

should nevertheless make practical recommendations as to how the Security Council might more effectively discharge its functions. As inevitably the Assembly would be interpreting some of the more important provisions of the Charter, Mr. St. Laurent suggested that delegations should interpret it in such a way as to "encourage its growth and adaptation to changing circumstances" and "in the way best calculated to strengthen the authority and prestige of the United Nations".

5. By 1947 the Department's thinking on the possibility of the United Nations providing an effective organ for the maintenance of world peace followed an even more pessimistic trend. A statement approved by Cabinet on September 11, 1947, for the guidance of the delegation to the Second Session of the General Assembly noted for example that the Government was "aware that there is a possibility that issues will emerge ... which may destroy the United Nations in the form in which it was conceived and established". It recognized that some major states might endeavour to force the Assembly to take a decision on an important question such as the veto, the net result of which might be to force one or more states to withdraw from the United Nations. It also recognized that the proceedings of the Assembly could be impeded to the extent that little or nothing would be accomplished and that, as a consequence, the United Nations would fall into disrepute both in the eyes of the public and of member governments.

6. Although Canada, in the words of this statement, did not consider "that the time had yet been reached when any of the issues dividing members of the United Nations should be pressed to a conclusion which would destroy the organization as it is at present constituted", the Government nevertheless thought that "the realities of the situation should be faced" and that on appropriate occasions the delegation should not hesitate to state that the "inevitable final results" of either development mentioned above would destroy the United Nations. The statement then went on:

" It should be the policy of the Canadian delegation to contribute as much as possible to the constructive work of the Assembly and to assist in offsetting the influence of delegations which seek to stand in the way of its business. It should endeavour to avoid the premature development of any issue to the point when it is likely to destroy the United Nations or to drive any of its members to withdraw immediately. This is not to say that the delegation should refrain from expressing clearly and vigorously its criticisms of weaknesses either in the organization of the United Nations or the conduct of its members. It would, nevertheless, be unfortunate if amendments to the Charter or alternatives in procedure, however desirable they may be, were obtained at this time only at the expense of defeating the larger purpose of building a universal organization. The time may be approaching when changes may have to be made in the Charter against the wishes or even against the threat of withdrawal of say the USSR but that time ... has not yet been reached. In short ... the emphasis should be on warning what may happen rather than on forcing issues to the point where things will happen."

7. In the opening debate of the Second Session of the General Assembly in September, 1947, Mr. St. Laurent touched upon some of these points. Once more, he expressed Canada's feeling that because of the record of the Security Council, the United Nations was not discharging its primary task. The continued abuse of the veto power, he thought represented a real