

Mr. President, we founded the United Nations, as the Charter says, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". More has been accomplished in this past year to remove that danger than in any year since this Organization was created. Certainly so far as the risk of a general nuclear war is concerned, the hopeful evolution of great power relationships evokes deep feelings of relief, gratitude and satisfaction from us all.

It would be a bitter irony, Mr. President, if the safer, saner world which seems at last a possibility rather than a dream should turn instead into a world in which the stream of violence simply cuts new channels. Time and again, the smaller countries have called for an end to the nuclear arms race, an end to nuclear confrontation. We have sought an international order in which the great powers conceived it neither as their interest nor their obligation to attempt to police the world. Now the great powers, in their own interest and in the interest of us all, are moving in this direction. Is the new security and freedom which will thereby be available to all countries, large and small, to be dissipated in new forms of violence? Must we admit that only the fear of nuclear escalation has allowed us some limited success in the past generation in controlling recourse to force?

Yet the international community still has no answer to the dilemma of deciding at what point local violence has such wide and obvious international implications that it can no longer be accepted as a purely domestic matter. We struggled with this problem last year in the crisis in Bangladesh. And even where violence is plainly international from the outset, our means of dealing with it are often pitifully weak. There are those in the world who appear to believe that the norms of civilized international life are not for them. They consider that they have a right to pursue their grievances with kidnapping, piracy, murder, and wholesale terror and violence.

The problem is growing. It has become world-wide. My own country has had its tragic experience of violence of this sort. Canadians instinctively share the horror and shock which these acts produce wherever in the world they may occur. The Canadian Government understands only too well the agonizing choices governments face when called upon to deal with a sudden nightmare of violence.

Terrorism takes many forms. It is called forth by a wide range of complex situations. The rights and wrongs of these situations are bitterly contested. It is simple realism to recognize all this. But the problem cannot be ignored because it is difficult: there must be no truce with terror. Some acts of terror are the work of deluded and demented criminals; others of frustrated and desperate men willing to sacrifice their own lives and the lives of innocent people in what they regard as a noble cause. When we agree that the cause is noble, we are tempted to condone the terror. But are we wise to do so? The act we condone today may be the one we regret tomorrow, when it is turned against us. For terrorism in the end affects everyone; it is an attack on civilization at large. Violence breeds violence, murder answers murder, and order dissolves in chaos.

Therefore, Mr. Secretary-General, we approve your initiative in seeking to have the subject placed upon the agenda. A number of delegations have reservations about the debate upon which the Assembly is to enter. Some fear it will be too diffuse to be useful; others that it will be too narrow to be constructive. It need be neither. The Canadian Delegation looks upon it as