

consent from those who would bear the cost as well as from the prospective beneficiaries.

To the emerging nations the dignity of man is closely related to his economic well-being, and for them this question is bound closely to racial discrimination. In what was probably the principal achievement of the United Nations in the human rights field over the past several years, the General Assembly in 1965 approved the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination.¹ As a legal instrument, the Convention may not be perfect in every respect, but its aims and purposes are beyond reproach in their intent to contribute to the end of bigotry and racial injustice. In a step which breaks new ground for a human rights instrument, the Convention not only requires signatory parties to undertake to implement its provisions but also requires them to report on what they have done to give it effect and allows other signatory parties, and in special circumstances their own nationals, to complain to the United Nations if they are not doing so. While all delegations favoured the substantive articles of the Convention, it was the Western delegations which spoke out strongly from the beginning for effective implementation articles and which succeeded in persuading other delegations to support them as well. The Convention on racial discrimination should contribute to solving the hitherto intractable problem of implementation measures of the Draft Covenant on Human Rights, which has been before the General Assembly since 1952. Other future instruments of the United Nations in the human rights field may also benefit in this respect.

As Pope Paul VI phrased it in his address to the General Assembly in October:

The peoples of the earth turn to the United Nations as the last hope of concord and peace. We presume to present here, together with our own, their tribute of honour and of hope.

By and large, the United Nations continued to live up to these expectations in 1965. Its members are now engaged in a critical appraisal of what its future role, powers and responsibilities should be; but none wishes to see it abandoned and all agree that, in this increasingly interdependent world, ever mindful of the threat of nuclear war, it is an essential vehicle for the conduct of diplomacy, the prevention of war, and the economic and social advancement of man. If the United Nations did not exist, a similar organization would have to be created, for it fills a need that has been developing for centuries. As the Pope said:

You exist and operate to unite the nations, to bind states together. . . . You are an association. You are a bridge between peoples. You are a network of relations between states. . . . Your vocation is to make brothers, not only of some but of all peoples.

¹See Page 27.