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KEEPING THE PEACE

Lecture by the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson,
Prime Minister of Canada, in the Dag Hammarskjold
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When I received the invitation to speak in this Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Series of lectures, I considered it a privilege to be included among those close collaborators and friends of the late Secretary-General who would be paying tribute to his memory, and to his work, in this way. It is most fitting that in Canada this lecture should be given at Carleton University, from which Dag Hammarskjold received the first honorary degree given by this university and the first offered to him by any Canadian university.

I have chosen the subject "Keeping the Peace" because Mr. Hammarskjold gave so much of himself to the task of developing the peace-keeping work of the United Nations. Indeed, he was on active service for peace when his life so tragically and so prematurely ended.

Dag Hammarskjold died, as he would have wished, in the service both of peace and the United Nations. I had the privilege of knowing him well and of working with him at the United Nations during some difficult years. I admired and respected the high character of the man and the great qualities of the statesman. He was tireless and selfless and wise. He was as sure and as resolute in carrying out instructions from the United Nations for international action in the cause of peace as he was skilful and objective in seeking to establish a basis for that action in the Charter.

His life was a triumph of service and achievement and his passing at the very height of his career was a tragic loss. His death must continue to inspire us all to do what we can to secure the triumph of the cause for which he died, peace and security in the world, through the United Nations.

At a press conference early in 1959, Dag Hammarskjold said this:

"The basic policy line for this organization is that the United Nations simply must respond to those demands which may be made of it. If we feel that those demands go beyond the present capacity, that in itself, from my point of view, is not a reason why the organization should refuse to respond, because I do not know the exact capacity of this machine. It did take the very steep hill of Suez; it may take other and even steeper hills. I would not object beforehand unless I could say, and had to say in all sincerity, that I knew what was asked

of the United Nations could not be done. So far, I am not aware of any question which has been raised which would cause me to give a negative or discouraging reply. For that reason, my policy attitude remains that the United Nations should respond and should have confidence in its strength and capacity to respond."

In this lecture, I am concerned with ways and means of increasing that "strength and capacity to respond".

To this end I wish to review developments in the field of United Nations peace-keeping in order to illustrate the various demands which have been made of the organization and its response to them. I hope, as well, to suggest ways in which the capacity to respond can be strengthened, as it must be strengthened, if the United Nations is to fulfill its primary purpose of maintaining peace and security in future.

Intervention for War

As the nineteenth century came to an end, governments were beginning to think about international organization to prevent war. But, in the main, they continued to rely for security on their own power, supplemented by military alliances which had replaced Metternich's earlier "Concert of Europe". Like the little old lady in Punch of 1914, they consoled themselves with the thought that, if threats to the peace occurred, such as the assassination of an Archduke in a Serbian town, "the powers are sure to intervene". After the shot at Sarejevo they did so - against each other and for national ends. The war to end war was on.

After World War I, experts on international affairs debated whether it could happen again. They hoped that it could be avoided by strengthening collective security. They looked to the new League of Nations for this. But most governments still showed a preference for arms and military pacts. When collective security and sanctions under the Covenant were advocated, it was primarily with a view to possible use against Germany. Later, in Italy's attacks on Ethiopia, the League rejected effective international action for peace. In consequence, we lost the race with rearmament, while Hitler and Mussolini scorned the treaties intended to maintain the balance of power. "Intervention", a dirty word in the case of Ethiopia, Spain and Czechoslovakia, became a necessity in Poland. Peace in our time dissolved in the global destruction of the Second World War.

Again there was a kind of peace, this time soon followed by "cold war" which had become so intense by the fifties that great-power deadlock was in danger of destroying or rendering impotent the improved League which we now called the United Nations. Yet the world organization, in spite of limitations and with varying success tried to keep the peace on the periphery of potential war - in Greece and Kashmir, in Palestine and Indonesia. Its method was one of persuasion and "watchdog" presence. It seemed a frail basis for collective security in the face of Soviet aggressiveness - and in the shadow of The Bomb.

Since the main Communist challenge at that time was in Europe, the North Atlantic states responded to the weakness of the United Nations by exercising their right of collective self-defence under the Charter. They

NATO to ward off the threat of military attack in the treaty area and, in essence, to safeguard peace by deterring aggression. NATO was not an alternative to the United Nations but a practical and regional means of cementing cracks which had appeared in the Charter security system.

In some ways, the situation in 1950 was unpleasantly like that of 1935. The international peace-keeping machinery was virtually stalled; the powers were once more turning to defence pacts. Tension in Europe remained explosive. A single incident from this tension could, and more than once almost did, result in general disaster.

But the flash of fighting actually occurred on a distant horizon - in Korea. This was no mere incident with possible alarming repercussions. This was an armed aggression, carefully calculated and prepared, and bolstered by the conventional military weapons of the Communist arsenal. It was a direct challenge which had to be met squarely by the Western powers if there was to be any hope of containing Communist military expansion. They were able to use the United Nations for this purpose because, luckily, the Russians stayed away from the Security Council when the Korean resolution was passed. It was an absence not likely to be repeated.

If the great powers had intervened in the manner of earlier times, Korea could have been the spark which ignited nuclear world war. Instead, the conflict was localized by improvising a collective response from the United Nations, by carefully defining the objectives of the United Nations military action and by making effective but limited use of United States military strength. In his thoughtful lecture in this series, Mr. Adlai Stevenson suggested that "perhaps Korea was the end of the road for classical armed aggression against one's next door neighbour". It may also have signified the end of Communist gambling on direct aggression in areas of great-power interest.

Intervention for Peace

In any event, Korea was the beginning of a new development in international affairs - the deployment of armed military force under the control and the flag of the United Nations. At San Francisco, this possibility had been provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter. But the international security force of that Chapter - intended to be the strong arm of an effectively functioning Security Council and to include all its permanent members - withered in the angry cold-war debates of the late forties.

With the Security Council "frozen in futility", the General Assembly, under the stimulus of the Korean emergency, took its own action to give sinew to the United Nations peace-keeping arm.

It adopted certain recommendations under the heading "Uniting for Peace", including one to the effect that each member should maintain within its national armed forces elements so trained, organized and equipped that they could promptly be made available for service as a United Nations unit or units upon recommendation by the Security Council or the General Assembly. The same resolution provided for the General Assembly to act on short notice when there was a threat to the peace and the Security Council had failed to act because of the exercise of the veto.

Neither the procedure nor the collective measures proposed were pursued with any vigour in the next few years. The fighting in Korea died down. The wave of that crisis receded and with it the urge to be ready for time. The Soviet bloc was naturally opposed to the "Uniting-for-Peace" resolution and violently denounced it as a violation of the Charter. In an event, East-West tension had eased after the "summit" meeting at Geneva, and the West lost interest in the matter. In short, great-power deadlock destroyed the hope of establishing the United Nations Security Council force envisaged in the Charter. Inertia and wishful thinking, among members generally, postponed any significant action on the 1950 resolution calling for the alternate of stand-by units. The world community was to wait for another crisis.

It came in 1956, mounting with increasing menace in the Middle East. In late October, Israeli armed forces raced to the Suez Canal. Britain and France delivered their ultimatum and moved in. The Soviet Union and later Communist China issued threats. War seemed imminent and the United Nations was called upon to intervene for peace.

The main demand was to end the fighting and bring about the withdrawal of the British and French forces. What was needed to accomplish this was an impartial military force to secure a cease-fire and withdrawal and to supervise a buffer zone, first near the Canal and later along the line dividing Israel and Egypt. Some security had to be restored after the shock of fighting, the humiliation of defeat, and the frustrations of withdrawal. But the United Nations force to be organized for this purpose would do no fighting except self-defence and would rely mainly on its presence as representing the United Nations to accomplish its aims. "Intervention" by the United Nations was to acquire new meaning.

Problems of Ad Hoc Peace-keeping

The "Uniting-for-Peace" procedure had made it possible for the Assembly to meet in emergency special session to deal with the Suez crisis. It was able quickly to adopt broad directives governing the establishment and functioning of UNEF. But the Secretariat found little on their files concerning collective measures which might give a lead on how to proceed. It was a new course on new ground. Some experience could be drawn from the earlier activities of the military observer groups but no real precedent existed for a major, genuinely United Nations military operation which had to be carried out with speed, efficiency and even daring, if it were to succeed.

The Secretary-General and the participating governments had to start virtually from zero. There was no time for detailed planning, either in New York or in national capitals. An international command staff had to be gathered in the Canal Zone, and an ad hoc team of military advisers assembled overnight at the United Nations headquarters. Contingents, selected from the offers made, had to be moved to Palestine within a few days after the adoption of the Assembly resolution.

That UNEF did succeed in its initial tasks can largely be attributed to the ingenuity, skill and energy of Dag Hammarskjöld; to the solid core support which existed in the Assembly; and to the prompt response of the governments which provided the original contingents; finally, to the fact

the parties directly concerned with the Suez conflict consented to the stationing and functioning of the force in the area.

There were many anxious days in the long weeks from November 1956 to March 1957, when the withdrawal from Egyptian territory was completed and the United Nations force was fully deployed. There was noisy and acrimonious debate. There was also quiet and earnest consultation. At times it looked as though the UNEF experiment might fail, mainly because of political objections but also because of practical difficulties of establishing, organizing and directing an international force which was the first of its kind in history.

A major question for Canada was the nature of its own participation. Our experience was revealing. To support our political initiative in the Assembly, the Government offered to provide a self-contained infantry battalion group. But after these troops had begun to move to the port of embarkation, it emerged that, of some two dozen offers of military assistance to the United Nations, most were infantry units and practically none included the supporting and technical services which the force would need - including an air component. Since the great powers were not participating in the force, Canada was one of a very few countries which was able, because of its military know-how and experience, to provide administrative and logistic specialists. In the end, the Canadian contingent included reconnaissance, transport, maintenance and supply units of the Canadian Army, and an observation and transport squadron of the RCAF. They were sneered at by some in the heat of partisan debate as a typewriter army, but they were indispensable to the success of UNEF. They played, and are still playing, a courageous and essential role.

This last-minute need to re-organize the Canadian contingent was not only a source of political embarrassment but a cause of delay in getting Canadian troops to Palestine. Both could have been avoided if there had been advance United Nations planning for such peace-keeping operations and co-ordinated preparations in the military establishments of the contributing countries.

Similar problems - the political problem of achieving balanced composition and the practical problem of finding qualified units and personnel for maintaining a mixed force - arose when the Congo crisis broke in 1960 and the United Nations was again asked to provide a peace-keeping force. There was no lack of infantry contingents and it was very desirable that the countries of Africa should provide most of them. Technical units and specialists were also needed, however, and national establishments had to be combed for suitable personnel.

The UNEF experience was available because the Secretary-General had produced a very useful study in 1958. But the United Nations faced a very different situation in the Congo and the demands on its military force were much more complicated. Quite apart from the political difficulties, which multiplied as the operation progressed, once again, as in the case of UNEF, there were technical delays and administrative and other difficulties.

Again our own experience can be cited. For both UNIF and ONUC, mainly because of the nature of our participation, it was necessary to organize new Canadian units to form the contingent. This caused some disruption in our

armed services, for specialists had to be drawn from units and formations already committed to other tasks. While the personnel were well trained in their technical duties, they had been taught, as part of their regular training, to think and act as fighting soldiers. In a peace-keeping role, largely passive and supervisory in nature, the troops were called upon to perform unaccustomed and difficult duties, often without clear directions.

I do not wish to leave the impression that the Canadian armed services in both the Suez and the Congo did not respond to United Nations needs with speed, efficiency, tact and inventiveness. The opposite is true. They were magnificent. What I do suggest is that the launching of these two vital peace-keeping operations - from the point of view both of the United Nations and of participating countries - would have been accomplished more easily and effectively if steps had been taken in advance to ensure technical and other forms of preparation for this kind of peace keeping.

Now I am aware that earlier conditions are not likely to be duplicated when the United Nations embarks on a peace-keeping mission. The political circumstances vary; the composition of the force usually has to be adjusted to suit them; the climate and terrain in the area of operations may be quite different.

We also have to recognize that the kind of United Nations presence required may vary greatly from situation to situation. Mr. Hammarskjold spoke about the "uniqueness of the UNEF setting". He maintained that such a force could not have been deployed in Lebanon or in Jordan in 1958, although there was a need for other forms of United Nations presence on these occasions in which unarmed military observers were able to play a significant part in restoring stability. Similar operations - but with local variations - were carried out more recently in West New Guinea and in Yemen.

The method of operation has to be adapted to each situation. The truce-supervision teams in Kashmir and Palestine investigate complaints about incidents; the observers in Lebanon, moving about in jeeps and helicopters, sought to check the illegal entry of arms and infiltrations. In Gaza, UNEF had been stationed at fixed posts. In the buffer zone and in Sinai it has engaged in mobile reconnaissance on the ground and in the air. In the Congo the force has occupied key points in the main centres of the country. In some areas, the task has been one of patrolling demilitarized zones; in others of calming and controlling local populations; and, in still others, of persuading opposing factions to refrain from hostile acts.

The very fact that forces are composed of national contingents with their own military traditions and methods and disciplines adds to the complexity of the operation. Language can be a barrier, and problems of supply a difficulty. The many variations which occur require careful organization, through training and standardization of procedure.

But, in spite of all the difficulties and differences, the shocks and surprises, the United Nations has shown itself capable of brilliant improvisation and has succeeded in making its peace-keeping presence effective. Its record of achievement has been good; all the more so because it was never prepared to be prepared.

Cyprus Dilemma

How can we be complacent about this chronic state of unpreparedness; this necessity of improvising during a crisis when failure could mean war? Today in Cyprus, the United Nations is facing another severe test of its capacity to respond, without preparation, to a challenge to peace. On tomorrow's horizon, there may be other sudden and equally exacting demands. The halting response which the organization made, after the Cyprus issue had been raised in the Security Council, reflected the deep-seated political dilemma which handicaps the United Nations peace-keeping role. It also served to remind us again that the protection of international peace should not be left to preparations made on the brink, to ad hoc arrangements and hasty organization.

Hesitations and difficulties over Cyprus were increased by division among the great powers. But this was a normal situation in the United Nations and outside it. More disturbing was the widespread disinterest or suspicion on the part of many middle and small powers. Some were too preoccupied with national and regional interests, which dulled their sense of danger at tensions smouldering in other parts of the world. Others had grown weary of the burden of international crises, and of finance, which, in recent years, has fallen heavily on the shoulders of a few states. All-pervading also was the suspicion that the Cyprus conflict was just too difficult and too domestic for United Nations treatment. It was too small a local tail to wag such a big international dog.

But, as in the Suez and the Congo, the United Nations, while hesitant and unprepared, did not abandon its peace-keeping responsibilities, thanks to the initiative taken by certain of its members.

So we can take comfort from the fact that in the Cyprus crisis, occurring even before the liquidation of the Congo problem, the Security Council decided to establish a force in that troubled island; that five member governments agreed to provide contingents and ten to make contributions to the voluntary fund for financing the operation; that the force became quickly operational and that a mediator was chosen who took up his difficult assignment without delay.

While this result gives cause for satisfaction, it should not blind us to the need, demonstrated once more, to organize, plan and prepare in advance for prompt United Nations engagement in peace-keeping operations. It has become glaringly apparent that the organization and its individual members must improve their capability to act quickly. I believe that there is a growing resolve to do this, reflecting a conviction that United Nations preparedness in the field of peace keeping falls far short of the urgent demands being made on the organization with increasing frequency.

The requirements of peace preservation in the future may not always be satisfied by skilful improvisation and by the willingness of a few to do their duty. The growing interest in improving peace-keeping methods must be broadly stimulated into advance planning and preparation. Canada, I know, is resolved to draw on its own experience in a way which will give leadership and encouragement in this effort.

Preparedness for Peace-keeping Operations

What can be done, then, to prepare the United Nations for the kind of peace-keeping operations which we have seen in the past and others which we can expect in future? Ideally, the organization should have its own permanent international force in being, under its orders, for peace-keeping duties. But this is not now feasible for political reasons.

As a next best, all member governments should have elements in their armed services earmarked, trained and equipped for United Nations service; ready for call to such service. There should be a military planning staff in United Nations headquarters to co-ordinate the national preparations and to improve the operating procedures of the organization.

It has become apparent in the past ten years, however, that formal action by and in the United Nations to achieve even these limited ends is not immediately feasible because of political and practical difficulties. The most recent occasion when the United Nations showed some disposition to deal with the question of stand-by arrangements was in 1958. Dag Hammarskjöld had made his report on the experience derived from the establishment and functioning of UNEF. A number of countries, including the United States, wished to take action in the General Assembly, based on that report. Political circumstances, however, were not favourable. United States support roused all the worst Soviet suspicions. So the matter was dropped. The report was not even discussed by the Assembly.

The Soviet bloc remained firmly opposed to any international security or peace-keeping force or any plan for such a force. The West were not willing to force the issue. The Arab world had been rocked by disturbances in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Some non-aligned countries, suspicious of Western motives and not wishing to become involved in East-West argument, were unwilling to authorize the United Nations to put force behind international decisions and organize for the purpose. They failed to appreciate that, by strengthening the United Nations capacity to meet threats to the peace, they would be strengthening as well their own security and creating conditions favourable to the economic and social development which they so badly needed.

Since that time - 1958 - there has been some shift in the attitude of member states but not sufficient to ensure the kind of support needed if formal UN stand-by arrangements are to succeed. Nevertheless, the need continues and increases.

A few members have recognized this. Like Canada, they have earmarked units for United Nations service. Following an announcement last year, the Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden - have introduced legislation setting up contingents which are designed for United Nations service and each of which may be used in conjunction with those established in the other Nordic countries.

This is an encouraging development. The Netherlands has followed suit by earmarking troops. There have been indications that other states, representing other geographical areas, have begun to think along those lines.

This is why I proposed recently that, if the United Nations itself remains unable to agree on permanent arrangements for a stand-by peace force, members who believe that stand-by arrangements should be made could discharge their own responsibility, individually and collectively, by organizing such a force for use by the United Nations.

I do not wish to be misunderstood on this point. The stand-by arrangements made by the interested countries, because of existing circumstances in the United Nations, would have to be made outside its constitutional framework. But those arrangements would be squarely within the context of United Nations purposes, within the Charter.

The stand-by contingents which resulted from such an arrangement would not be used unless and until they had been requested by the United Nations to engage in one of its duly-authorized peace-keeping operations. In some situations this stand-by force might not necessarily serve as an entity; only some of its national contingents might be selected to serve. Parts might be used alone or be combined with contingents from other United Nations members not included in the stand-by arrangements. Political requirements would determine its role.

I emphasize this because there has been some disposition to interpret my proposal as an intention to turn away from the United Nations. The whole point of it was to strengthen the capability of the members concerned to serve and support the United Nations.

When I suggested that at first the stand-by arrangements might be confined to half a dozen or so middle powers, I had in mind, of course, the countries which have already earmarked contingents for United Nations service. They would be ready - and willing. Soon, I hope, others would be added until all the continents would be represented.

Co-ordination would be a first requirement. This could be achieved in several ways. The governments concerned could consult closely about the kind of units and personnel which might be needed in future operations. They could perhaps agree to some allocation of responsibility for organizing and training their earmarked contingent. Exchanges of ideas, experience and key personnel could be arranged on a regular basis.

An international staff would be needed to co-ordinate the training and other activities of the earmarked contingents; to analyze and correlate with future needs the experience of past operations; to prepare contingency plans and operating procedures for a variety of situations. No stand-by arrangements would be complete without making provision for such a staff - at least in embryo.

It would be even better if a compact military planning staff could be set up in the office of the Secretary-General, one which could co-operate with the member states who have decided to work together in the United Nations peace-keeping field. It is a matter of some satisfaction that the Secretariat now includes a Military Adviser. He should have a supporting staff to assist him in advising the Secretary-General on the establishment and conduct of military operations. The same staff could be planning ahead for possible peace-keeping missions.

I believe that, if a group of middle and small powers could be persuaded to work together along the lines indicated above, an effective stand-by arrangement could be brought into being.

I do not expect that even the most modest of such arrangements could be accomplished quickly. Nevertheless, the Canadian Government is determined to push ahead toward this goal. We have been considering plans for confidential discussions with certain other governments, primarily of military problems arising out of past and current peace-keeping operations. As a first stage, such discussions would be confined to countries which have taken steps to establish stand-by units for United Nations service. Later they might be extended.

Out of these discussions may come suggestions for improving the United Nations ability to conduct peace-keeping operations and for strengthening and co-ordinating arrangements for national participation in these operations. That is what I intended when I suggested at the eighteenth General Assembly that there should be a "pooling of available resources and the development in a co-ordinated way of trained and equipped collective forces for United Nations Service".

We shall be following up these exploratory talks with a more formal approach to the other governments concerned. We have reason to hope that they share Canadian views on the need to improve on the present improvised and haphazard approach to peace keeping.

My concentration so far on the organization and employment of military force reflects my deep concern about the present operation in Cyprus as well as a conviction which I have held for many years.

However, just as the United Nations is not the only instrument for keeping the peace in today's world, international military force is not the only peace-keeping United Nations machinery which should be readily available. There remains a growing need for unarmed supervisory teams, for experienced mediators and conciliators. This need should also be planned for.

Arising out of past operations, the United Nations has been able to compile an impressive list of individual soldiers and civilians who have demonstrated their qualification for serving as impartial international servants. Some member governments are aware of the need to keep this list up-to-date and up to strength. They have been proposing additional names to it. They know that there will be more situations requiring the prompt dispatch of observers and mediators ready and able to serve the organization.

In many cases, the functions performed by an international force more closely resemble those of the police than the military. This is especially true in a country experiencing the breakdown of internal order or torn by civil disturbance.

Police training is not usually a part of military training but it should be, under any stand-by arrangement for an international peace force. I would go further. If the United Nations, as such, cannot now organize its own peace-keeping force, it should at least recruit a small professional

international police force specifically trained for such duties as traffic and crowd control, property protection, escort duty and crime investigation. Cyprus is showing the importance of having such a police force to supplement the soldiers.

Mr. Trygve Lie, the first Secretary-General, had this kind of force in mind when he put forth his proposal for a United Nations Guard in 1948. His proposal, like many others at that time, was a casualty of the cold war. But it had great merit then, as it has even greater merit today, in the light of recent experience of the United Nations in the field of peace keeping.

Whatever may be the role of United Nations representatives in the field, it will always call for special qualities, in civilians and soldiers alike. They must make a quick transition from being a loyal citizen of one nationality to being a member of an international team with loyalty to the organization and the Charter.

This means that training for UN service is of particular importance. Such training - military or para-military or civilian - should have a certain uniformity in all countries likely to participate in peace-keeping operations. It should take into account the training requirements of individual units. It should include a substantial content of United Nations philosophy. Personnel of all categories should be educated in the aims and purposes of the United Nations, in its political methods and administrative procedures, in the significance of the peace-keeping role.

This is particularly true for the soldiers of all ranks, who have been trained to be non-political and to owe one allegiance. It is a tribute to the character and discipline of United Nations troops that there have been very few instances in which they have broken the code of international service.

In the tasks of separating armies, supervising truce lines or calming hostile factions, the United Nations soldier will be frequently called upon to exert a mediatory rather than a military influence. He will be required to display unusual self-restraint, often under severe provocation. In many cases, an explosive situation can be brought under control through coolness, good humour and commonsense. And this applies not only to high-ranking officers but to NCO's and other ranks.

Behind this self-restraint and commonsense there must, however, be force. The problem of the use of such force in United Nations peace-keeping operations can be a complicated and difficult business, especially for the commander on the spot. But the basic principles are clear enough and follow logically from the initial premise: that a UN force is a peace force and there is no enemy to be defeated. Therefore, the UN does not mount offensive actions and may never take the initiative in the use of armed force.

This means the use of arms by a United Nations force is permissible only in self-defence and when all peaceful means of persuasion have failed. It is important to appreciate, however, what is involved in this right of self-defence. Thus, when forcible attempts are made to compel UN soldiers to withdraw from positions which they occupy under orders from their commanders,

or to disarm them, or to prevent them from carrying out their responsibilities. UN troops should be and have been authorized to use force.

What can be done in any situation depends on the mandate given the force. It is always open to the Security Council or the General Assembly as the case may be to enlarge this mandate and authorize the use of the necessary amount of force to achieve specified objectives. This was done during the Congo operation as the developing situation required, and with the aim of preventing civil war clashes and apprehending mercenaries. The mandate thus determines the extent to which any UN peace-keeping force can employ arms for the discharge of responsibilities which have been clearly assigned to it.

In this lecture I have put forward some modest proposals whereby the United Nations could be better prepared for keeping the peace. There are, however, two large and related issues which make such proposals difficult to carry out. The first is financial. The second, and more important, is political.

We know that for the past few years the United Nations has been teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. There have been heavy burdens assumed in the Middle East and the Congo. A number of member states -- including the great powers -- with full capacity to pay have failed to assume their share of these burdens and pay their share of the costs. Others have been slow in paying, even when reductions were granted to take into account their relative incapacity to pay.

This is a deplorable, indeed an intolerable, situation for a world organization established to maintain peace and security. It is especially urgent in view of the growing demands for peace-keeping operations, which have demonstrated not only their worth but their cost. The situation is moving toward a climax this year because a number of states, including the Soviet bloc, now have accumulated arrears of payment which make them subject to Article 19 of the Charter, which provides for the loss of vote in the General Assembly. When it next meets, the Assembly will have to deal with this critical situation, which has far-reaching political and financial implications, unless steps have been taken in the meantime by those in default to liquidate their arrears.

Canada is convinced that the principle of collective responsibility is the only sensible basis for financing peace-keeping operations. We believe that Article 19 was intended to provide, and should provide, the sanction for that principle. We do not seek to force this issue but we are ready to face it if the delinquent states are not prepared to join in a search for a constructive solution. The financial dilemma must be solved.

Even more important is the political conflict which underlies finance and everything else. This conflict has made it all the more necessary to re-define the political basis for United Nations action in the field of peace preservation. It has also made such re-definition more difficult to bring about. The powers and function of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General have to be clarified in an agreed manner. In particular, the Security Council needs to reassert its authority in a way which will be effective when the peace is threatened.

To exert its proper influence, the Council should be enlarged to permit a balanced composition in its membership with equitable representation for all geographical areas. It must be made more capable of preserving the peace. For this, its functions may have to be modified to meet the changing situation in the world.

The United Nations must put its house in order so that it can exercise to the full its responsibility for maintaining peace and security. Stand-by arrangements for peace forces and for the other forms of United Nations presence are part of that process. But this does not embrace the whole responsibility for keeping the peace in our nuclear age.

The world organization, as such, plays its part but the individual members cannot escape their own responsibility for maintaining peace, for refraining from the use of force in the pursuit of national policy; for leaving aside short-sighted and debilitating manoeuvring, designed for national, regional, or ideological purposes.

The great powers have a special responsibility in this regard. The Charter gives them a position of privilege but it also imposes a corresponding obligation to co-operate and show the way in preventing war and securing peace; to strive to avoid major clashes among themselves and to keep clear of minor ones.

The middle powers also have their own position of responsibility. They are and will remain the backbone of the collective effort to keep the peace as long as there is fear and suspicion between the great-power blocs. They have a special capacity in this regard which they should be proud to exercise.

Finally, there is the particular responsibility of the parties themselves to a dispute. U Thant, the courageous and worthy successor to the Secretary-Generalship, underlined this in his report to the Security Council last week on Cyprus: "It is the parties themselves who alone can remedy the critical situation of Cyprus. The authorities...must, with a high sense of responsibility, act urgently to bring completely to an end the fighting in Cyprus, if that island is to avoid utter disaster." This meant, he added, a voluntary and immediate renunciation of force as the first essential to finding a peaceful solution of the problems of Cyprus.

The United Nations can and will assist the process of peace making whenever it is given the chance. Its peace forces can restore and have restored the conditions necessary to a peaceful solution of a dispute when they are permitted to operate effectively.

I know that for this purpose and in the long run the political conflicts, and above all the East-West conflict, inside the United Nations must be resolved or at least reduced.

But there is also a growing necessity for planning and preparation so that the machinery for peace making can operate swiftly and effectively even under present conditions and when required.

To this end, we must do what we can now; and hope that we will soon be able to do more.

In this effort Canada has played and I know will continue to play a good and worthy role.

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