

A further stratagem consists in the introduction of high-sounding resolutions containing the most unexceptionable sentiments of a peace-loving kind which on closer inspection are found to mask the stubborn intention of the Soviet Government not to budge an inch in the direction of practical compromise. These devices have created little or no impression within the United Nations where delegations are all too familiar with this pattern of propaganda diplomacy. Instead, they have served the purpose of disillusioning those delegations which still clung to the hope that the Communists were genuinely interested in international cooperation. The Soviet Delegation, however, may have less interest in the fate of their proposals in the General Assembly than in posing before the wider public outside as the defenders of peace.

The most striking example of these tactics is to be found in the major propaganda debate which each year is introduced into the General Assembly by the Delegation of the U.S.S.R. In 1949, this debate was inaugurated by a resolution denouncing the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States for attempting to prepare a new war and at the same time proposing that these Governments should give their assent to ill-defined and equivocal proposals for disarmament and for the conclusion of a Five Power treaty. The representatives of the democratic countries replied that if indeed there was danger of war, the source of this danger lay in the disruptive policy and in the aggressive activities of the Government of the U.S.S.R. They embodied these views in an alternative resolution which was adopted by an impressively large majority. The debate was a manifestation of the high degree of unanimity among the non-Communist states on the principles which underlie a free society and on the necessity of defending these principles. It cannot be said, however, that the immense outlay of time and energy required to meet and offset the Communist propaganda attack in this debate made any contribution towards the purposes for which the United Nations was founded.

Similar attacks were made by the Communist delegations in debates on almost every other subject on the agenda. The discussions on disarmament and on the control of atomic energy resulted in little progress because, in both cases, the Communist delegations were able to distort the debate into an exchange of mutual recriminations, thus avoiding serious consideration of practical measures. Similar methods were used in every organ of the United Nations on which a Communist delegation sits. It is, therefore, to the very considerable credit of the United Nations that ways and means have been found of achieving results in a number of fields in spite of these efforts to reduce its effectiveness.

Of course, it should not be assumed that without Communist obstruction all would have been plain sailing in the United Nations. Quite apart from the complications introduced by the attitude of the Communist delegations, the Organization faces formidable problems. It must reconcile national sovereignty with the needs of a world community; it must balance the realities of political power with the exigencies of a Charter based on the nominal equality of all member states; it must adapt its procedure to avoid waste of time. These and many other complex questions would in any case face the Organization. The Canadian Government since the foundation of the United Nations has taken the attitude that the Organization should be capable of growth and that its constitution should be susceptible of adjustment in the light of experience. Such a developing process would be