

Another thing the U.N. has had to struggle against has been a natural but touchy pride felt by young nations, newly independent, which are determined that no one shall cast a shadow on their independent sovereignty. When they show an intention to do as they please, it is to prove that no one can make them do otherwise. In dealing with these nations the U.N. has had to show patience, caution and great understanding of their national pride. That has been the case in dealing with India and Pakistan over Kashmir. It was the case in Palestine. It is the case today when President Syngman Rhee of the Republic of Korea adds so many complications to the effort to work out a peace in Korea.

The U.N. has likewise been forced to reckon with national fears. Take the attempt to promote world disarmament as an illustration. Everybody wants disarmament. The nations want it because they need to use the billions they are spending on arms for more constructive purposes. Their citizens want it because they are carrying a tax burden which all but breaks their backs. Governments and people alike dread the outcome of the armament race - particularly the race in atomic and thermonuclear (hydrogen) weapons. One of the purposes of the U.N., as set down in its Charter, is to secure disarmament, and a U.N. commission has been working at that task almost from the start.

It has failed to get to first base. Why? Because every proposal so far made has involved opening the plants in which A-bombs, H-bombs and bacteriological weapons could be produced to international inspection. The prospect that Russian members of a U.N. inspection team might come prying around our American munitions plants, ferreting out our secrets, frightens us as much as the prospect of American inspectors on a U.N. team in the Soviet Union frightens the Russians. Here again is another unwelcome fact of today's international life which the U.N. has to far found no way to get around.

Furthermore, the U.N. has to reckon with a world condition which, for want of a better name, may be called national self-centeredness. By that we have in mind the habit of nations - and their people - to think almost exclusively in terms of what seem to be their own immediate interests and not to admit that others also have interests which must be taken into account.

Here is something which bobs up almost every time the U.N. proposes some kind of negotiation. For example, what happens when the United States considers negotiating with the Reds over Korea? Our representatives outline a list of our demands. They look to us like reasonable and just demands. But the other side also has its demands. Now, negotiation implies give-and-take. It means making concessions to gain concessions. But this seems to some appeasement, and to others surrender. These are the people who are always afraid that every negotiation is a trap in which the slightest concession will be a betrayal of the national interest.

This state of mind is not peculiar to the U.S.A. It is even more evident in the Communist countries. It leads to conducting international relations on a basis of "Do as I say, or else -" There is far too much of this state of mind left in this unhappy world to make the conciliation efforts of the U.N. easy. It always has to be conceded that a nation, or nations, not in a conciliatory mood constitutes a