

Though decolonization is almost complete, we should not overlook the UN's very respectable record in this process, particularly in making it less violent than it might have been.

Finally, we should not dismiss the UN's function as a useful safety valve. Despite the limitations of the UN, I believe, the international situation would be infinitely more dangerous without it.

The maintenance of peace and security in the UN system may capture the headlines, but much valuable work goes on in the technical parts of the system.

In 1984 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will provide about \$1 billion in technical assistance funds to developing countries of which \$61 million will come from Canada. Other agencies such as UNICEF and the UN Fund for Population Activities also respond effectively to specific development needs. These efforts are of direct relevance to Canada not only because of our humanitarian commitment to the development process, but also because a growing and healthy world economy provides markets for Canadian goods and services.

Despite the Soviet veto in the Security Council, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has been able to investigate the Korean Airline disaster and to work towards ways of preventing future recurrences. Due to the work of the World Health Organization (WHO) in eradicating smallpox Canadians need no longer carry vaccination certificates when they travel abroad.

In Human Rights the distance still to go should not obscure the steady progress. No longer can a government claim that human rights abuses are solely within its domestic jurisdiction; no longer can it be immune to positive UN pressure. Canada through nine consecutive years of membership on the UN Commission on Human Rights has been deeply involved in this process.

The UN also coordinates humanitarian assistance to refugees, responses to disasters, and works on social issues, such as the status of women, youth, the aged, the disabled, and the use of narcotics. Progress in these latter fields relates directly to programmes in Canada.

The UN has pioneered legal regimes in crucial fields, such as trade, law of the sea, outer space, the environment, civil aviation, and telecommunications.

These then are the current realities of the UN system, both its shortcomings and its positive features. What about the future? I do not see much merit in being distracted by consideration of radical institutional reform.