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PEACE KEEPING AND DISARMAMENT

The following address was delivered on May 3 by Mr. Paul Martin, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the special session in Geneva of the eleventh general assembly of the World Veterans Federation, held to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations:

...This is a solemn anniversary for all of us. It is an anniversary of the hopes and aspirations which repose in this great organization. It is, above all, an anniversary of our collective determination to build a better world order.

The first condition of such a world order is peace. And it is no coincidence that the first pledge to which we subscribed in the Charter of the United Nations is a pledge of peace — a pledge "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". I have no need to dwell on the undiminished urgency of that pledge in a gathering of world veterans.

We have come a reasonable way along the course we charted 20 years ago. But a long and arduous road stretches before us. The end of that road is still far from being in sight. It is important, therefore, to be clear where our steps should be directed.

RECORD OF PROGRESS

I have spoken of reasonable progress on the road to peace. In the very difficult situation which is confronting us in Vietnam today, this may seem like an excessively optimistic statement. But if we cast our glance back over the past two decades, I think that the record will bear me out. In that period, we have faced a large number of situations of conflict or potential conflict. Many of these situations could

have led to war. In the event, they did not lead to war. They did not lead to war because the international community did not permit them to lead to war — and because there were mechanisms by which the international community was able to insulate such situations against the hazards of escalation and to bring them within the ambit of peaceful resolution.

That, as I see it, is the essence of the idea of peace keeping as it has evolved within the framework of the United Nations. I do not think there can be any doubt about the immense importance of that conception in a world in which instability and insecurity are still prevalent. Nevertheless, the future of peace keeping is now at issue. Only a few months ago, the United Nations narrowly avoided a confrontation over that issue. I am glad to say that saner counsel prevailed. A special committee is now looking into all aspects of peace keeping with the object of arriving at a sound and broadly acceptable basis for the future.

ELEMENTS OF A CONSENSUS

I am hopeful that at least the basic elements of a consensus will emerge from the work of the committee. Such a consensus, as I see it, might be reached on some or all of the following propositions:

First, the United Nations must be restored to financial health. This is a matter of liquidating past debts. I should hope that it is also a matter of not permitting a recurrence of the present situation in the future.

Second, the United Nations must be enabled to maintain the capacity to act in emergencies. The

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