

Political Context of Problem

The extreme gravity of the situation which will face the United Nations if no suitable solution to the financial problem is found, and found quickly, will be immediately apparent when viewed in the political context in which the Congo situation has evolved, a context which I have already described. Quite apart from its other novel aspects, the Congo operation represents a further advance in United Nations efforts to develop effective machinery to keep the peace, when the great powers, which are charged with this responsibility, are unable to reach agreement. If this machinery is to continue to be available in the service of international peace, this Assembly must make adequate financial provision for it. A failure to do so at this critical juncture would not only run dangerous risks for the Congo, but would place in jeopardy the ability of this organization to take effective action in other situations in the future in fulfilment of its peace-keeping responsibilities. Of particular significance is the fact that financial instability could also jeopardize the ability of the organization to maintain the pace of its vital economic and technical assistance programmes. All aspects of the organization's work are therefore threatened.

These thoughts should be before us as we consider the costs of the Congo operation. I do not minimize the difficulties which members will face in meeting the financial commitments which this operation makes on them. My Delegation recognizes that the burden will be particularly onerous for those members in the process of developing their economies, many of whom are themselves receiving international assistance in one form or another. Nevertheless, we believe it is important that the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations should continue to be regarded as a collective responsibility requiring that each member bear his fair share. The principle which must be maintained is that the collective benefits we all reap from the existence of a strong and effective United Nations lay upon all of us a collective duty to take up loyally the responsibilities - in political, military and financial terms - which our membership entails.

... There is at issue here the future not only of the Congo but also of the United Nations. This challenge is for all members of the United Nations, large and small, to meet, but the middle and smaller powers have most at stake because they have most to lose if the United Nations fails. As has been truly said before in this Assembly, it is the middle and smaller powers, and especially those who have recently reached independence, which are the principal beneficiaries of a strong and sound United Nations. It is principally those powers which look to the United Nations for the defence of their independence and for disinterested economic and technical assistance. And it is to those powers that I appeal particularly to support the United Nations in this time of trial.

---

S/C