

Finances

The second matter I mentioned in this regard is the question of United Nation's finances. This has become most serious. Last spring the United Nations came within hours of closing its doors because financial arrangements could not be made. Probably the public is not aware of this, and I should like to take a few moments to deal briefly with the subject.

The legislative processes of the United Nations are somewhat different from those in this Parliament or elsewhere. You have the strange situation in the United Nations that the General Assembly can pass a resolution and it will be accepted by a two-thirds majority, but at the same time there are no financial arrangements to carry out the resolution. The arrangements are made in advance each year by the Fifth Committee reporting to the General Assembly. This peculiar arrangement, where resolutions are passed with the finances to carry them out not provided for, has caused a great deal of trouble in the UN. The particular difficulty in this regard has to do with the peace-keeping arrangements of the United Nations. The United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East has had its problems. The trouble is that those peace-keeping arrangements are not regular budgetary items in the UN. Arrangements were made to provide finances for the United Nations Emergency Force, and those were not contributed to by all the countries. The Russian excuse was that it was an illegal undertaking, and they have never contributed.

The Congo

The present peace-keeping arrangement of the United Nations which has been in the public eye a great deal is the question of the Congo. Again we ran into the problem of how to finance this particular arrangement. To date the results in the Congo have been a great success for the United Nations. That force cannot be continued unless a permanent financial arrangement is made. In this regard, some permanent financial arrangement is made. In this regard, and it is no secret at all, that France has said she will not contribute to this arrangement, and so have certain other states. The Soviet Union, of course, says it will not, and certain other countries have also said that they will not contribute to it because they felt the money required was too much, they could not afford it. Many other reasons have been given.

It is a very serious matter. If permanent financial arrangements cannot be made for the UN, it will not be able to carry out its peace-keeping function. If this is not done the United Nations might just as well close its doors. If I may say so, ... last year this temporary disaster was averted thanks to Canada. We came very close to having to close the doors of the UN. The Secretary-General had used up all the cash on hand to carry on the Congo operations and he had borrowed from various other UN organizations. A temporary arrangement was made.

At the present time, again thanks to the initiative of Canada, a 15-man committee representing 15 countries is studying the whole question of how to provide finances for the UN operations, including the operation that is going on at the present time, but it is going to be a very difficult problem to work out. Many countries feel they cannot afford it, and other countries will not contribute because they have no desire to see the United Nations succeed in these fields.