

If the Middle East conflict, with all its new dimensions, were the only threat facing the world, this would be sufficient to occupy fully the energies, imagination and resources of the world community. In other parts of the world there are formidable obstacles to peace and security. We have found no answers to the continuing race conflict in Southern Africa. It continues to smoulder more and more dangerously and, if nothing is done, might end in a conflagration engulfing the southern half of the continent. In Indochina, war burns with varying degrees of intensity while the talks in Paris show little sign of coming to grips with the real issues. Europe remains divided, but there have been some encouraging developments. We can be thankful that deteriorating situations in other parts of the world have not been used to impede the movement toward the relaxation of tension between the super-powers. SALT talks continue, rapprochement between West Germany and the Soviet Union has taken place. Similar improvements are foreshadowed.

While international conflicts, and especially violence, of necessity occupy the attention of many member governments, they must not be allowed to overshadow equally important developments of concern to the entire world community. Developing nations see a crisis in the international development program. Canada shares their concern and is making an increasing contribution. Environmental issues are looming larger each day. The United Nations is responding. Canada has made available the services of a distinguished public servant, Mr. Maurice Strong, to be Secretary-General of the 1972 conference. All around the globe nations are in a state of uncertainty about the economic outlook.

World prosperity and world security are indivisible and depend on the strength of the world economy. Over the years, the United Nations has set up -- partly in anticipation of needs, partly in response to demands -- a large and impressive family of intergovernmental bodies and other international instruments for strengthening co-operation in important fields such as finance, trade, economic and social activity. Their contributions to better world conditions rank high on the record of the United Nations achievement. The continuing need is to keep them effective.

In my speech on behalf of Canada last year, I drew attention to the need for renewal of the United Nations. Events in the past 12 months have brought a new sense of urgency to this need. Procedural improvements can help, and I shall have something to say about this in a few moments. They cannot, in themselves, meet the need.

In its work for mankind, the UN today is facing new threats, new constraints and new obstacles. The very assumptions upon which the organization operates must be re-examined if the aims of the Charter are to be advanced. This advance will depend on the readiness of members to exploit opportunities, to bring new attitudes to bear and to set practical objectives for the organization.

The Canadian delegation believes that in this year of anniversary we should seek practical ways of improving the United Nations' capacity for converting common purpose into common action. It is ever more difficult for the Assembly to cope with the number and complexity of international programs and projects that it has set in motion. Important work is often postponed or left incomplete. This compounds organizational and administrative problems and imposes additional expenses, burdens and obligations.