

Seeking a route for achieving a more dynamic United Nations

Canada feels the United Nations can be made more effective and more dynamic without rewriting its Charter. The world organization's effectiveness and vitality depend not upon changing its basic structure so much as upon the political determination of its members to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities under the present Charter. In short, the effectiveness of the UN is directly dependent on the political will of its members.

Despite this overall approach, Canada is prepared to give careful consideration to all specific proposals for re-

vision or more effective use of the Charter which might enlist broad support among member states.

This is the gist of the Canadian Government's reply to the UN Secretary-General's invitation for suggestions on review of the UN Charter. Under a resolution adopted by the twenty-fifth General Assembly, the Secretary-General called on member states to submit proposals for review of the Charter and this question has been placed on the agenda for the twenty-seventh General Assembly session this fall. Text of the Canadian reply follows.

A basic premise of Canada's foreign policy is to continue to work actively to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for international co-operation, and to improve its capacity to meet its responsibilities. It has been suggested on various grounds that, to achieve this end, a review of the Charter is necessary. It has been pointed out, for example, that the Charter is now 26 years old, that conditions have changed greatly since it was drawn up, that a majority of the present members of the organization did not participate in drafting it, and that the United Nations has not fulfilled all the hopes of those who did draft it in 1945.

The Government of Canada is prepared to give careful and serious consideration to all specific proposals for revision or more effective utilization of the Charter which might command broad support amongst the membership of the organization.

In considering such proposals, it must be borne in mind that it has proved to be very difficult to achieve agreement on textual amendments in the past. Charter revision is governed by Article 108 of the Charter, which states: "Amendments to the present Charter shall come into force for all members of the United Nations when they have been adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the United Nations General Assembly and ratified in accordance with their respective constitutional processes by two-thirds of the members of the United Nations, including

all the permanent members of the Security Council."

Hitherto it has been possible to reach agreement on amendments in only two respects, providing for enlargement of the Security Council from nine to 15 and enlargement of the Economic and Social Council from 18 to 27 and recently — subject to ratification — to 54.

Nonetheless, the Charter has proved to be a remarkably flexible document, capable of growth and adaptation in response to changing conditions and needs of the international community. The involvement of the United Nations in the emergence to independence of non-self-governing territories, its activities relating to international development, its concern with racial discrimination and *apartheid*, are all examples of how a broad rather than narrow interpretation of the Charter can make it a living Charter, responsive to the needs of the United Nations' members. There is in the Canadian view no reason why this should be any less true in future. The United Nations can be made more dynamic without rewriting the Charter; its effectiveness and vitality depend not upon changing the basic structure of the organization so much as upon the political resolve of the member states to fulfil the obligations and the responsibilities each has taken up in subscribing to the provisions of the Charter. In short, the effectiveness of the United Nations is directly dependent on the political will of its members. No documentary revision in itself can