

just settlement of the issues that brought about those hostilities. That will be for the United Nations a more important and I suspect a more difficult task. We can take satisfaction over what has already been done in the Assembly, but recent developments have raised in our minds some questions regarding its future and I want to mention one or two of these.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, we have become more aware than we were previously of the gap between responsible and irresponsible membership; between the membership of those democratic countries such as the United Kingdom and France who are loyal members of the Organization and as such take heed of its recommendations and those totalitarian despotisms such as the Soviet Union which treat such recommendations with contempt when they cut across their own national policies.

This has led to a demand in some quarters that somehow or other United Nations Assembly should take action to enforce effectively its own recommendations. This of course ignores the fact that such compulsory enforcement procedure through the Assembly is not in accordance with the terms of the Charter as drafted; and also that resolutions that may be passed by an irresponsible majority in the Assembly may be such that we ourselves would find great difficulty in accepting them and the enforcement of which we would in certain circumstances resist.

Mr. Diefenbaker: What does the Minister mean by irresponsible?

Mr. Pearson: Well, I mean by exercising the right of membership in an irresponsible fashion against the principles of the Charter which was accepted by all members. This leads to another question which causes some anxiety in our minds, and that is the growing tendency in the Assembly, which is of course facilitated by the one-state one-vote principle, and regardless of the powers of state, to force through, by sheer voting strength, resolutions that are impractical and at times quite unreasonable. In reverse there is the power of a minority of one-third plus one to prevent reasonable and useful resolutions of the majority which we may consider ourselves to be both practical, reasonable and desirable.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in a very real sense the effectiveness of this unique instrument for the preservation of peace, the United Nations Assembly, rests with a majority of small nations now operating at least to some extent in blocs. If the group veto or the bloc veto in the Assembly, irresponsibly exercised, replaces the single-power veto in the Security Council, the larger body will soon become as futile as on so many occasions the smaller body has become. I suggest therefore that each member of the Assembly has now a greater duty than ever before to exercise its rights with a clear and unprejudiced understanding of their implications for the future of the Organization and for international peace and security. If they do it in that way they will be showing a sense of responsibility.