

FOREWORD

At a time when the rapid emergence of new states seems to have given new emphasis to the idea of nationalism, it is, I think, more important than ever to focus attention on what progress is being made toward the ideal of world co-operation and the harmonization of national interests. This volume helps to do so. It is offered as a record, from a Canadian viewpoint, of the work of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies during 1959.

I believe that in recent years there has been a better understanding of the limitations imposed upon the United Nations by the political climate of the day since it can but reflect the varied aspirations, antagonisms and fears of its members. In spite of this, the United Nations has proved its value as an international forum for safeguarding peace and for stimulating action in the economic, social and human rights fields. The obligation for member governments to consult together regularly and frequently provides a unique opportunity for negotiation on a wide range of international problems. In the debates the scope and the importance of international problems become clearer as member states define their positions and explain the national interests involved. The practice of exchanges on such a broad international basis can bring home to every member state the extent of the interdependence of nations in the world today.

There are, inevitably, some failures in the United Nations record for 1959. Thorny political questions concerning Hungary, Tibet and Korea remained unresolved. Some "colonial" questions vexed relations between West European powers and the newer states of Asia and Africa. On the credit side, we can look back with satisfaction on the unanimous adoption at the General Assembly of resolutions on disarmament, radiation and outer space. We are heartened, too, by the continued search for new ways to assist in improving the economic and social welfare and the health of the people in less developed areas. While there was no evidence of a desire to impede such possibilities as may exist for the reduction of tension by negotiations conducted on a bilateral basis or among a limited number of countries primarily concerned with particular issues, there was a general determination to respect the role of the United Nations in the settlement of international problems, of which the most important is disarmament. The potential capacity of the United Nations to meet new challenges and to perform new tasks is, of course, enormous. For countries like Canada, which see in this the best hope of the future, maintenance of the ultimate responsibility of the United Nations for international peace and security is a principle of cardinal significance.

I hope that you will find, as I do, cause for encouragement in the record set out in the following pages. There was evidence during 1959 of more relaxed relations between the two great power blocs. The fourteenth session of the General Assembly took place in an atmosphere of reduced