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"THE MORAL SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS"

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An address by Gen. A.G.L. McNaughton to the World Conference of Religion for Moral and Spiritual Support of the United Nations, New York, June 16, 1948.

It is a very real privilege and pleasure for me to address you this morning to bespeak your interest in developing moral support to the United Nations. As an inter-faith organization, I recall that the Church Peace Union was established to work for enduring peace and to strive for a method of settling international disputes by pacific means. These objectives are also precisely the aims of the United Nations as set forth in the Preamble of its Charter; and there is, therefore, a very close inter-relation between the aims of the United Nations as a world peace-preserving agency and those of the Church Peace Union, which recognizes that the imperatives for a lasting peace and a just world order are basic objectives in all the religions of the world. The principles upon which your Union was founded accept the fact that, without doubt, wars begin first of all in the minds of men and, consequently, that the defences of peace must therefore be constructed through the education and spiritual development of the individual and through the building of closer understanding between peoples which we now have widened opportunities to do through the use of all the remarkable modern methods of communication which are available.

In the brief address I am to give this morning, I recognize fully that, in arguing the necessity of support for the United Nations, I am speaking to the already-convinced; yet, even so, I would like to advance some ideas of a general nature which may stimulate more detailed discussion at this Conference. My hope is to bring out the reasons for which we must give this support so that we may clarify the methods through which such support may be made effective.

In the first place, I believe we must all recognize that the United Nations, despite the set-backs and disappointments which so far we have experienced, represents, nevertheless, a very great step forward in the attempt to apply the processes of democracy in the field of international affairs. Many years ago Woodrow Wilson spoke eloquently against secret diplomacy and in favour of "open covenants openly arrived at". Whatever we may think of the disputes and disagreements which constantly bedevil the deliberations of the United Nations at Lake Success, I think we must agree that it is far better that these disagreements should be ventilated openly in public than that they should be the subject of secret diplomacy between nations, whose peoples would thus be kept in a state of unfortunate ignorance concerning the increasing seriousness of the international situation.