

the general assembly in New York, by the representative of New Zealand, Mr. Carl Berendsen. This is what he then said:

What have we got there? What have we got there as a result of the charter? We have an organization under which each of the five great powers reserves to itself the right in every case, for any reason, however capricious, to decide whether it will or will not take in any proposed resistance to aggression. More than that, much more, we have an organization under which each of the five great powers reserves to itself the right to say not only whether it will take part, but whether the organization as a whole can be allowed to function at all.

A few minutes ago, Mr. Speaker, I was saying that all nations were forced to accept the granting of the veto right to the great powers in order to allow the formation of the united nations organization. Well, today one is allowed to ask himself, with the New Zealand representative, if the granting of the said right does not have the effect of preventing the organization itself from functioning and operating. In any event, one thing is sure. This veto privilege, when thoughtlessly used—as was the case for some great powers—has the result of preventing the organization from functioning properly and toward the common interest as defined in the charter. This veto right sanctions the principle of the unanimity of the great powers on all the important decisions the security council has to reach for the maintenance of world security. One of the reasons which brought about the failure of the league of nations—and I should say, in my opinion, the most important of such reasons—is found in the fact that the league attempted to apply the principle of unanimity of all nations, great or small, in the solution of world problems. In other words, to be binding, a decision had to be approved by all members of the league. As soon as some nations began to bear the faults or consequences of that policy, they abandoned the league of nations one after the other. As a result, the organization itself remained under the sole control of one or two greater nations at the expense of the others and also at the expense of peace itself.

The principle of unanimity of all nations, as applied by the league of nations, was mere utopia; while the principle of unanimity of the five great powers, as put into practice by the united nations organization, is a definite injustice. What would have been the ideal solution is, in my opinion, the application of a principle of majority, or at least of absolute majority. In such case, any decision, to become effective, would require the approval of the absolute majority of the members. It may be admitted that the great

powers did not make too frequent a use of this veto right allowed by the charter. Nevertheless, it may also be said that such privilege was mostly and abusively used by Russia as a constant threat, and in many circumstances that nation obtained advantages which have endangered and are still endangering world security. It has also been the case where other nations have been deprived of the recognition of certain essential rights because Russia has refused to comply with certain demands and has opposed, or threatened to oppose them with its veto privilege. As a result of all the compromises which the other nations were compelled to accept one after the other to the benefit of Russia, we are now faced by a fact of great seriousness.

The first intention of all nations to avoid after the last war was the creation or formation of spheres of influence in the world; and yet, because of this very defect to which I have just referred, our world of today finds itself once more in the presence of two distinctly different groups, both formed with different nations. And every day since, one may see that cleavage is still getting deeper and deeper, and that communist domination is ever growing and endangering world security. On each side of the barricade two different ideologies are dominating and inspiring the policy of the nations of the two groups, and it is an everyday admission that a secret fight is already going on between them. That imaginary line, which separates the two camps, and which was termed by Winston Churchill not so long ago as being the iron curtain, does not appear to be only a division between frontiers, but a real fighting line. Russia itself has accepted the appellation given by the former British Prime Minister and the Moscow radio offers to its listeners today a programme called "Around the Iron Curtain". It does not seem to me too late to intervene; but one of the sure ways to succeed would be the disappearance of the veto right which the great powers have obtained in the security council. As far as Russia is concerned, it has categorically refused to abandon that right, upon which it established all its influence and to which it is constantly having recourse to prevent the repression of the many injustices it has been guilty of in the past. In the name of the United States, Mr. Byrnes, former secretary of state, was more conciliating when he declared in a recent speech:

We must cooperate to build a world order; not to sanctify the status quo, but to preserve peace and freedom based upon justice, and we must be willing to cooperate with one another—veto or no veto—to defend with force, if necessary, the principles and purposes of the charter of the united nations.