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CANADA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Support of the United Nations is the cornerstone of Canada's foreign policy, Prime Minister Diefenbaker said Monday, September 23, in a speech at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Touching on various aspects of Canada's international relations, the Prime Minister stated that "Canada's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations is fundamental to our destiny", referred to "the closeness and neighbourliness of our relations with the United States", and described the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as "a major bulwark against the forces of aggression which Canada will adhere to regardless of threats from whatever source they may emanate".

In Mr. Diefenbaker's view, it is imperative that the disarmament talks, which ended without agreement, be resumed. The Prime Minister said that Canada would be in accord with any suggestion that the Disarmament Sub-committee membership should be broadened, provided such a step led to a quicker and better solution of the grave problem.

Referring to the United Nations Emergency Force as a stabilizing and tranquillizing influence in the Middle East, Mr. Diefenbaker said that out of the experience of UNEF it should be possible to evolve a system whereby the UN will have at its disposal appropriate forces for similar services wherever they may be required.

Warning of the danger of the UN losing its flexibility through becoming merely a company of hostile blocks stultifying efforts to find real and sensible solutions to problems, he said Canada would not become a party to any bloc which "prevents us from judging issues on their merits as we see them".

Excerpts from Mr. Diefenbaker's speech follow.

"... So far as Canada is concerned, support of the United Nations is the cornerstone of its foreign policy. We believe that the United Nations will grow stronger because it represents the inevitable struggle of countries to find order in their relationships and the deep longing of mankind to strive for and attain peace and justice.

"We believe, too, that countries like Canada, acting in consultation with other friendly nations, can exert an influence far stronger than would be possible outside the United Nations. Indeed, our views of the value of this organization are epitomized by the Secretary General in the introduction to his annual report for 1956-57, in which he stated: 'If properly used, the United Nations can serve the diplomacy of reconciliation better than other instruments available to the member states. All the varied interests and aspirations of the world meet in its precincts upon the common ground of the Charter'.

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