

The attempt of some permanent members of the Council to return to the assumptions of 1945 meets, of course, with the stubborn opposition of other permanent members and of many other nations. A great deal has happened in 20 years. The General Assembly, which now has a great many more members, has shown that it can act effectively and responsibly. It is most unlikely to override great-power interests. For one thing, the realities of economic and military power put important limitations on too ambitious schemes for United Nations action. But the diffusion of political power means that there are many areas in which middle and smaller powers should and do take a lead in international action.

These are the realities of the clash within the United Nations and they would seem to demand a compromise or negotiated settlement. In that settlement appropriate weight must be given to all relevant considerations -- the proper functioning of the Charter, the particular responsibilities of the permanent members of the Council, the interests and obligations of the middle powers which, in fact, are the major participants in peace keeping and the rights of the membership as a whole.

I have already spoken in considerable detail about fundamental questions at issue, and I do not intend, therefore, to discuss the various complicated formulas put forward for passive acceptance of certain decisions, for opting out of financial obligations or for sharing responsibility between Council and Assembly. These discussions and negotiations will go on for some months yet, probably until the 1966 session of the Assembly.

What I should like to do in this concluding section is to outline the essential points in the Canadian position. I may say that, on the important issues currently under discussion, we find ourselves very close to United States positions. I might also take this occasion to pay tribute to the way in which the United States, with all its other preoccupations as a great power, has given unstinting political support to United Nations peace keeping. Canada has taken part in most peace-keeping operations and can appreciate that, without the logistical and financial support of the United States, they could not have been established and maintained.

The Canadian Government has stressed that the first priority is to restore the United Nations to financial solvency. We have pledged a voluntary contribution ourselves, and hope that as many nations as possible will respond to the need. These voluntary contributions do not require commitment to particular theories about responsibility for peace keeping in the past or in the future. Overcoming the accumulated debt would be one important step towards creating confidence and defining an area of common interest from which we could try to reach a new understanding about peace keeping.

The Canadian Government has also proposed that the United Nations improve its capacity for prompt action in the peace-keeping field by preparing in advance for emergencies. Last November, a conference was convened in Ottawa with representatives of 23 countries which have shown special interest in peace keeping in order to discuss some of the technical and military aspects of these operations. The exchange of views and experience was helpful and of benefit to the United Nations. We should hope that, if agreement is worked out