

The same motives which prompted us to respond readily to the calls of the United Nations also prompted us, last month, to convene a conference in Ottawa for the purpose of taking stock of the practical experience which has been gained in past peace-keeping operations. The Conference was attended by representatives from 23 countries, and I am pleased to take this opportunity of paying tribute to the excellent work they did. There was no attempt made by the Conference to produce formal conclusions or to chart any forward course of collective action. I am confident, however, that the Conference has done something to improve the capacity of the participating countries to respond more effectively and more rationally to future appeals by the United Nations.

Since the conclusion of the Conference, I have been encouraged to note the proposal of the Secretary-General that the whole question of advance planning for peace-keeping operations be studied by the United Nations. In putting this proposal forward in the introduction to his annual report, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that such a study might "yield recommendations for consideration by the competent organs", which may then authorize him "to proceed along such lines as may be generally approved". Canada strongly supports this proposal, and we will naturally be prepared to play our full part in carrying it forward at the appropriate time.

The availability of properly trained and equipped forces is one element of an effective United Nations capacity to keep the peace. The availability of the necessary financial resources on an assured basis is another. It would be tragic, indeed, if, in a future crisis, the United Nations were debarred, for lack of funds, from intervening in the cause of peace.

Expenses the Business of All

Canada has always supported the view that the responsibility for maintaining peace and security is one which is shared by all member states of the United Nations. We regard it as a logical consequence of that view that the cost of peace-keeping must also be shared equitably by all, with due regard to their relative capacity to contribute. We believe this principle of shared responsibility to be inherent in the Charter, and we find ourselves confirmed in that belief by the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. According to that opinion, the expenses incurred by the United Nations in the Middle East and in the Congo are expenses of the organization and the assessments for them approved by the General Assembly are binding assessments.

I am bound to acknowledge that some important member states do not share our view either of the principle or of the law involved. In circumstances where the five Permanent Members of the Security Council between them are responsible for meeting two-thirds of the costs of our organization, the dissenting views of two of these Permanent Members are clearly of critical importance. The divergence between their views and those of the majority of members have set us on a col-