

spell in which all but essential measures (like the financing of UNEF) could be left more or less in abeyance. Perhaps this lull was usefully occupied in acclimatizing the 22 new members to their first "normal" Assembly. Perhaps in this year when man stepped into the threshold of outer space it was advisable not to try to reach solutions to questions which had been first raised long ago in very different circumstances. Perhaps the continued exploration behind the scenes of national policies, on a slightly wider scale than at earlier sessions, was still the best that could be hoped for at any annual session.

15. These are all handy and perhaps not altogether implausible excuses for the shortcomings of the Twelfth Session. They are valid just so long as they do not become too much of a pattern for assessing the annual Assembly. It can hardly be, however, that the Thirteenth and following sessions can be a succession of holding operations or breathing spells. Either the Assembly must go forward or decline as an influence in international life. At the beginning of 1958 there seems to be a considerable possibility that the Soviet Union will attempt to inject new life in the Assembly by attempting to seize the leadership which the Western Great Powers have allowed to slip from their hands. Certainly with its enhanced prestige the Soviet Union has every opportunity to do this but it is by no means inevitable that this should happen. Combined, the Western Powers still have a monopoly of knowledge, skill and experience which should enable them to maintain the initiative in the General Assembly. All that is needed is bold, sensible and firm leadership. If a strong challenge should come from the Soviet Union at the Thirteenth Session, the Western Powers should be prepared to meet it squarely and their leadership must come from the United States. Because of this real possibility it seems clear even now that serious preparations for the Thirteenth Session should begin in a very few months and should be developed through the most careful consultation among the principal Western powers. To be most effective these consultations should take place mainly in New York where the processes of the United Nations are best understood and where the links between Delegations are strongest.
