

Improving Peace Operations

We also invite other states to consider jointly what can be done to improve the United Nations methods for establishing peace-keeping operations. We are fully aware that standby arrangements within the United Nations framework are not immediately feasible, because of political and practical problems which have priority. But we are equally aware from diplomatic discussions that some members are disturbed about the sad state of United Nations preparedness in this important area of activity. Like Canada, they have made their own arrangements for earmarking national contingents for United Nations service. Canada regards this as a promising and practical approach in the face of present circumstances, and one which should be developed through closer consultation among interested states.

There are these practical problems and the underlying political issues, which have proved intractable for a long time questions of organization, representation and procedure. In particular, the Security Council needs to re-assert its authority for exercising political control in relation to peace-keeping operations. This need goes beyond the control of operations because in essence they may be without lasting benefit unless the actual causes of tension and disturbance can be removed. To exert its proper influence the Council should be enlarged to permit a balanced composition in its membership with equitable representation for all geographical areas. Its functions should be performed, and perhaps modified to meet the changing situation in the world. These and other constitutional questions beg for answers as the United Nations approaches its twentieth year.

Peace Arrangements Cannot Delay

But the practical problems of peace-keeping today cannot wait long. In Cyprus they must be solved pragmatically, as the United Nations finds its footing there and confidence is restored. In the General Assembly - and before that in the Working Group on Twenty-one on United Nations Finances - the financial dilemma must be faced squarely and constructively. And in the future, whether formally inside the United Nations framework or outside it in the arrangements of interested member states, the methods for training, assembling and directing international military forces must be improved so that they can be deployed on the shortest notice.

These are the formidable challenges of the immediate future. They may loom even larger during the coming summer. But the very size of the problems, their complexity and their significance require that United Nations members of all shades of opinion face their responsibilities in this regard resolutely. They must put aside their short-sighted and debilitating manoeuvring for national, regional and ideological influence. They must demonstrate their determination to co-operate in keeping the United Nations effective. Our era of limited peace demands no less.