

United Nations, because of the experience of the Security Council, is not showing itself equal to the discharge of its primary task of promoting international confidence and ensuring national security. The Economic and Social Council is functioning fairly successfully. The specialist organizations are doing good work. But the Security Council, founded on what is called the unanimity of its permanent members, has done little to strengthen the hopes of those who saw in it the keystone of the structure of peace. It has done much to deepen the fears of those who felt that, with the veto, it could not operate effectively in an international atmosphere of fear and suspicion, where pride is often allowed to take precedence over peace and power over reason.

This veto privilege, attacked and defended with equal vigour, if it continues to be abused, may well destroy the United Nations, because it will destroy confidence in the ability of the Security Council to act internationally, to act effectively, and to act in time. There is no point in deceiving ourselves. Our peoples cannot be expected to accept indefinitely and without alteration, voting procedures and practices which, in the name of unanimity, underline disunity; and which reduce agreement to a lowest common denominator of action that in practice often means inaction. For this reason, the Canadian delegation warmly supports the United States suggestions concerning voting procedure in the Security Council.

Our delegation also supports the United States proposal designed to extend the usefulness of the Assembly. We think that its acceptance would infuse new life and vigour into our whole organization.

In the concentration of attention on the vital role of the Security Council, it should not be forgotten that the Assembly, or a continuing committee of the Assembly, can do many of the things for which the Security Council was intended to take primary responsibility. It can discuss a dispute or situation at open meetings and at small private committee meetings. It can investigate by calling witnesses and by sending out commissions of enquiry. It can publish the findings of its committees as soon as the Security Council ceases to deal with a dispute or situation. The General Assembly can make recommendations and can send these recommendations to the Security Council or to the nations concerned, or to both. The Canadian delegation sees no reason, therefore, why these functions of the Assembly should not be put to greater use for the solution of problems when they are not being solved elsewhere.

The fact remains, however, that these problems must be solved, and that procedures and practices which obstruct such solutions must be changed. This can be done by the voluntary abandonment of these practices; by agreed conventions or understandings which will regulate them; or, if necessary, by amendments to the Charter. We hope that no member of the Security Council will flout clearly expressed world opinion by obstinately preventing change, and thus become responsible for prejudicing, and possibly destroying, the organization which is now man's greatest hope for the future.

Nations, in their search for peace and co-operation, will not, and cannot, accept indefinitely an unaltered Council which was set up to ensure their security, and which, so many feel, has become frozen in futility and divided by dissension. If forced, they may seek greater safety in an association of democratic and peace-loving states willing to accept more specific international obligations in return for a greater measure of national security.