

Our direction is clearly laid down: it is toward economic and social progress and away from poverty: it is toward full and free self-government and away from dictatorial regimes imposed from inside or from outside: toward the progressive realization of human rights and the dignity and worth of the individual person.

Our organization has, I think, had significant success in dealing with each of these three main lines of division in our world. But in each, there are problems and trends which cause concern, and which if they got out of hand could easily lead to grave setbacks.

On the road toward self-government, for instance, and we sometimes forget this, giant strides have been taken under United Nations auspices, and hundreds of millions of people in Asia, the Pacific and Africa, have during the past eight years become self-governing. But against this, we must set the fact that some countries which formerly were self-governing democracies have fallen under foreign domination and been subjected to totalitarian and outside control. Too often, it seems to me, debates in the United Nations on questions of colonialism and self-government ignore these setbacks, and blur the balance sheet of freedom. I do not, of course, suggest that we should refrain from trying to make progress in one area, merely because no progress seems practicable in another. But we should be careful not to confuse and mislead world opinion on these vital issues of self-government and freedom.

But the most important of the United Nations tasks remains unquestionably that of keeping the peace, or perhaps of establishing peace. Though in this field, too, we have a number of achievements, there is less ground for satisfaction, or even for confidence that the passage of time is necessarily bringing us closer to our goal. There is far more reason for anxiety than complacency.

The United Nations has, I think, shown in Korea that it is capable of taking effective and successful international police action against local aggression. It must be remembered, however, that in this case one great power (and we pay tribute to it) was willing and able to give the lead and shoulder most of the burden.

Apart from the problem of possible local aggression, and the risk of it spreading through hasty or ill-considered action, there remains the danger of a major world conflict and here as I see it the primary object of our world organization must be prevention, rather than intervention.

Such a major conflict could be caused by deliberate aggression, or by accident, or miscalculation. Certainly the history of the last twenty-five years has shown that the danger of deliberate aggression, by totalitarian empires, is a real one. Such deliberate aggression can be and is being deterred by regional collective security organizations, by defensive alliances, which make it clear that the peaceful nations cannot be destroyed and absorbed one by one. In this way, such arrangements - which are aimed against aggression wherever it comes from - deter attack and serve the cause of peace. They also restore the balance in threatened areas of the world, and thereby contribute to stability and security.