

Canada still participates in the UN Emergency Force, ten years after its formation. The nature of our contribution has changed as the size of the Force has diminished. Yet the circumstances which brought about its despatch to the Middle East have not appreciably changed. Two questions arise. What have we learned about peace keeping during these ten years? If the UN is to stay in the peace-keeping business (and experience suggests it will), how is responsibility for this task to be shared amongst the member states?

Let me first try to summarize what we have learned, based not only on our participation in UNEF but on our subsequent participation in the Congo Force, the Cyprus Force and in a number of UN observer groups sent to patrol frontiers and supervise cease-fires. The first conclusion to be drawn is that each operation is different and that no standard political guide-lines will serve to prepare for the next. In the Middle East, for example, we have been called upon to supply a variety of needs, including administrative and maintenance support, mobile ground reconnaissance, air reconnaissance, and air transport. In the Congo we were asked to provide signallers. In Cyprus the need was for an infantry battalion. Again, the mandates of these various forces and groups have been different, ranging from defensive military action in the Congo to observation and reporting in the Yemen. The observers who went to Lebanon in 1958 did not have the same job as those in the UN Truce Supervision Organization who were already stationed on the borders of Israel.

In addition, the composition of each operation has varied with the political and social circumstances. Obviously, it is desirable, for example, that troops from African countries should be available for peace-keeping duties in Africa under UN auspices. In Cyprus, it makes more sense for troops from Western countries, broadly speaking, to be doing the job. On the other hand, the UN cannot restrict itself to a regional pattern of composition, for by definition a UN force represents the organization as a whole. The Canadian, Scandinavian and Irish troop contributions to the Congo Force demonstrated that non-regional assistance may be desirable not only for political reasons but for reasons of technical efficiency and experience. I would conclude, therefore, that ad hoc methods of raising forces and some improvisation in planning is an element of contemporary peace-keeping experience which we shall have to accept. This does not mean that planning cannot be done in advance, and I shall make some suggestions in this respect. But we are right to be sceptical of schemes for elaborate staff work and standing forces. We are still at a stage in international military organization where the first priority must be some agreement on the blueprints or master texts of peace-keeping procedures, these to be moulded to fit the individual circumstances of each operation. Even this measure of agreement has proved to be more difficult to accomplish than we expected ten years ago.

I want to emphasize as well the importance of establishing clearly the terms of reference or mandate of a peace-keeping force or observer mission before it is authorized to begin its work. The degree of clarity of such terms of reference will depend to a large extent upon the degree of political consensus which prevails amongst the parties to the dispute and the other governments concerned. This will usually depend in turn on the nature of the dispute or situation. If the situation involves internal disorder, it will be very difficult