

old-fashioned atom bomb, the effect might well be the same, extinction. According to Russell, and others, after the nations had dropped a certain number of these bombs on each other, radio-active clouds would be formed, which, drifting over the earth, would annihilate everything in their paths. Only a few Eskimo and other isolationists, might survive to give man a second chance.

So what we are really concerned with -- or should be -- is not the ways and means of avoiding a Charge of the Light Brigade war or even a Battle of the Bulge -- which is already, militarily, almost as out of date -- but the means by which the human race can avert wars which must ultimately and literally mean its own extinction.

It is well for us not to forget these things - in the pressure of more immediate problems such as the cost of a pound of butter or the hockey fortunes of the Maple Leafs.

There is another development, however, by which, if it takes place, we may escape the fate that modern science, applied to medieval social and political ideas, is preparing for us. That way is the growth of the United Nations into an organization which will really guarantee security.

The United Nations is not yet very old - two years - about half the time it takes to produce a baby elephant or a graduate in arts at Toronto university. So we have no right to be impatient or unduly critical if all our hopes for the United Nations have not been realized or if its accomplishments have not been great. It took three years to plan D-day, and we may surely be given a little more time than that to bring about the millennium.

It is not the lack of concrete accomplishment that provokes grave doubts about the capability of the organization to do the job it was given, to keep the peace. It is a realization that this may be made impossible by international developments, more particularly by the embitterment and intensification of ideological and political conflicts, between the two super powers, the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., each watching the other across a widening chasm of suspicion and mistrust; each a leader of the two groups into which the world is tragically dividing.

In this political climate, the United Nations, even with a perfect charter, could not guarantee peace and security. In this political climate and with an imperfect charter, the structural weaknesses of the organization are becoming depressingly apparent, and are in their turn exposing and encouraging trends and tendencies which weaken it even further. The fact is that the United Nations was founded on the ability and desire of the great powers to work together for peace. Given that desire, the present charter would be satisfactory and the powers of the organization sufficient. Without that desire, the United Nations is ineffective as a law enforcing and peace preserving agency. It cannot instil any confidence in its ability to chastise speedily and effectively any nation that violates its charter or threatens security. Any such punitive action against a great power is impossible and even action against a small power is virtually so, because most small powers now have big friends.

The expression of this powerlessness - but not the cause of it - is the privilege of the veto which under the charter is given to the Five Permanent Members of the Security Council. In the bad relations between the Great Powers which have now existed for too long a time, that veto-limitation has been enlarged and extended beyond anything contemplated at San Francisco when the charter was drafted. At that time, it was understood, -- indeed it was definitely so pledged by the five states who were to possess it -- that it would be used with responsibility and restraint; only in grave cases where the consequences of a decision might mean war.