

sought strenuously to find some basis for negotiation. The points of difference between the developed Western countries (apart from France) and the Afro-Asian and Latin American countries were soon seen to be reconcilable by developing practical arrangements on the basis of the principles adopted at the fourth special session. The Soviet Union, however, was obdurate in denying any role to the General Assembly in the peace-keeping field and in refusing to pay "one kopeck" to past operations. France, not yet subject to Article 19 but due to exceed the permissible level of arrears on January 1, 1965, also declined to shift its ground. Official visits by the Secretary-General to Paris and Moscow in July produced no modification in the stand of the two most significant defaulters. A few days prior to U Thant's arrival, the Soviet Union hinted that any attempt to deprive it of its Assembly vote would result in Soviet withdrawal from the United Nations.

Against this background of increasing rigidity, the Working Group met in formal session in September in an attempt to deal with its mandated task of working out cost-sharing methods for future operations and exploring ways and means for bringing about the widest measure of agreement on this question.

The United States proposal for new procedures for future operations — hinging on a Peace-Keeping Financing Committee which would include all the permanent members of the Security Council and a number of other major contributors to peace-keeping costs, as well as a geographically representative sample of the membership as a whole — was again put forward and again rejected. The United States proposal would have required any recommendation on financing a future operation to be supported by a two-thirds majority of the Financing Committee before the General Assembly could apportion expenses among the membership in keeping with the principle of collective responsibility. The Soviet Union attacked the idea as an attempt to create a financial veto outside the Security Council. Such a procedure would, in the Soviet view, be "a gross violation of the United Nations Charter". The Soviet representative again asserted in categorical terms the exclusive — and comprehensive — rights of the Security Council to take peace-keeping decisions :

... the only body authorized to take action in the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security is the Security Council. It is likewise within the purview of the Security Council to adopt decisions in all matters relating to the establishment of United Nations armed forces, the definition of their duties, their composition and strength, the direction of their operations, the structure of their command and duration of their stay in the area of operation, and also in matters of financing. No other United Nations body — not even the General Assembly, much less a committee of the Assembly — has the right under the Charter to decide these matters.