

run on such a basis of inequal distribution of representation and responsibility, although one should not forget that in the United States Senate, one-third of the members representing only a very small percentage of the population of the country could, theoretically, prevent any treaty becoming effective.

The fact remains, however, that the United Nations is an association of sovereign states each, in theory, equal to every other one. In any event, what matters most is not theoretical possibilities, but the use to which votes are put in practice. The record here is not unsatisfactory.

The larger powers, because they are the most powerful, do influence the voting of the smaller powers; do exercise far more power than a single vote would suggest. As an example during the weeks before the Israeli withdrawal from Egypt, a mathematical majority could probably have been secured in the Assembly for sanctions to be imposed against Israel. However, the issue was never presented to them for decision. Why? The influence of the United States and other countries, including Canada, was sufficient to prevent the Assembly from taking this action which would have been premature and unwise. The members at least the majority of them recognized the facts of power and the impossibility of taking effective action on sanctions without United States support, even if they desired to do so. They knew that diplomacy was going on behind the scenes and that a solution might be forthcoming which might be at least of a character which they could not openly oppose. So sanctions were never put to the vote.

At the recent Eleventh Session of the Assembly which was dominated--and at times disrupted--by Middle Eastern issues, voting power was used to pass some resolutions which were futile, others that were silly, and one or two that were unfair. But it would be hard to prove that any of them were dangerous or extreme, and some of them were of positive peace-preserving value. There were extreme speeches made and some irresponsible moves attempted. But the resolutions which secured the requisite two-thirds majority were usually the product of reasonable compromise.

The picture which is being built up in certain quarters of a majority of the votes of the United Nations Assembly lined up irrevocably against the West, demanding that the Western democracies give up their territories or hand over their treasure, is not an accurate one. It is based more on impressions from the controversial political harangues which so often disturb Assembly proceedings, than on a study of actual results. Good results, however, often command less attention than violent polemics. Unfortunately, conflict and controversy are their own best publicity agents, while quiet achievement seldom gets a headline.

Discouragement and defeatism about the United Nations arises also from a faulty understanding of the Charter and the power of the United Nations. We must never forget that the United