

are working in Russia itself. The instinct for freedom—personal and national—cannot be destroyed in any people. There is a ray of hope for the end of the cold war in this development.

To counter-balance in some measure and in another field the discouragements which we have experienced in 1956 is the fact that the United Nations has been given at least the opportunity to act in a way which would increase its authority and its value. It is true that the United Nations has been shown to be unable to take effective action in such circumstances as surrounded the brutalities in Hungary; nonetheless, the conscience of the world was effectively aroused against the invader through the world organization, and its condemnation was unequivocally expressed in this worldwide forum. The United Nations has also been able to establish an Emergency Police Force in the Middle East whose operations we are all watching with concern because of their effect, not only on the pacification of the area, but also on the future of the United Nations itself in the field of security.

It must be remembered that the United Nations has no authority apart from the strength which its members contribute to it. The present United Nations Force, for instance, consists of national elements under the ultimate control of their home governments. It can act only through resolutions of the General Assembly which are merely recommendations and not instructions. If belligerent states were well-disposed to resolve their differences, there would be little need for a United Nations Force and, if they are not so disposed, the United Nations would have need of forces which it would be unrealistic to expect would be forthcoming. We have, however, made a beginning through this Force in creating machinery for supervision of the peace through Assembly action. In this way we have been able to introduce a new element into the conduct of international relations which may become important if—and it is well to emphasize the “if”—it works effectively on this occasion.

I mentioned last year that the Canadian role in international affairs was not likely to diminish. Indeed it has increased, and its execution has taxed the resources of the Department. Throughout the year we have taken an active part in international conferences of many kinds; and have in many far-off places taken on responsibilities for preserving the peace and helping to make effective international decisions. I do not think that it can be said that Canada is shirking its international obligations.

I should like to join the Under-Secretary in paying a very sincere tribute to the work of the members of the Department, both at home and abroad (some of the latter in trying circumstances). If Canada has been asked recently to play a difficult and important part in many aspects of international affairs, and has done it worthily, this is due in large part to the men and women of the Department of External Affairs who have, with devotion and skill, carried out the task allotted to them.

February 7, 1957

L B Pearson

Secretary of State
for External Affairs