

I said earlier that the United Nations has not played the role in peacemaking that its founders foresaw. But we must acknowledge the intractability of the problems it has had to contend with. In the tragic Middle East conflict, for example, the only generally acceptable machinery for peacekeeping and peace-making endeavours has been United Nations machinery. It is in the United Nations context that the great powers have been seeking to bring to bear their invaluable influence toward promoting a settlement. It is a United Nations cease-fire which has at last been restored, opening the way for possible movement toward peace talks. If, as we earnestly hope, these talks are successfully launched in the weeks ahead, it will be under the aegis of the United Nations Secretary-General's special representative, Ambassador Jarring, that the search for peace will go forward. Facing such problems, I ask myself, without an organization having the global stature of the United Nations, where would we turn?

As regards United Nations efforts to achieve social justice, I need only mention the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which came into force last year. The world community simply cannot afford racial discrimination, as much for practical as humanitarian reasons. I commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to secure the signature and ratification of the Convention by all member states in this year of rededication.

The field of international law is one of fundamental importance, and a field of endeavour in which Canada has been active for many years. The work of the United Nations toward the development of a body of law to govern outer space is an example of how the nations working together can anticipate problems that are still, perhaps, far off in the future. The work of the International Red Cross Conference on international humanitarian law held last year in Istanbul is an example of how problems that have been with us for years can be faced by co-operative action. A declaration of principles of co-operation and friendly relations among states is likely to be proclaimed as part of the anniversary celebrations in October after seven years of study and debate by a special UN Committee. This declaration could have great influence as an authoritative interpretation of the basic Charter principles regulating the relations between states.

Of special interest to Canada, with a coastline said to be the longest on earth, is the law of the sea. The United Nations is on the verge of reaching agreement on a set of principles to govern the exploration and exploitation of the seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Canada has long been an innovator in this field, and our new Act of Parliament establishing a pollution zone in the Arctic, not for our benefit only but for the sake of all mankind, is an example of state practice that will lead, we are confident, to international agreement and new international law.

The threat to the Arctic ecology posed by the possibility of oil-spillage in the frigid Arctic waters is only one in a long list of threats posed to our new physical environment by our uncontrolled exploitation of the world's resources. It is hard to believe that our search for the economic betterment of our peoples has, as a by-product, opened the possibility and the very real threat of the destruction of our environment. We find ourselves in a rapidly accelerating situation, faced with a threat that is increasing in a geometrical rather than an arithmetical progression. In the technologically-advanced nations we have to find, as a matter of the utmost urgency, means to