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KEEPING THE PEACE

Lecture by the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Prime Minister of Canada, in the Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Series, at Carleton University, Ottawa, May 7, 1964.

When I received the invitation to speak in this Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Series of lectures, I considered it a privilege to be included among those close collaborators and friends of the late Secretary-General who would be paying tribute to his memory, and to his work, in this way. It is most fitting that in Canada this lecture should be given at Carleton University, from which Dag Hammarskjold received the first honorary degree given by this university and the first offered to him by any Canadian university.

I have chosen the subject "Keeping the Peace" because Mr. Hammarskjold gave so much of himself to the task of developing the peace-keeping work of the United Nations. Indeed, he was on active service for peace when his life so tragically and so prematurely ended.

Dag Hammarskjold died, as he would have wished, in the service both of peace and the United Nations. I had the privilege of knowing him well and of working with him at the United Nations during some difficult years. I admired and respected the high character of the man and the great qualities of the statesman. He was tireless and selfless and wise. He was as sure and as resolute in carrying out instructions from the United Nations for international action in the cause of peace as he was skilful and objective in seeking to establish a basis for that action in the Charter.

His life was a triumph of service and achievement and his passing at the very height of his career was a tragic loss. His death must continue to inspire us all to do what we can to secure the triumph of the cause for which he died, peace and security in the world, through the United Nations.

At a press conference early in 1959, Dag Hammarskjold said this: "The basic policy line for this organization is that the United Nations simply must respond to those demands which may be made of it. If we feel that those demands go beyond the present capacity, that in itself, from my point of view, is not a reason why the organization should refuse to respond, because I do not know the exact capacity of this machine. It did take the very steep hill of Suez; it may take other and even steeper hills. I would not object beforehand unless I could say, and had to say in all sincerity, that I knew what was asked