



## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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### TASKS FACING UN: CANADIAN VIEW

Address by Mr. Sidney E. Smith, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, September 25, 1958.

The prime purpose of the United Nations in its present phase of development is the pursuit of peaceful settlement and peaceful change, not by force, but by reconciliation. In this process the general debate with which we open our proceedings each year has an important function. It provides an invaluable opportunity for broad exchange of views on the international situation and upon the specific tasks which our organization faces. In the world of today it is not surprising that these declarations of policy by nations, great and small, demonstrate a wide divergence of views as to the methods by which our problems might be resolved in achieving the noble aims of the Charter. This clash of policies -- this urging of certain courses of action as good and the denunciation, sometimes in heated terms, of other courses of action as bad -- which takes place in this forum does, I believe, serve a purpose which is far greater than the mere publication to the world of national policies of member states. This debate -- this exchange of views -- is a part of the process of negotiation and conciliation, a part of our efforts to ensure international peace and security.

I desire, in this spirit, to express to you a Canadian view on some of those matters which we have on our agenda.

#### The Middle East

It is only a few weeks since we met together here in special session on the Middle East. We look forward to receiving from the Secretary-General a report on the implementation of the Assembly's resolution of August 21, passed at the conclusion of that session. I do not wish to say anything which would anticipate the Secretary-General's report, but I do think that we should consider briefly what lessons, what guidance, may be derived from our recent experience in the special session in

order to help us in dealing with the many topics, covering all quarters of the world, which are before us at this session.

We recall first that the Assembly which met in special session last month was a deeply divided and anxious body, many of whose members felt that their interests were vitally at stake in the proceedings. The discussion was, in general, reasoned and moderate in tone; and as we all know, the result was a resolution passed unanimously, to the credit of all member nations. There are grave subjects on our agenda now, on which opinion is also deeply divided, but surely we can hope and expect that the debate on these subjects can be conducted with a similar lack of polemics, and with a similarly reasoned approach. The recent special session has shown us that this is possible, and it has provided an example -- I think an outstanding example -- of the ability of the United Nations, in the words of the Secretary-General last year, to "serve a diplomacy of reconciliation" and, so to speak, "to blunt the edges of conflict among the nations".

The Secretary-General has defined the United Nations as being "an instrument for negotiation among, and to some extent for, governments". The passage of the Arab resolution of August 21 was a recognition that this "instrument for negotiation" is beginning -- perhaps more than beginning -- to constitute a separate entity which is somewhat more than the sum of its 81 parts, something to which the nations can turn when other more traditional means of negotiation and mediation are exhausted.

The "practical arrangements" which the Secretary-General was requested to make under the terms of the resolution of August 21, to uphold the principles and purposes of the Charter, may necessitate some innovation and improvisation in the development of United Nations representation appropriate to the circumstances. It is perhaps symbolic of the shift in world opinion in the face of the awful means of destruction that this latest United Nations initiative appears to foreshadow a civilian -- a diplomatic and political -- approach rather than a military approach on the model of some of the other bodies of The United Nations already functioning in the Middle East.

We must not, of course, be too optimistic in our assessment of the achievements of the special session. No one will draw the conclusion from the events of that session that the mere entrusting of responsibility for negotiation to a United Nations organism or official is in itself any assurance of abiding success, and we do not yet know the outcome of the protracted and very difficult negotiations which the Secretary-General has been conducting in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, the special session did produce a detente, a marked relaxation of tension. It also laid down, or reaffirmed, certain principles to guide the countries of the area in maintaining this detente. We must hope that the countries concerned will continue scrupulously to abide by these

principles; other members of the United Nations can also encourage them to do so, by persuasion, by reassurance, by exercising restraint and by adherence themselves to the general principles outlined in the resolution, both in this and other areas of the world.

Let me emphasize this point again. It seems to my delegation that the noteworthy fact of this United Nations endeavour to serve the cause of peace in the Middle East is this: we have seen the parties to a dispute willingly and spontaneously joining together, with the unanimous assent of the international community, to entrust to a third party, the representative of the United Nations, a task which they had been unable, in their normal relations with one another, to accomplish. We may indeed find this a valuable precedent for future action.

### The Far East

Distinguished representatives have referred to the situation in the Far East, and in our view it is both appropriate and necessary that the United Nations should pay attention to the danger that the conflict in the Taiwan Straits might spread to engulf more than the Chinese off-shore islands. We should then be faced with a very serious threat indeed to the peace of the world. I record that the Canadian Prime Minister, speaking in Parliament on September 6, 1958, said that he thought that people wanted to be assured that nothing would be left undone to prevent any action that might result in the world sliding into disaster. And he suggested that it might devolve upon the United Nations to exercise responsibility in this direction.

Well, Mr. President, I think we were all encouraged by the fact that the representatives of the United States and of the Peking Government resumed direct negotiations with one another through conversations between their ambassadors in Warsaw. We still hope very earnestly that this quarrel can be settled peacefully, rather than through a resort to force, with all its parlous consequences.

There is, of course, another side to the matter. Peace cannot be won by giving way to force -- that is a lesson which has been learned at heavy cost in our times and we cannot afford to forget it. Negotiations, if they are to mean anything, must not be conducted under the duress of concurrent aggressive military actions. If, therefore, the leaders of the Peking Government wish to take advantage of the possibility of arrangements for a peaceful solution of the present dispute over disposition of the islands being made as a result of negotiations, they must be prepared to enter into an agreement to desist from the use of force. I am bound to say that such a solution would be very greatly helped by a disposition to abandon the threat of force and the techniques of force by the Nationalist Government

as well. If one is to condemn the use of force, one must also condemn provocations to the use of force.

We have looked with hope, therefore, to the Warsaw negotiations to arrest the dangerous drift towards war in the Far East. If, unhappily, we should be disappointed in this, then, Mr. President, I think that we would come to the point when the United Nations must recognize the existence of a serious threat to the peace and examine in what way it could use its good offices to avert a conflagration in the Far East. Such a threat to peace cannot be ignored by the Security Council if bilateral negotiations fail. The Security Council might itself hear the views of the contending parties, or it might be more appropriate in this delicate situation to make use of one or other of the various methods of seeking agreement by private discussion which the United Nations has found efficacious in the past. I doubt, however, if a contentious debate in this chamber would be of present help in the circumstances.

The first necessity is, of course, to put a stop to the firing of guns and other warlike activities. For, so long as the islands are subjected to active blockade and its defenders convoy in their supplies against the blockade, it is obvious that even an accidental armed clash might precipitate a general conflict, even though no one desired it. Surely it is not beyond our power, or our will, to find the basis of a cease-fire under equitable conditions which would give some assurance that peaceful negotiation of the disposition of the islands would, in fact, take place.

Such steps, then, are immediately imperative. We believe also that thought must now be given, by all concerned, to the unravelling of the twisted situation which has produced the present crisis off the China coast. A peaceful solution of the dispute over the Chinese off-shore islands could be a first encouraging step in this direction. The primary responsibility for the distrust and conflict which are at the root of the trouble in Eastern Asia lies in the communist record of aggressive and arrogant behaviour towards those who are not of their persuasion -- a record which can only, in small part, be excused by reference to the past sins of other imperialisms. We dare not forget the past and present activities of Chinese Communism in Korea and throughout Southern Asia, nevertheless, the adjustments necessary for peaceful solutions require us all to examine the contributions which we, on our part, can make toward reconciliation.

#### Disarmament

The small brush fire can easily become a widespread conflagration. The point has been laboured so often that we are in danger of accepting it as a fact of life and not as something which we must avert at all cost. The sacrifice, not just of sovereignty but of historic conceptions of national

policy, is essential if we are to move now towards disarmament. It is foolish to tarry with the argument as to whether disarmament must precede or follow the reduction of political conflicts and tensions. The fact is that we must move simultaneously along both lines.

Despite an unpromising situation at the conclusion of the twelfth session, the course of events in 1958 has been such as to encourage those governments which, like mine, hope to find greater security through an agreed programme of disarmament. The regular processes of negotiation within the United Nations were unfortunately disrupted by the refusal of the Soviet Union to participate in the work of the Disarmament Commission. We deplored that Soviet decision last year and we did so with a deeper conviction by reason of the efforts which we had made, in co-operation with other delegations, to reconstitute the Commission in a way which would warrant the approval of the vast majority of the members of the United Nations. We continue to regret that decision, not only because it has meant that no negotiations within the United Nations have taken place, but also because it was an additional illustration of the slight regard in which the Soviet Union holds the resolutions of the General Assembly. It is the hope of the Canadian Delegation that when our discussions at this session have come to an end the Soviet Union will have adopted a less intransigent position.

Notwithstanding these procedural difficulties, there have been concrete negotiations through other channels. We all take satisfaction from the fact that agreed conclusions were reached at the conference of experts who met in Geneva during July and August of this year to study the possibility of detecting violations of a possible agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests. We, in Canada, were pleased to be able to make some contribution to those discussions. And we have welcomed the statements of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union that negotiations would begin on October 31 by their representatives on the suspension of nuclear weapons tests and the actual establishment of a control system on the basis of the unanimous report of the experts.

We look forward to an agreement among the three powers which have conducted nuclear tests. An agreement which would call for the implementation of a system along the lines which the experts have concluded to be feasible would directly affect many countries. Control posts would be located on the territories of a substantial number of states in addition to the three negotiating powers. Moreover, there are questions relating to the staffing of such posts and to the availability of the information recorded by the instruments at those posts. While agreement on the terms of a suspension of tests would be of direct interest only to those states which manufacture nuclear weapons, the interests no less direct of many states are involved in aspects of the control system. We would expect that,

if a basis for agreement is evolved by the three powers, suitable arrangements would be made for other governments to put forward their views with respect to the distribution and operation of the control system. It will be necessary for us, in so doing, to face the logic of the inescapable fact that these arrangements must apply to countries in Europe and Asia which do not normally participate in United Nations bodies.

The Canadian Government regards the developments which have taken place with respect to nuclear tests as an encouraging start towards a realistic programme of disarmament. We look forward to early arrangements for additional discussions on the technical plane to provide safeguards against the dangers of surprise attack. In our view, the value of a technical approach to specific disarmament problems in a step-by-step programme has demonstrated its worth, and we hope that the procedure may be extended to additional subjects. Such a course would be in keeping with Resolution 1148 which the Assembly adopted last year and which specifically recommended the establishment of groups of technical experts. An obvious example of a question involving technical considerations, to an important extent, is the problem of ensuring that outer space is used exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes. This is, indeed, an urgent problem, and we have before us, as a warning and a guide, our experience with the problem of nuclear weapons, the solution of which has become increasingly difficult with the passage of time.

We are encouraged that progress is being made and we are not disposed to question the procedures which have made such progress possible. It is, nevertheless, our view, which I am confident is shared by all delegations, that the specialized discussions which are in prospect should in some way be brought more closely within the United Nations framework -- without interfering, of course, with their prospects of success.

The conference of experts in Geneva had the advantage of the services of the United Nations Secretariat and I understand that this will also be the case when the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union begin their talks on October 31 of this year. Moreover, we have before us in the form of a United Nations document, the report of the experts. However, the experts attending that conference submitted their report to their respective governments and not to the United Nations. At the very least, I think we should provide for the consideration by the United Nations of the results of the future talks relating to disarmament. I trust that means suited to this purpose will be agreed upon during the course of this session, so that the continuing interests of the United Nations in disarmament may be formally safeguarded. Agreement among the great powers is, of course, of fundamental importance in achieving disarmament, but there is a general world interest beyond that of the major countries involved which can find

expression and satisfaction only through the United Nations.

### Outer Space

I have mentioned the hope of the Canadian Government that a start may be made, perhaps by means of a discussion of the technical details involved, on an effort to develop an agreement which will ensure that outer space will be used exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes. The Canadian Government accordingly welcomes the proposal of the United States that the General Assembly should establish a committee to study the potentialities for international collaboration in the peaceful uses of outer space and to make recommendations for action by the United Nations. Last February, the Prime Minister of Canada spoke of the desirability of establishing an international space agency which would assure that jurisdiction in outer space would be vested in the United Nations and would ensure its use only for peaceful and scientific purposes. We have been devoting attention to the possibilities of international collaboration and we desire to share the results of our studies with any committee which the General Assembly may decide to establish.

### Law of the Sea

Another subject to which I must briefly refer is the Law of the Sea. It will be recalled that, pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 1105 (XI) of February 21, 1957, eighty-six nations gathered in Geneva last February to attend the International Conference on the Law of the Sea. Very significant results indeed were reached at this Conference on a wide variety of questions. The four conventions which were drawn up by the Conference may be said to constitute a code of almost the whole range of maritime law, and stand out as one of the most notable achievements in the recent history of international law. Unfortunately, no agreement could be reached by a two thirds majority vote of the Conference on the difficult and exceedingly important questions of the breadth of the territorial sea and of a coastal state's right to a contiguous fishing zone.

The distinguished representatives are undoubtedly aware that recent events in the North Atlantic area have dramatically, if dangerously, demonstrated the great necessity of reaching agreement on a rule of law for these questions. I think that it is beyond dispute that there is, as illustrated in this area, an urgent need for the adoption by the international community of nations of a rule of law which can serve to reconcile the conflicting interests of various states and which can command the respect of all nations. The present situation regarding the Law of the Sea cannot be allowed to deteriorate further.

At Geneva, the Canadian Delegation put forward a proposal which in its final form would have given states the right to fix their territorial sea up to six miles and a fishing zone contiguous to its territorial sea extending twelve miles from the baselines from which the territorial sea is measured,

in which zone the coastal state would have the same rights in respect of fishing as it has in the territorial sea. Believing as we do that extension of the territorial sea should be curtailed as much as possible in the interest of the freedom of sea and air navigation, we considered that this proposal would meet the growing concern among coastal states for their off-shore fisheries and at the same time obviate the need to extend the territorial sea. It is the goal of the Canadian Government to see such a clear and easily applied formula established as a rule of law.

One of the items on the agenda at this session of the Assembly will be the question of the advisability of convening a second international conference of plenipotentiaries to deal with these matters left unsettled at Geneva. My delegation is convinced that the international community of nations can reach a satisfactory solution on the questions of the breadth of the territorial sea and of fishing rights in the contiguous zone. We believe that the best way to do this is by convening a new international conference at which all members of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies may attend. The convening of such a conference cannot be delayed if we are to stop the situation from steadily worsening. As representative of a country whose motto reads "a mari usque ad mare" and which is confined by three vast oceans -- on the east, west and north -- I can say that Canada is deeply concerned with the present situation and attaches extreme importance to the early solution of these questions. The Canadian Delegation, therefore, intends to give its full support to the convening of a new international conference at the very earliest practicable date.

#### U.N. Peace Machinery

In the course of our deliberations here we will consider an item proposed by the Secretary-General on the experience of the United Nations Emergency Force and the lessons which might be derived therefrom for future United Nations policy. We shall consider with great interest the views of our Secretary-General, whose remarkable accomplishments in this field inspire in us such great respect. He has been a great pioneer himself, and I hope that action by us on the basis of his comments or recommendations may enable us to give him more adequate support when we call on him again, as I am sure we shall.

Members of this organization are aware that Canada has consistently supported UNEF. We have supported and advocated the maintenance of UNEF because it has been effective and we are confident that, as constituted, it will continue to be effective. A glance at the figures regarding incidents which are contained in the Secretary-General's report on UNEF of August 26, 1958, illustrates my point. Not only has the force been able to prevent a resurgence of violence and bloodshed along the armistic demarcation line, but by so doing it has, we are convinced, contributed toward what we hope will be a steady improvement of the political



atmosphere to the point at which fruitful efforts can be made to reach a durable settlement of problems in the area.

Canada would welcome a renewed effort in the direction of more permanent and effective arrangements to meet the requirements of the United Nations. I do not suggest that our summary study in connection with the Secretary-General's report should necessarily constitute the basis for the creation of a permanent United Nations force of the UNEF type. Clearly the employment of a UNEF would not be appropriate in every conceivable emergency situation. However, we think the experience derived from UNEF should serve as a starting point and a useful guide to the drawing up of a blueprint for effective United Nations action to meet various future contingencies. We realize that these contingencies are many and varied and that it is not simple, or even perhaps desirable, to try and specify them.

It is just as important, in our view, to study the precedents set for us by those United Nations emergency agencies, none of which could be described as a force. While in certain circumstances something of the proportions of UNEF may be required, it is often better to make use of the truce-supervision type of body, or something along the line of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon. We Canadians have also had a good deal of experience in these agencies both under United Nations auspices and in the International Supervisory Commissions in Indochina and we believe firmly in their effectiveness under proper conditions. It is worthy of note that the officers of the Commission in Indochina have now completed four years of collaboration with the authorities of the countries in that area in maintaining an international armistice agreement, and they have done so without carrying arms of any kind. The moral authority of an international commission, carrying with it the sanction of the international community, should not be underestimated.

The need for flexibility in our approach to breaches of the peace is made all the more necessary by the complexity and delicacy of the issues which so often confront us. The despatch of armed forces under a United Nations banner is by no means always the best method of dealing with situations in which internal and external forces are engaged simultaneously.

There can be no question as to the interest of the United Nations in preventing any outbreak of violence which may affect international peace and security. There are very grave questions as to how far it may be appropriate or expedient in particular cases for the United Nations to intervene, even in order to prevent a disturbance of the international peace, by measures of force which are not directed against an aggressor, but against one or other of the parties to an armed conflict which is in the nature of a civil war.

The United Nations has no responsibility to maintain by force the established authority of any régime against its people, or to prevent an established régime from putting down rebellion. We cannot go so far as to say that all force in cases of civil conflict is illegal and expect the United Nations to maintain the status quo in every individual country through the world. Clearly, it is equally wrong to suggest that if the régime in power in any country is changed by force from within, that the United Nations should intervene to protect the newly established authority against the old. Nobody contemplates the assumption by the United Nations of any such responsibility and it would be generally expected that no United Nations force or measures of force should be utilized either to aid or to quell internal rebellion. But when a civil conflict develops in such a way that other nations become directly involved, or threaten to intervene, and the international peace is in danger, this great organization cannot be unconcerned. There is room then, in such cases, for the exercise of good offices, for efforts of mediation and conciliation and perhaps, indeed, with the consent of the countries concerned, for the establishment on their territories of some United Nations force or body as a safeguard for the international peace, and to preserve the integrity of a nation from outside aggression. I emphasize that this must be with the consent of the countries concerned because the Soviet representative has attempted to distort our intentions. My country would not be a party to an effort to impose any kind of international police force on the countries of the Middle East or elsewhere. We think the widespread use of the term "international police force" in this connection is perhaps unfortunate. The role of the United Nations is to assist member states to find peace. It could not, even if it would, impose its will upon them in this form.

We have failed to put into effect the provisions of Article 43 of the Charter, under which it was envisaged that the United Nations would have adequate force to intervene in any case of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, and take effective measures to maintain or restore international peace and security. There is no immediate prospect of our reaching agreement on the provision for the United Nations of forces available to act against any country which the United Nations should declare to be an aggressor. We can earnestly hope and pray that the need for them will never arise. In the meantime, we need not fail in more modest efforts to provide less complicated machinery which could take the action necessary to prevent small wars from developing, or to maintain and supervise a peace which has been established. The success which has been achieved by the United Nations Emergency Force and by various observer groups established by the United Nations points to the need of further development of machinery of this kind in order to help the United Nations to discharge its responsibilities.

The increasing importance of the peace-making activities which I have mentioned emphasizes the role of the smaller powers in the United Nations. The assumption of greater responsibility is perhaps good for the souls of the middle powers. It has been all too easy for us to belabour the great powers and find in their sins the causes of all our trouble. It is, not infrequently, the irresponsibility of a lesser power which has involved the United Nations in a crisis, and we should bear in mind that such irresponsibility inevitably encourages the great powers to assume greater authority. The lesser powers are not wiser or more virtuous just because they are smaller. Nevertheless, our lack of the capacity for global aggression and our limited involvement in world affairs do give us the chance to play a peace-making role which is denied by circumstances to the great powers. This represents, to some extent, a shift in the nature of the United Nations as envisaged by its founders. The Charter was based upon the principle of collaboration among the great powers to keep the peace. If this basis is not as yet possible, then it is up to the lesser powers to do what they can in the meantime. We should then be in a sounder position to warn the great powers that the United Nations was not established as a forum in which they could play the game of power politics, and that the lesser powers have roles other than that of pawns in a cold war.

I take this opportunity to pledge the intention of Canada to contribute as can be reasonably required of us to work for peace through the United Nations.

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