



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 67/12

CANADA'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING EFFORTS

Lecture by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the First Series of the Jacob Blaustein Lectures, Columbia University, New York, April 26, 1967.

It is appropriate to begin this series of lectures with the subject of Canada's role in supporting UN peace keeping. Keeping the peace is the primary purpose of the United Nations and is, therefore, of great significance in itself. I have in mind more especially, however, that Canada's policies in support of peace keeping are particularly relevant to an understanding of the Canadian outlook on the world. For reasons which have to do with our geography, our resources and our relatively recent development as an independent state, we have chosen, perhaps unconsciously, to concentrate a good deal of our foreign policy energies in the realm of international organization. It would not be fanciful to suggest that, having few illusions about the past to shape our conception of the national interest, we have tried to frame our policies more fully in terms of future international requirements and responsibilities. It so happens, as well, that to play our distinctive part in the building of international institutions corresponds to the Canadian urge to look outwards, to find, if we can, a counterweight to the enormous, if benign, influence of our great neighbour. We have been fortunate, moreover, to have had some extra margin of wealth and stability to devote to these purposes. If my remarks suggest, therefore, that Canada's interests often coincide to a degree that is unusual with the efforts of the UN to keep the peace, I shall be well satisfied.

Some of you will be accustomed to reading in the press about stalemate, deadlock or failure at the UN on the subject of peace keeping. These reports are, of course, discouraging. Yet they are also partial. They do not reflect the fact that, while there is disagreement in New York, there is action in the Middle East, or in Cyprus, or in Africa, which helps to preserve the peace. On the one hand, the General Assembly has not been able to reconcile the differences which divide member states over questions of principle, but, on the other hand, these same member states have responded to clear and urgent requirements to initiate and to keep in being UN forces and teams to patrol, to supervise and to conciliate.

The disagreements are hardly surprising. For the first time in human history, something resembling a world community is emerging from the dissolution of empire and the simultaneous spread of technology. Everywhere men pursue the same goals. Yet few are able to measure significant progress in reaching them. Disparities in national wealth, the indignities of racial discrimination, the rivalries stimulated by artificial boundaries and uncertain loyalties -- all of these generate tension and conflict on a scale which is world-wide. Yet, if the complexities are greater, so is our determination to act together to find solutions.

If we do not act together, then the dangers of losing control are all too familiar to our post-Hiroshima generation. Every schoolboy has heard the term "escalation" and knows immediately to what it refers. This, too, is a new phenomenon. In the past governments have been prepared to go to war if necessary to gain their ends or to defend their interests, knowing that defeat, while never expected, would not destroy the nation state itself. Today no government can take or contemplate military action, whatever the reason, without a strong sense of the limits beyond which all such action would be suicidal.

Thus, on the one hand, the conditions which make for conflict and the use of armed force in world affairs are of unprecedented scope. On the other hand, the potential effects of modern weapons impose on the conduct of states and the calculations of statesmen unprecedented limits. In these circumstances, the UN is bound to be both a battlefield and a conference room. It must reflect as well as contain the impulse for change. It has served, in the words of one student of the subject, as the registrar of prudential pacifism.

The conditions I have just described were not all foreseen by the founders of the UN. Certainly, none would have imagined a membership of 122 states after only 22 years. Nor could they have anticipated that one of the major premises of the Charter would prove to be unworkable. This was the assumption that the permanent members of the Council would co-operate in order to maintain peace. True, the statesmen of 1945 were not so naive as to expect such co-operation to be automatic. But they did assume that without great-power understanding the security system laid down in the Charter would not function. The governments which had won the war were quite naturally determined that it should not happen again and that the combined strength of China, France, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and the U.K. should serve to deter any potential aggressor. If these powers could not agree, it was thought, then no security system could save the peace.

It was not until later that peace keeping by consent, as we now understand it, and by the lesser powers, came to be regarded as the standard form of UN military action. It was this reversal, however, which enabled Canada to participate in peace keeping in quite unexpected ways. Instead of the great powers banding together to threaten any aggressor with overwhelming force, the middle and small powers were called upon to police situations which otherwise might have led to great-power intervention.

Canada emerged from the Second World War with military capacities and economic strength second only to that of the great powers. It had developed close working relations with the U.S.A. and British Governments, and from an early stage was consulted about the post-war institutions and arrangements which were under discussion by these powers. It was aware, therefore, both of a new-found status in world affairs and anxious to enter into commitments which would satisfy this status. Bismark is said to have once remarked about a European rival that it had developed an appetite for power without the teeth. About Canada it might have been said after the war that it had developed both the appetite and the teeth for a new international role. This was in sharp contrast with Canada's pre-war policies, which, by and large, had been directed to avoiding commitments and involvement in the affairs of the world even though it remained a member of the League of Nations.

At San Francisco, therefore, Canada directed its efforts towards strengthening the provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals in respect of the rights and responsibilities of the so-called middle powers. Canada pressed strongly for the adoption of qualifying rules for election to the Security Council which would recognize the contributions member states might make to the maintenance of international peace and security. This idea was incorporated into Article 23 of the Charter. Canada was also responsible for the adoption of what became Article 44 of the Charter, providing for consultation between a member state and the Council before the latter called for the provision of that member's armed forces for enforcement action. The Prime Minister of Canada explained at the time that the imposition of sanctions would "raise especially difficult problems for secondary countries with wide international interests" because, while the great powers would be able to prevent by the veto any decision to impose sanctions, the so-called secondary countries would apparently not have any choice in the matter, despite the possibility they would be called upon to participate. Thirdly, Canada was responsible for the provision of the Charter now incorporated in Article 24(3) which requires the Security Council to report periodically to the General Assembly. The purpose was to give the Assembly some sense of supervision of the Council's acts, although it has not turned out that way. On all these issues, Canada pursued policies which were consistent with its wartime record and its post-war position as a leader of the secondary powers.

In subsequent years, Canada continued to look for and to follow policies which satisfied these general capacities and needs. We fully expected to play our proper part in the building of the collective security system sketched in Chapter VII of the Charter and we were alarmed and disappointed by the early signs of disunity in the Security Council and by the breakdown in 1947 of negotiations between the permanent members of the Council on the question of UN armed forces. We were obliged to turn elsewhere for the satisfaction of our security requirements. Yet, even as we ratified the NATO Treaty in 1949, we did not despair of the UN's capacity to fulfill its primary purpose. The present Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Lester Pearson, said in Parliament at the time, for example, that "the North Atlantic Treaty will serve as an instrument which...will make it possible for (the free democracies) to use the UN with greater confidence and more hope of success".

The UN action in Korea was an apparent fulfillment of these hopes. Canada regarded it as the first effective attempt by the UN to organize an international force to stop aggression. We had contributed for the first time to a UN peace-keeping operation when military observers were sent to Kashmir in January 1949. We had also supported the Secretary-General's proposal for a UN field service. But it was not until 1950 and the opportunities provided by the decision to resist aggression in Korea that we began to organize the procedures and to think in the terms which we have followed since.

The Canadian Army Special Force, raised for service in Korea, would, we hoped, have a continuing function in carrying out Canada's obligations under the UN Charter. We urged other member states to earmark national contingents so as to be better prepared to resist aggression if and when called upon to do so by the UN. We welcomed the establishment by the Assembly of a Collective Measures Committee, to look into the details of joint military planning. We appointed a representative to a UN Panel of Military Experts. Yet, once the Korean emergency had passed, the UN was to hear little more of these bodies. For the members of the NATO alliance, in particular, the strains and pressures arising from the military build-up in Europe soon pushed into the background the schemes for strengthening the UN. Moreover, after 1955 the character of the UN began to change. New member states added their distinctive interests to the torrent of talk and paper. The Western members no longer enjoyed the influence they had been able to bring to bear five years before.

In 1956, however, the development of crisis conditions in the Middle East enabled the UN once again to take measures which revived Canada's interest in defining its contribution to collective security. It was the UN Emergency Force which was to be the fruitful precedent for the growth of the concept of peace keeping. For the first time, organized military forces were deployed and commanded without participation by the permanent members and outside the framework of the cold war. Canada made a special contribution to the ideas behind the new Force, as well as providing its first Commander. On the one hand, it was a matter of urgent importance to us that some way should be found to bridge the gap which had opened up between our traditional European allies and the U.S.A. On the other hand, we saw in the situation an opportunity to implement the ideas we had put forward six years before at the time of Korea.

This is not the place to describe the characteristics of peace-keeping forces as they were defined by Mr. Hammarskjold in the light of the UNEF experience. What I wish to emphasize is that the lesson we drew from our participation in the Force was a further refinement of the earmarking idea. In addition to the desirability of governments themselves earmarking contingents for peace keeping, we concluded that the UN Secretariat must be enabled to plan ahead in advance of the next emergency. It was just ten years ago that the present Prime Minister of Canada proposed, in an article which appeared in Foreign Affairs, that governments be invited to signify a willingness to contribute contingents to the UN for non-combatant purposes and that some central UN machinery be created to make advance arrangements and to direct future operations. Since 1957, Canada has itself made arrangements for units of its armed forces to be on standby duty for possible service with the UN.

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

to lay down a clear-cut mandate. There will be other kinds of situation where the degree of consensus existing in the Council is so fragile that nothing can be agreed other than a general instruction to prevent conflict or to supervise a truce.

It may be that it will be clearly preferable for the UN to intervene in these circumstances than for some other organization or government to do so without reference to the UN. We may have to accept that the Force Commander and the Secretary-General will have little guidance. However, we should only come to this conclusion, I believe, after having accepted the risk that inadequate terms of reference might do serious harm to the prestige of the UN and to its future effectiveness. There will be no easy answers. But the Canadian Government will be bound to give more searching examination to requests for assistance if it is not satisfied that the mandate provides sufficient guidance for the conduct of the troops on the ground.

There is a related point. Even if defined satisfactorily at the beginning of an operation, the mandate may be subject to interpretation or gradual erosion. Freedom of movement, for example, is particularly important for the carrying out of any mission which involves observation of frontiers or the supervision of a return to normal conditions. Generally, it will be in the interest of the parties that such movement be as unrestricted as possible. But there will also be occasions when this is not so. It is now an accepted condition of peace keeping that the host government consent to the operations and procedures followed by the UN. Nor in principle must the UN interfere in the internal affairs of the host state. But it must be able to observe, to verify and where necessary to interpose. It will be the more difficult to carry out this task if there is not firm, consistent pressure on the parties to co-operate. Who is to exercise this pressure? It is unfair to expect the Secretary-General to do the job alone. The Security Council must give him the backing he needs. If it cannot do so, then contributors may have no choice but to re-examine their decision to participate in the operation.

A third important conclusion we would draw from our experience is that peace keeping is a beginning, not an end. Perhaps the day will come when the UN is able to provide for forces and to maintain bases around the world on a semi-permanent basis. But that day has not yet arrived. In the meantime, contributions by governments of contingents of their forces for UN peace-keeping purposes will be based on the assumption that the parties to the dispute will get on with the job of settling their differences or re-establishing order. The UN cannot, and must not, be responsible for one party clearly gaining the advantage over the other. As a general rule, peace keeping and mediation should proceed concurrently. The Security Council resolution which authorized the Cyprus Force, for example, also provided for the appointment of a mediator. His report was not acceptable to all the parties to the dispute. But, if the latter do not soon find a solution by their own means, then the process of mediation must begin again.

The financing of peace-keeping operations has been a continuing problem, climaxed by the deadlock which prevented the nineteenth session of the Assembly from functioning normally. We have concluded from that experience that collective responsibility for financing, even on the basis of a special assessment-scale which would take into account the economic capacities of member states and other relevant considerations, is not a principle which, in present circumstances, will be enforced by the Assembly. It is naturally in the interests of the countries which contribute contingents to UN forces that the costs of these contingents should be equitably shared by all, and there is no doubt in our minds that collective assessment based on a special scale is the most equitable method of meeting peace-keeping costs. It is now apparent, however, that such a method of financing will not be enforceable unless the Security Council so decides. What we should hope is that the Council would, in fact, decide on this method in most cases. If no agreement can be reached in the Council on that basis, then the next most satisfactory method of financing, if conditions permit, is for the parties to the dispute to pay the costs. Voluntary contributions may always be solicited as an extra source of funds, where the expenses are heavy and the parties are unable to meet them. But, in that case, the members of the Council, and particularly the permanent members, should be the first, in my view, to contribute their share. The permanent members cannot reasonably claim a preponderant voice in decisions to keep the peace if they will not help finance operations which they have authorized.

The final conclusion I should like to draw from Canadian experience with peace keeping is that there is a very delicate balance between the requirements for efficiency and neutrality. In general, I should say, the more candidates for peace keeping the better, even though this may mean some loss of efficiency. Over 40 UN members have participated in one or more peace-keeping operations. I should hope that this number could be substantially increased. It is disappointing that only a few have informed the UN of the kinds of force or service they might be able to provide if requested to do so. Peace keeping ought not to be the business of any one group or of those who can best contribute the facilities and services required. Only when UN forces represent a wide spectrum of the UN membership can we be hopeful that the necessary political support will be forthcoming. All member states should be equally eligible, with two qualifications: the great powers should not usually be asked to participate nor should states with a direct or particular interest in the dispute or situation. Peace keeping, after all, is not only a method of preventing or stopping conflict; it is an international experiment from which the peace-keepers themselves have much to learn and which could be a forcing-house for international military co-operation with immense long-term benefits for world security.

I have spoken of the past and drawn some conclusions which point to the future. Let me now be more specific about how we might improve the UN's capacity to keep the peace. At the last session of the General Assembly Canada co-sponsored a resolution which called for the adoption of a special scale for the financing of peace-keeping operations involving heavy expenditures, and recommended to the Security Council that it authorize a study of the methods of improving preparations for peace keeping. The resolution also invited member states to communicate information to the UN about their own plans and capabilities.

Canada's financing proposals are modest. We accept the fact that, where expenditures are more than, say, \$10 million a year for any one operation, special arrangements must be made to protect the interests of the developing states. We suggest that their share should be fixed at the level of 5 per cent of the total, which is what they now pay for UNEF. This would mean that most member states would pay only nominal amounts, and then only in cases when the Council recommended this method of financing. Naturally, if they agreed to accept a larger share, we should be delighted, but we think 5 per cent is a not unreasonable figure. The rest would be divided amongst the relatively wealthy states, with the permanent members paying the major part.

Financial problems were the superficial cause for the stalemate in the Assembly's proceedings of two years ago. Less was heard about the operational aspects of peace keeping, which have been equally, if not more, controversial. I said earlier that elaborate planning machinery centred in the Secretariat and early agreement on a UN permanent force seems unlikely to be realized soon. We strongly believe, nevertheless, that important improvements can be made.

Let me give some examples. Co-ordinated planning needs to be done on such questions as standard operating procedures, training, logistics, and communications. Model principles might be drawn up for general application in status-of-forces agreements. The question of comparable standards of pay, leave and welfare for troops from different countries has not been studied. Governments with peace-keeping experience might consider providing staff courses for the training of officers from other interested countries. A standard training manual needs to be produced. We ought to consider whether at least some standardization of equipment would be possible and whether such equipment could be stockpiled for distribution as necessary. Communications equipment, in particular, makes a vital contribution to the success of a peace-keeping operation and standardization both of such equipment and communications procedures would be desirable. Air transport is equally relevant to the success of UN missions. Standby procedures and standardized-load tables would be most useful. Military observers are usually available on fairly short notice from some countries, but, as I have already emphasized, it is always helpful for the Secretary-General to be able to call upon as many governments as possible for assistance. Might it not be desirable, therefore, to outline the duties of a military observer and the kinds of abilities which a United Nations observer ought in theory to have?

Who is to make these studies? Objections are held by some member states to the Secretariat engaging in activities which, it is said, are the responsibility of the Military Staff Committee, that long-neglected but still-functioning body established by Article 47 of the Charter. As long as these objections are pressed, the Secretariat would not seem to be able to do the job properly. What, then, about the Military Staff Committee? Its function, as outlined in the Charter, is to advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to the Council's requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security and the employment and command of forces placed at its disposal. It has failed to perform this function because, after the war, the U.S.S.R. was unable or unwilling to reach agreement with the other

permanent members on the numbers and types of United Nations forces. At that time, these forces were to be provided by the permanent members themselves, and it was not surprising, given their very different experiences during the war, that they should find it impossible to agree on the contributions each should make to the United Nations.

The atmosphere of the cold war stifled any further work by the Military Staff Committee, and its functions were afterwards executed by the Secretary-General. Now, however, the theory and practice of UN forces has changed. Their purpose has not been the enforcement of UN decisions against recalcitrant states but the supervision of agreed arrangements. The non-permanent members have become the major troop contributors. A good deal of experience is available for analysis. There may be some basis for believing, therefore, that the Military Staff Committee, enlarged by the addition of several non-permanent members as the U.S.S.R. has proposed, could work out some standard rules and regulations for peace keeping.

Another possible answer to the question I have posed of who is to do the planning is that the governments chiefly concerned should do it themselves, independently of the United Nations. This is a possibility which Canada explored in 1964, when we convened a conference of military experts from 23 governments to consider the technical aspects of United Nations peace keeping. Since that time a somewhat similar conference has been held in Oslo. For our part, we are ready to carry further this process of informal consultation outside the strict framework of the UN whenever circumstances appear to warrant it. We are ready, as well, to produce guide-books and training manuals based on our own experience, and after consultation with other governments concerned, to make them available for the use of the United Nations or of any of its members.

In considering the alternative ways of military planning that I have just described, Canada's principal concern will be the same now as in 1945: if we are to participate in United Nations police actions, then we want to take part as well in the planning and decisions which will lead to those actions. An enlarged Military Staff Committee, on which we would expect to be represented, might be one convenient method of achieving these objectives. In any event, we are prepared to co-operate in whatever arrangements may be made, inside or outside the UN, to improve the UN's capacity to fit its peace-keeping services to the diversity of present world conditions.

I want to take up now the second question I have asked -- how are member states to share the responsibility of peace keeping? This question raises what is, in my view, the central problem of peace keeping -- the procedures of political authorization and control. The primary purpose of the UN is to control conflict -- by consent if possible, by enforcement action if necessary. The use of force or coercion is subject in principle to the agreement of the permanent members of the Council to its use. I say in principle because, while it is clearly the sense of the Charter that coercive action cannot be taken by the UN without unanimous great-power consent, it was also the expectation of the majority of governments at San Francisco that this consent would be forthcoming in cases of acts of aggression or flagrant breaches of the peace. When by 1950 this expectation had proved to be illusory,

the Assembly asserted the right to make recommendations for the maintenance of peace and security, including the right to recommend the use of force to maintain or restore peace if there was a breach of the peace and the Council was prevented from taking appropriate action. Canada was a leading advocate of the Assembly's right to assert this residual power and has continued to be ever since, on the grounds that collective action to stop aggression is the overriding purpose of the organization and must not be frustrated by the abuse of the veto power.

We were confirmed in our opinion by the Assembly's role in the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force in 1956. It has been argued that the recommendation to establish the Force was ultra vires of the Assembly's authority because it is a military force with potential if not actual coercive functions. Whether or not the functions of the Force are defined as peace-keeping or enforcement action (and we have always thought it to be the former) seems to me, however, to be irrelevant to the point that the Assembly can make recommendations for action in the circumstances I have described and that such recommendations serve to implement the purpose of the UN if they obtain the required two-thirds majority.

The view is sometimes expressed that the expansion of the membership of the General Assembly has created a new situation and that peace-keeping operations might now be authorized which would ignore or defy the interests of important member states or even important groups of members. I think this is unlikely to happen because the Assembly is a political body and in politics it is not customary to take actions which are self-defeating. A veto in the Council is one thing. Opposition to UN action by a number of powerful states is another. I think it very improbable that the Assembly would recommend a peace-keeping operation without making some provision for its financing and without knowing whether sufficient personnel and logistic support would be available.

On the other hand, I also think it might not be a bad idea if we were to take another look at the voting procedures of the Assembly. It is now possible to adopt important recommendations by a substantial majority which are quite unrelated to the facts of power in the world. Such recommendations remain "on the books" but they have little or no effect. This is not a procedure calculated to expand the influence of the Assembly or to enhance the prestige of the organization. The Foreign Minister of Ireland proposed two years ago that the Assembly change its rules of procedure in order to increase the number of affirmative votes required for Assembly recommendations on peace and security questions. I believe this proposal deserves careful study.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of this question, however, the fact remains that the argument reflects a deep split between the permanent members of the Council about how to exercise control over peace keeping, and it has blocked any progress on financing and advance planning. As we all know, such conceptions as aggression or threats to peace have always been extraordinarily difficult to define to everyone's satisfaction. They are doubly so today, the era of such phenomena as wars of liberation, subversion and neo-colonialism.

Everywhere the status quo is under attack, often by violent means. The distinction between the internal and external affairs of states becomes blurred as does the very conception of the legitimacy of authority. The danger of great powers being drawn into local conflicts is increasing. It is understandable that these powers should wish to retain control over UN actions which are bound to affect their interests. It is difficult to agree, however, with the view of the U.S.S.R. that this control, including the detailed supervision of peace-keeping operations, be exercised exclusively by the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee. Even if there was a moratorium on the use of the veto, could we reasonably expect a committee of this membership to run peace-keeping operations without delay, disagreement or deadlock?

I do not think so. I believe the present system whereby the Secretary-General directs peace keeping under the guidance of the Council is more in keeping with today's blend of political and military realities. No doubt this system might be improved. In particular, the Military Staff Committee might be able to do some useful advance planning, including the preparation of a model agreement between the UN and contributing governments. It might possibly perform as well some advisory functions during the actual course of an operation. If this were to be done, its membership would need to include the countries actually doing the peace keeping at any one time. Perhaps a compromise along these lines, coupled with a tacit understanding not to pursue the constitutional argument about the powers of the Assembly, might enable us to get ahead. It is futile, in any event, I believe, to insist on constitutional positions which cannot be implemented in practice unless we are to re-write the Charter. The fact is that interventions by the Assembly in the peace-keeping field have been exceptional. If the permanent members act responsibly, it will not have cause to intervene again.

The aspects of peace keeping I have been discussing relate, by and large, to Canada's view of the world from the gallery of the middle powers. I should be guilty of distortion, however, if I did not remind you that Canada is also a Western country with a point of view which is shaped by its alliance commitments and responsibilities. UN efforts to keep the peace, I have suggested, are and will be successful in so far as they serve the interests of the principal groups of members, and especially the great powers. They must tend, therefore, towards neutrality and passivity. The participants as well as the Secretary-General must hope that the balance of interests which brought about the intervention in the first place will generate the pressures that bring a peaceful political settlement. Canada, of course, will exert what influence it can to obtain such settlements. But, unlike the UN as an organization, we cannot always be impartial towards the issues themselves. We must and do reserve the right to state our views on these issues in the framework of our foreign policy. If, in our judgment, the peace-keeping role in any particular case should not be consistent with our conception of a just or speedy settlement or with our national interests, we should not hesitate to decline or to terminate Canadian participation. If we do participate, it is because, in all the circumstances, we believe it to be the most appropriate and most helpful action for us to take.

We have taken that action each time we have been asked to do so. Our general view has been that the UN is the most suitable international instrument to keep the peace. It may not be the best or most efficient. Regional organizations have a prior claim under the terms of the Charter itself, and the more disputes they can help to settle the less burdened will be the UN's agenda. Other disputes do not appear on the agenda because one or more of the parties are not UN members. The UN, however, is more likely to give a fair hearing to complaints and to provide a more generally acceptable procedure for saving face or gaining time. In Dag Hammarskjold's words: "The greatest need today is to blunt the edges of conflict among the nations, not to sharpen them. If properly used, the United Nations can serve a diplomacy of reconciliation better than other instruments available to the member states." Canadians like to think that they serve themselves when they serve the UN.

S/C