

In Canada we have not, of course, been unaffected by the criticisms which have been directed against the United Nations. Yet, on the whole, the tendency here has been to avoid harsh judgments on the Organization. It may be that we should be less tolerant if, like the United Kingdom and other countries administering territories overseas, we found ourselves exposed to irresponsible criticism, or if, like the United States, we collected abuse and requests for economic and financial aid, in almost equal quantities.

But I think that there may be less pessimism about the U.N. as an institution among Canadians than in many other countries because, although we have always looked upon it as an essential framework for international collaboration, we have taken the view, from the beginning, that in the present state of the world there is a limit to what we should expect of it. Whatever our aspirations for its future, we have thought that it is a mistake to conceive of the United Nations as anything in the nature of a world government which could enforce world law with a kind of universal world police. It is not a supra-state. Its imperfections reflect the imperfections of its member nations. It is rather an agency for reconciliation and negotiation; a forum where opponents can maintain communication and eventually reach compromises and solutions. It is not a substitute for diplomacy; it is a place where, at least in some situations, diplomacy can be more effectively conducted. If it did not exist, mankind would find it necessary to invent a comparable forum.

I remarked earlier that diplomacy is unspectacular work. I can think of no better recent illustration of this truth than the successful efforts made during the twelfth session of the General Assembly last Autumn to calm the passions aroused by the dispute between Syria and Turkey. The net result of the long debates on the floor of the Assembly, and of the even longer deliberations behind the scenes was, in terms of resolutions, nothing. Yet, a potentially explosive situation subsided without either side losing much of its self-respect. This was a considerable success for what the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Hammarskjöld, has called the "diplomacy of reconciliation" and it provides in my opinion a good example of the United Nations at its best.

I was very much impressed, during the period which I spent at the General Assembly, by the high reputation which Canada enjoys in United Nations circles. I found it particularly gratifying that the Canadian Delegation was so frequently invited by other delegations from every corner of the world to consult on items on the agenda of the Assembly. That is a tribute to the calibre of the Canadian people: it is a recognition of the growing prestige of Canada: it is a realization of the fact that Canada seeks peace without any ambitions for territorial expansion or selfish domination of other peoples. Apart from the satisfaction of helping in the work of the United Nations, there is something more.