

We cannot achieve peace by evading the disputes which exist today throughout the world, nor by attempting to conceal them under the camouflage of diplomatic politeness. We can achieve peace, however, by determining to settle disputes in the forum of open discussion.

The weaknesses and limitations which have come to light in the United Nations are merely the reflection of the disagreements which exist between the great powers of the world today. The temper of proceedings at Lake Success merely registers the international climate, and if very little real agreement has been reached in the United Nations, we must recognize frankly the fact that there is very great disagreement between the major powers. We must certainly not confuse the symptom with the disease. The futilities and the frustrations which have occurred so often in the meetings of the United Nations, and more particularly in the Security Council, have been the consequence and not the cause of these disagreements. The United Nations did not create the problems of power politics and the clash of ideologies which have plagued its existence so far; on the contrary, the United Nations has played a very useful role in bringing before world opinion the existence of these problems and these divergent trends of thought in a manner which could never be achieved under the older, traditional forms of secret diplomacy.

The meetings at Lake Success have been described by a cynical observer as "open disagreements openly arrived at". The key word in this phrase is open; for, in the last analysis, the United Nations depends for its effective strength on the force of public opinion throughout the world, and the more we have experience of it, the more fully we appreciate that this is a very real force indeed. This is emphasized in the Preamble of the Charter itself, which begins with the words, "We the Peoples of the United Nations...". The representatives at Lake Success are merely the instruments of their respective governments which, in democratic states, are, in turn, responsible to public opinion. The positions taken by these national representatives at United Nations meetings are well publicized and, in a healthy democracy, these positions should be the subject of close scrutiny by the public in whose name these representatives are speaking. In this way, and, in my judgment, only in this way, can the democratic process be applied in the field of international affairs. If public opinion in a democratic state is lethargic and indifferent, then this public has only itself to blame if disastrous policies are sponsored by its representatives. On the other hand, an alert and well-informed public opinion gives a fine insurance that sensible and well-considered policies will be advocated and carried out. The United Nations offers an opportunity for world opinion to assert itself to a degree which has never existed before in international affairs and, for even this reason alone, it is deserving of full public support.

Again we must recognize that the world becomes smaller day by day. Nations are now increasingly inter-dependent. Improved communications and vastly enlarged methods of public information make it evident that events, which might perhaps have had only an academic interest some decades ago, are today matters whose immediate urgency is no longer attenuated by distance. If I may cite the case of my own country for example. In the last few weeks Canadian representatives have been intimately concerned in the discussions of the questions of Indonesia, of Kashmir, of Czechoslovakia, of Palestine; we have had discussions of the future of international trade at Havana, and of the future of a free press at Geneva; we have been concerned in the political settlement in the state of Korea; and with other anxious nations we have earnestly sought to evolve a system for the effective control of the dread forces of atomic energy.