

the mistake of thinking we would be better off if these debates did not take place. For the differences and the conflicts exist. We cannot escape them. We have to live with them and deal with them.

The role of the United Nations is to bring to bear upon all these differences and conflicts of interests, month in and month out, the over-riding common interest and to do this in terms of the principles and purposes of the Charter. For the United Nations is not only a meeting place, but a meeting place in which the instinct of mutual self-preservation is reinforced by the constant presence in the background of moral purpose. The positions taken by the Member Governments, the policies they advocate and defend, can never escape comparison with the principles and aspirations of the Charter, to which all of them are solemnly committed by treaty. Thus, the influence of the United Nations upon the Member Governments is being exerted steadily and constantly on the side of peace, justice and progress in their efforts to reach solutions of the problems that confront them. This influence is exerted in many ways and through different instruments. Let me cite three examples of what I mean.

When it became evident that a universal system of collective security was for the time being beyond their reach, various Member Governments cast about for other means that would give them at least some measure of interim security. In former days these might have taken the form of the traditional military alliances so well known to history. And we have, indeed, seen the creation of collective self-defense arrangements that are outside the institutional framework of the United Nations. Of one of these -- the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- Canada is a very active member. I myself have been invited to speak next week at the meeting in Caracas of another -- the Organization of American States. But these are not alliances that recognize no higher law than the naked exercise of power. Both of them, by the terms of the treaties which brought them into being, explicitly recognize the supremacy of the United Nations Charter. This also is implicit recognition of the fact that regional organization can never be a substitute for universal organization, although it may be an important or even necessary supplement. Indeed, the United Nations Charter in Articles 51 through 54 makes full provision for such supplementary regional arrangements. Thus, the Charter and the existence of the United Nations as an institution have given a new meaning and imposed new obligations upon such groupings of nations.

An example of how the United Nations exerts its influence toward the just and peaceful solution of a dangerous problem is in Palestine. This problem has been with the United Nations since 1947. Aside from those issues directly related to the cold war, it is at once one of the most difficult and the most challenging of all, because the claims on both sides are so strong and so extremely difficult to reconcile. The problem is still far from ultimate solution and the danger of a breakdown in the armistice continues to be a cause for concern to the Member Governments in the Security Council and to me as Secretary-General.

Although the United Nations has already been instrumental in ending the war in Palestine and in preserving