

There are some who argue that the mere existence of these arrangements constitutes a provocation to other nations. This is an old and familiar contention often used in the past by aggressors to frighten their victims from joining together for defence. Before the war the nazis used it to confuse and weaken those whom they wished to destroy. Surely in the present international situation, it would be the height of folly not to take, in consultation with our friends, such precautions as reason indicates to be vital to our security and to theirs in an emergency. Surely, too; it is apparent to all that those arrangements constitute a threat to no one, except to those who are deterred by them from committing any aggression. Finally, they are not inconsistent in any way with our obligations under the charter of the United Nations.

This brings me to another and important phase of my review, the present position of the United Nations.

The annual report of the government to parliament on the United Nations is now being printed, and I hope to be able to present it to the House shortly. It will be, as last year, a general review of the activities of the United Nations, with particular reference to the second session of the general assembly in New York. I will not attempt to cover the ground of that report in this statement, but there are two matters on which I feel sure you would wish me to comment without waiting for the report to be tabled. The first of these is the general policy of Canada toward the United Nations; the second is the question of Palestine.

On repeated occasions the government has indicated that collective security through the operations of an effective international organization was a primary objective in the foreign policy of this country. This continues to be our policy. We are fully aware, however, of the inadequacy of the United Nations at the present moment to provide the nations of the world with the security which they require. The realities of this situation must be faced, and the policy of the government in respect of it may be summarized very briefly.

In the first place we shall not encourage or foster any activity which at this moment might provide any state with a legitimate - I emphasize the word "legitimate" - excuse to withdraw from the United Nations. On the other hand, we shall not refrain from action which we know to be right merely because it displeases certain other members of the United Nations. We shall continue to give every assistance to constructive efforts to make the United Nations into the instrument for security and co-operation which it was originally designed to be, and in the meantime utilize its present possibilities to the fullest extent.

We will also oppose demands on the United Nations which at the moment are too heavy for its resources. It should not, for instance, attempt to undertake administrative responsibilities and police activities in various parts of the world before it has been given the means which may be required for carrying out those responsibilities.

We must realize also that the effectiveness of the United Nations is at the moment greatly reduced by the divisions which have grown up between the countries of eastern Europe and the countries of the rest of the world. Until there has been some measure of settlement of the issues that appear to divide the world, we should not expect too much from the United Nations in its present form and organization. No one should expect, for instance, the machinery of the United Nations to produce a solution for problems on which the two most powerful nations of the world may have diametrically opposed views that cannot be reconciled.

During the last two years our faith in the United Nations as an effective organization for peace and security has been pretty severely shaken. What is unshaken is our determination to make of it, or within it, an effective organization for these purposes. Unshaken also is our faith that this can be achieved. It is therefore important that