

Yet the United Nations is also more than this. It is the place where, slowly and at times agonizingly, an international consensus can, and often does, emerge. One result of this emergence is that on occasion, decisions have been made that confound those who tend still to think of the world in the terms of the Congress of Vienna or the Conference of Versailles. The UN has, with a vengeance, called in the new world of Asia and Africa, to challenge the power and pretensions of the old. We should not be surprised if there is a resulting confusion - or worse - which brings about a negative reaction among the older and more powerful states. I should be surprised, however, if the newer and less secure states that have recently emerged from subservient status ceased to realize how vitally important to them is the United Nations; how it gives them their only real chance to play a meaningful and effective political part in the Family of Man and how, if they overplay this part and allow their grievances, their prejudices and their emotions to run away with them, others will react in a way which could end, or at least make impotent, the UN as a forum for international discussion and decision on a broad, world level.

The United Nations can be destroyed by the impatience of its new members, quite as well as by obtuseness or obstinacy of its old.

The United Nations is also the place where we have all been made most conscious of fact - as President Kennedy so eloquently reminded you on receiving his award from you in 1963 - that the Family of Man is not limited to any race or nation or creed.

We should remind ourselves that it is three billion strong and that we, in our white affluent society, fall far short of mirroring its make-up. For its predominant colour is not white; and, far from being affluent, most of the members of the Family of Man today are more deeply engulfed than ever before in the search for survival against hunger and destitution and disease. Those who are striving today to be free, or remain free, not illogically crave also to be fed.

I have often spoken, as your President and others have, about the widening gap in wealth and resources between the white Western nations - largely those rimming the North Atlantic - and virtually every other member of our Family of Man. I know that no country is doing more to close that gap than the United States. But the gap is still widening, with results that could become tragic.

Today, the great danger facing all of us is that, in our relative ease and affluence, we of the West are becoming bored with being continually reminded that more must be done. After two decades of economic assistance there is a "weariness with well-doing". The mood is not so much to ignore the problem or deny the need, but to rationalize a growing "weariness" by pleading the impossibility of effective action. So we lapse into the complacency of the comfortable.

But to withdraw our concern and slacken our effort on behalf of the whole Family of Man just because now the "going is getting tough" would be both a political mistake and a human betrayal. It would be a denial of the