



—United Nations

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. L. B. Pearson, President of the Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

begin another essential work of international peace — the bridging of the deep and deadly gulf which so tragically divides, in the world today, peoples and governments who fought together against aggression a few long years ago.

There is another major problem which confronts the present Assembly in a more acute form than previously. How can national self-expression — a dynamic and essential force in every part of the world — realize itself without setting in motion tensions which will endanger the whole structure of international co-operation.

A year ago in Paris, my distinguished predecessor, Mr. Padilla Nervo, pointed out that the freedom of nations and individuals was an indispensable condition for peace. We must all agree. But the building of a peaceful and progressive world community will only take place if freedom is coupled with responsibility.

There are issues with which you will be called upon to deal, within the limits of the Charter, and which may well impose as severe tests on our world organization as any it has faced in recent years.

The United Nations must, moreover, meet these tests without violating its Charter or without trying to do things it was not meant to do and has not the resources to do.

The United Nations, we should not forget, is not a supergovernment. It is basically a multilateral treaty — though one of tremendous scope and authority — which has been ratified by the great majority of sovereign states and which, by the consent of its members, has set up machinery to serve its purposes of insuring peace and promoting human welfare. Each of us, in helping to achieve this purpose, bears a responsibility toward the people in our own countries.

As members of the United Nations, we also bear a responsibility toward each other. Finally, we share together a responsibility to the world community for seeing to it that the principles of the Charter, and of the international law and procedure which we have slowly but surely been building, are interpreted with judgment as well as vision, and with moderation as well as justice.

I hope that we in this seventh Assembly will discharge honourably and well this threefold obligation. As the delegate whom you have so greatly honoured by election to its presidency, I pledge my own best endeavours to this end.

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