

INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS

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SEARCH FOR TEST BAN

Of all the arms-control issues that have tried the patience of the world in recent years, the most onerous has been the effort to conclude a comprehensive test ban to supplement the 1963 prohibition of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, under water and in outer space. The endless argument is continuing over whether "on-site" inspection is necessary in order to verify violations of an agreement to prohibit underground tests or whether national means of seismological detection are adequate for this purpose. At the last General Assembly, a resolution was adopted calling for the highest priority to be assigned to effective measures to limit the nuclear-arms race and to achieve nuclear disarmament. In the hope that a step forward could be made toward overcoming the verification problem, Canada proposed in the conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva that an international system of seismic-data collection should be explored through enquiries to all member states seeking information about the facilities at their disposal and their willingness to make information freely available to all nations. This proposal will be pursued in this Assembly....

CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE

I turn now to that other menace to the survival of the human race — chemical and biological warfare. The Secretary-General's report has told us once again — if we needed to be told — the tragic consequences of using these dreadful weapons. At this Assembly we shall be considering proposals to eliminate them.

We recognize the valuable contribution represented by the draft treaty on biological warfare prepared by Britain and tabled in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. The Secretary-General's report, together with proposals advanced in Geneva and the draft convention put forward in this Assembly by the U.S.S.R., will all help to guide and facilitate our deliberations. The procedural resolution Canada sponsored, and which we hope will be included in the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, is directed to the same ends.

Let us remember, too, that the founders of the UN provided in the Charter procedures for the pacific settlement of disputes designed to stop the insane pattern of fighting and bloodshed which disfigures our

globe from time to time, and today particularly in Vietnam, the Middle East and Nigeria. It is a sad commentary on the state of the world community that it has no capacity to order the cessation of hostilities, except to the extent that the combatants are influenced by world public opinion. The current tense situation in the Middle East perhaps illustrates most graphically the nature of our dilemma. The Security Council unanimously adopted in November 1967 a resolution which imposed an equitable balance of obligation on all the parties to the dispute. Its full implementation could have restored peace to the Middle East. Yet today the conflict continues to race.

We can do more, I am convinced, to improve the machinery to head off disputes before they erupt into open warfare. This is why Canada is urging forward the peacekeeping studies being carried on in the Committee of 33. In a working group of that Committee, a concerted effort has been made during the past year to develop a "model" for the conduct of military observation missions authorized by the Security Council. As a participant in this study, we have been encouraged by what has been accomplished, but at the same time we are disappointed that the possibilities of much greater progress have not been realized. Once the model for an observation mission has been completed, the working group should go on to develop models for other kinds of peacekeeping operations. These are difficult problems, with political, legal, and financial implications. Perhaps, as a representative of a country with a certain experience in peacekeeping operations, I might offer a comment. It is essential that these problems should be given urgent consideration...to participate in the peacekeeping operations there, as well as in the UN peace observation missions in Palestine and Kashmir....

To keep the peace and to improve the conditions of life on earth — these are tasks that call for all that is best in us. They will be fulfilled if we can lift our eyes from the narrow concerns of transient political advantage and national self-interest to a broader horizon that encompasses the whole family of man. We are all bound up together. It is together that we must learn to live in peace, it is together that we must apply all our resources to the betterment of the human condition. The UN can be the supreme instrument for the achievement of these great tasks. It can also become no more than a monument to man's lost hopes and lost opportunities. It is the member nations that will determine what course this organization will follow and like you, Madame President, we have faith.