

under the present tensions of international society, it would probably be impossible to operate a world association in any sense like the present one. The United Nations is, moreover, a platform where the oppressed peoples of the world, and those who feel they are oppressed, can--unless they are under Communist control, and this is an important though often forgotten exception--voice their grievances, or have them voiced. It is also a medium through which the more materially-advanced nations of the world can co-operate to assist under-developed countries. It is a forum where tensions between at least the lesser powers can be held in check and prevented from resulting in war. The tensions between the world powers can at least be exposed, though I admit the exposure is often painful and exposure can easily be turned to exaggeration and panic. Finally, the United Nations is almost the only remaining institution where free and totalitarian states can meet together and can speak to, or perhaps I should say speak at, one another face to face: a process of which I have some personal experience and which is not always as exhilarating or at least as civilizing as I understand it used to be under the old diplomacy, where the best of manners concealed the foulest intentions.

It is, of course, unfortunate that the United Nations has become to such a large extent an arena for controversy, rather than co-operation; for propaganda, rather than progress. But words, however vitriolic, are less immediately destructive than bullets. It is better to be shouted down than shot down. As long as the totalitarian and the free world can keep on talking together there is some hope that they can avoid fighting. I think, therefore, that it would be gratuitous folly to abandon the United Nations because circumstances have conspired against its success, or to drive out of it those who are largely responsible for those circumstances. That would indeed be a policy of despair.

I admit at once that the primary objective of those who framed the United Nations Charter - collective security - has not been achieved. Yet the Korean incident has shown that the United Nations can, in certain circumstances be an effective instrument for organizing ad hoc collective resistance to aggression. Moreover, the experience of Korea should help us to improve United Nations procedures and to strengthen the means of collective resistance to aggression from any quarter. We have recognized this in our Uniting for Peace Resolution in the Assembly of 1950, the response to which, however, has not yet been such as to counsel the abandonment of other security arrangements such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The reason for United Nations weakness in the security field, is not, of course, the veto in the Security Council but the nature of contemporary international society. So long as world power remains concentrated in two great blocs, with opposing interests and ideologies, collective resistance to the aggression of a great power, or a small power openly and actively supported by a great power, is almost certain to mean a general conflict rather than limited police action. The veto in the Security Council is merely the procedural recognition of these facts of international life. From the beginning of the United Nations it was clear that only if the great powers could at least partially co-operate to preserve peace would the United Nations be an adequate method for providing general collective security. So far this condition has not prevailed.

The judgment of history, I am confident, will be that the free world made a sincere effort to accommodate and work with its old ally, the Soviet Union. At the outset of the United Nations we tried to understand her, and to make allowances for the fears and neuroses of the Russian people who had suffered so terribly in the war and who had resisted so heroically. It was only after repeated refusals on the part of the Kremlin to co-operate in re-establishing a free Europe, only after it had become clear that there could be no liberation for peoples occupied by the Red Army, only after there was unmistakable evidence that the Kremlin's imperialistic ambitions extended far beyond the territories over which it already had control, and finally, only after we learned beyond any doubt that the subversive and divisive forces of international Communism were the agents of Soviet imperialism, only then were we reluctantly driven to the conclusion that additional measures to those provided by the United Nations for the collective defence against aggression