

of the atmosphere which sustains all life on our planet. It showed that great powers were able to agree on something important in spite of the fears and tensions of Cold War. The global sigh of relief that followed that treaty was due not only to the ending of atmospheric pollution, important as that was, but to a feeling of hope for further progress towards peace. In particular, the time seemed closer when the long frustration of disarmament negotiations might be replaced by some positive measures of agreement, with priority to atomic disarmament.

It would be intolerable now if our hopes for some positive steps to remove the fear of universal destruction were one more to be dashed. I cannot believe that this will happen. I cannot believe that there are not sensible solutions which will be found to the problems of the relations of 700,000,000 Chinese with their neighbours, or to those of a divided Germany, a divided Korea, a divided Vietnam. I do not accept the permanence of the Berlin wall as a symbol of a divided world. I reject the theory that Arabs and Jews must forever be hostile. I do not believe it is the destiny of Cuba to be permanently alienated from former friends and neighbours in this Western Hemisphere, or for whites and non-whites to be permanently embittered in Africa because of racial policies which are bad and bound to fail.

I do not claim that there are quick and easy solutions to these problems. There are no such solutions, and there never have been. But there is a better atmosphere in which to begin the earnest and persistent search for solutions. And in this search, I repeat, the United Nations can play an effective role -- but only if it puts its own house in order.

#### Scope for UN Action

It is not the sole instrument for international co-operation. It has no supra-national authority. It is no substitute for national foreign policy or bilateral diplomacy. The Charter rightly recognizes that there are other peaceful means of solution, regional and limited collective arrangements outside the United Nations but consistent with its principles, which member states can employ, and which they do employ. Nevertheless, the United Nations alone serves us all. It provides the only world assembly to protect and advance human rights and freedoms and human welfare, to reduce and remove the causes of conflict. It can lead us out of the post-war wasteland into greener pastures of a creative and secure peace. It can. But whether it does, whether it discharges that great role and fulfils its great responsibilities, depends on us. When the United Nations fails, its member governments fail. When it succeeds, all the plain and good people of all the world succeed.

We are 18 years old now. The League of Nations was 18 years old in 1938. That was the year of appeasement, of unawareness, of failure of heart and nerve. The eighteenth year of the United Nations opens in a climate of greater hope. We can make it the beginning of the end of the situation where a man can communicate with a missile 1,000,000 miles away, but not with another man whom he watches warily over a curtain of fear and suspicion.