

observations was the suggestion that the Assembly might call for the minimum possible co-operation in the voluntary contribution programme which had been initiated.

Legal Questions

Of the various items considered by the Sixth Committee, the most important dealt with the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among states. Well in advance of the seventeenth session, Canada took steps, in consultation with several other governments, to develop proposals for enabling the United Nations to make a greater contribution to legal thought and to the progressive development of international law. Accordingly, Canada took the lead in the debate during the session by introducing, with co-sponsors, a resolution calling for an affirmation of the rule of law and of the United Nations Charter as the fundamental statement of principles underlying friendly relations. It also called for a study of two areas of law which require clarification and development — the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of states and the obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means. Two other resolutions were introduced, one by Czechoslovakia and the other by Yugoslavia, calling for a declaration of principles which should govern friendly relations. After protracted negotiations, a compromise resolution was evolved which was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly. The hope is that, as a result, the Sixth Committee will be able to play a more constructive and active role in the future development and codification of international law.

Other resolutions approved by the Assembly on the recommendation of the Sixth Committee included one urging member states to undertake training programmes in international law and requesting the Secretary-General to study ways to help them to do so. This resolution also referred to the possibility of proclaiming a United Nations Decade of International Law. Another, on consular relations, provided for steps to be taken in Vienna next March preparatory to the holding of the International Conference of Plenipotentiaries on this matter. A third resolution invited the Secretary-General to undertake the publication of a United Nations Juridical Yearbook in the three working languages of the United Nations, the first volume (dealing with the year 1963) to be published in 1964.

All these resolutions received the Assembly's unanimous approval.