

within the present United Nations certain members were determined to form a collective system which would really guarantee their own collective security, even if this could only be done on a limited basis of membership.

At the recent General Assembly of the United Nations, the head of the Canadian Delegation, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, put this idea forward forcefully in the following paragraph:

"Nations, in their search for peace and cooperation, will not and cannot accept indefinitely and unaltered a Security Council which was set up to ensure their security, and which, so many feel, has become frozen in futility, and divided by dissension. If forced, they may seek greater safety in an association of democratic and peace-loving states willing to accept more specific international obligations in return for greater national security. Such associations, if consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter, can be formed within the United Nations. It is to be hoped that such a development will not be necessary. If it is unnecessary, it will be undesirable. If, however, it is made necessary, it will take place. Let us not forget that the provisions of the Charter are a floor under, rather than a ceiling over, the responsibilities of member states. If some prefer to go even below that floor, others need not be prevented from moving upwards."

Such a limited association for collective security - within the United Nations and acting within the letter and spirit of its Charter - would not be an offensive and defensive alliance of the old type. There could be nothing "offensive" about it because it would be bound by all the obligations and restraints of the Charter.

It would, on the other hand, be much broader and go much deeper than the alliances of old. It would be a genuine pooling of resources, spiritual and material, for purposes of collective defence. Nor would such an association exclude any state from membership which did not exclude itself. It would threaten no state and no state would have anything to fear from it which based its own actions on the principles and provisions of the Charter. It would merely be the recognition by certain states of the necessity of a collective system for defence which would be really effective; for accumulating under international control and outside the veto such a terrific preponderance of power that no one would dare to commit an aggression.

There is no reason whatever why any state which is unwilling to accept these additional commitments should withdraw from the United Nations itself which would continue in its present form.

Such a security system could, and indeed must, establish beyond doubt that it was solely an instrument of peace, and that it would not be used to further selfish national or imperial interests, or to support aggressive power politics by any of its members.

A collective security agency within the United Nations which could prove both its good-will and its power - two things which don't always go together - might hope eventually to attract to its membership all states in the United Nations. We would, then, in fact, have secured a new United Nations with both universality and effectiveness. If that does not happen, however, through no fault of the collective security group, we would at least be no worse off than we are now. We would know where we stand and that would, I suggest, be on firmer ground than where we are now. For we would have ensured that superior power - political, military and moral power - would be on the side of those who are determined to use it.

If we can secure that result, we would then at last have some reason to hope that peace might be preserved and that life on this planet might continue to exist.