

occasions, when the action concerned means interference with "capitalist" states, it takes, of course, the opposite view. Consistency in these, as in some other matters, is not a Communist virtue.

We might first look at the effect of international organization on national sovereignty by examining the Charter of the United Nations. This Charter is the most far-reaching international treaty in force today, and is at present the basic instrument of international organization. As such, it represents a considerable advance over the Covenant of the League of Nations which it replaced. Nevertheless, the Charter is, according to its first principle, based on the sovereign equality of all its members, though this principle is not always recognized in practice.

The Charter also contains a categorical provision that nothing in it should authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. This merely asserts another general principle, of course, and does not define what are essentially domestic matters. The way is left open, therefore, for discussion and dispute regarding such a definition - and the position taken in such discussion is often concerned more with political than legal considerations.

It should perhaps be mentioned that the Charter does contain a significant clause, though up to the present it has not been widely applied, that the Organization shall ensure that states which are not members of the United Nations act in accord with its principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security. To this extent the United Nations, at least in theory, asserts itself as an international body having some authority over non-member states, even though these states have not given their consent in any form to the terms of the Charter or actions which the various United Nations bodies may decide to take. This is at least an indication of the emergence of an international authority existing above and apart from its member-states, and threatening their freedom of action.

Because it is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of its member-states, the United Nations operates in most respects on the rule of one state, one vote. This follows the respected practice of universal suffrage in democratic communities. The application, however, of this simple principle to the conduct of affairs of international bodies leads to certain special difficulties. While it is proper to recognize that states have a right to equality in international law, it is equally sensible to recognize that they vary widely in their populations, economic resources and power, as well as in the stage they have reached in political development. The granting of equal voting rights to each of the sixty members of the United Nations means, because of the disparity in their size and wealth, that decisions are sometimes taken on an unrepresentative basis. Indeed, some decisions have been characterized as not only unrepresentative, but irresponsible, because of the use of voting power based on the one state, one vote principle. The United States, for example, contributes more than a third of the annual operating budget of the United Nations but a large number of small states, which in the aggregate may contribute a very small proportion of the operating funds, can have resolutions adopted, by the exercise of their collective voting rights, calling for very large expenditures by others on all kinds of projects. Groups of states could also succeed in