

chiefly an occasion for heart searching. The United Nations Organization is faced to-day with exactly the same central problem that faced the League of Nations over twenty-five years ago: Are the nations and the governments that speak for them ready to accept, in judgment on their own actions, "the decent opinion of mankind" expressed through a general international organization?

The United Nations starts with an enormous advantage that the League never had: there is no powerful state left outside. In its operations and decisions there is less reason for caution than there ever was in the case of the League. All the countries possessing substantial power to-day are members of the United Nations. But the question remains which, with greater justification, haunted the meeting rooms and corridors of Geneva: Have they the will to use their power to support the principles and procedures of the Charter?

Until that will is manifest in action, until we can see from experience that the machinery can be made to work as it was meant to work, until we can be sure that the latest dread lesson, the lesson of the atomic bomb, has imprinted itself more deeply in the minds of men, we cannot relax our vigilance or feel secure.

There has been talk, and talk from high quarters, of the need for a surrender of national sovereignty. This means that in certain respects, in certain very limited but very important respects, sovereign power should be transferred from national governments to a supra-national authority which all must be prepared to obey. That is a high and fine aim. It is not however, an aim which can be attained by starting off now on a new effort at constitution making. Before we can usefully consider what form such a supra-national authority might take, there must be evidence *de facto* of willingness to renounce some attributes of national sovereignty. When, and only when, it has been proved in practice that the existing international organization commands within its field of action the loyalty and obedience of its members, can serious consideration be given to preparing a new Covenant or Charter which would create *de jure* an international government. I fear, looking round the world today, that all this is a long way ahead.

The troubles of the world are not, and never have been, at bottom a question of the nature of the existing international machinery, of the processes whereby issues are brought forward for discussion and settlement, of the Covenant or the Charter of the rule of unanimity or the veto power. What the League of Nations could do, and what the United Nations can do, was and is what the States Members agree should be done. The League of itself could accomplish nothing. The United Nations of itself can accomplish nothing. Both are instruments for collective action of their states members.