

Two weeks ago, in Ottawa, your Assistant Secretary of State for International Affairs, Mr. Harlan Cleveland, told the annual meeting of our United Nations Association: "Since 1948, Canada has assigned Canadians to every peace-keeping operation of the UN except one - the only country which has done so". Yes, we have responded in Kashmir, in Israel, Gaza, the Congo, Yemen, and now Cyprus. It is a long and expensive list; it is politically difficult at home because of the risks; and we get small thanks abroad for our work. We do it not for the glory but as our duty, since there are not many who are both willing and able to move in quickly with an effective force. Only five other countries have so far joined us in earmarking part of our regular Army as stand-by forces ready at any time to go anywhere we may agree to send them at the request of the United Nations and the governments concerned.

At the same time we have been playing a similar international role politically as one of the three members of the Truce Commissions in Indochina for ten long and frustrating years.

To keep up the momentum of the peace-keeping idea, we are trying to take steps outside the UN, since efforts to make progress in the UN have for years been blocked by the Soviet veto, to ensure that in future there may be less improvising and strain and risk in this recurring UN need. To this end, we are planning to hold a conference in Canada later this year of those countries with experience of peace-keeping operations. United Nations peace keeping, we feel, has come to stay. It is now no longer an exceptional phenomenon but a regular feature of the United Nations repertory of possible answers to a dangerous situation or threat to the peace. In the world of tomorrow it is probably the key to both international and even national security.

Disarmament Essential to Peace

Of all the roles of peace diplomacy, however, it is disarmament that tackles the central problem most directly. Here again Canada has, since I first went to the League of Nations in Geneva 28 years ago, been playing a serious and constructive part in the collective effort to achieve disarmament on terms that would reduce rather than increase present risks for all. On these criteria, we believe it would be folly simply to give up the nuclear deterrent, unilaterally or on both sides, without some means of knowing that there was no cheating. We therefore want inspection and control, not before disarmament but progressing with it as required technically for the satisfaction of both parties to know pledges are, in fact, being kept. Progress is really being made, painfully slowly it is true, but I think already the improvement in Western relations with the Soviet Union which I mentioned earlier is due in part to the patience and sincerity of our collective work on disarmament over the years.

But it is due to something more. Since the war, we in the West have shown the Asian and African majority of the world's peoples that it is possible for white rulers to leave before they have to, and for independence - economic as well as political - to be given to hundreds of millions of these ancient peoples who were civilized long before North America had been, as we say, "discovered". It is also a salutary lesson for some people to see that Western countries are willing to give large amounts of aid for the economic development,