

It is a medium for world-wide cooperation between countries at different levels of technical progress and economic development. It is a place where tensions between countries or groups of countries can be, and have been, held in check and prevented from exploding in open conflict. It is a channel for the transition of dependent countries towards independence through organized and orderly processes. It is, finally, a meeting place -- indeed almost the only remaining meeting place where the states which stand and face each other across the Great Divide can at least talk to -- or at least at one another.

In the months and years ahead, we know that the United Nations may face new challenges. To meet these the supporters of the United Nations everywhere in the world will have to muster all the responsibility, all the steadiness and all the flexibility at their command. They will need above all patience, because there will be no quick solutions to many of our common problems. With many of them we shall have to live for a long time. Continuing, let alone increasing, tension is hard on the nerves. The United Nations, however, must persist in preventing that tension deteriorating into open conflict. We shall be provoked; but we must resist provocation. We shall be frustrated in our attempts to work out settlements in crucial areas of the world; but we must resist the temptation to react to rebuffs by tough and provocative retaliation. We shall be faced with propaganda hostile to everything we believe in; but we must answer patiently and methodically the incredible charges made against us. We must adjust our thinking to the realities of the times in which we live, and not count on any magic formula from the past to change those realities over night. Our best course -- indeed our only course -- will be to persist in strengthening our collective capacity within the United Nations to resist aggression, and to continue with diligence and perseverance the search for solutions to problems as they arise, or as opportunity offers. We will have to seek to avoid undue elation when we succeed, or undue despair when we seem to fail. Only in this way can we hope to bring about conditions which may one day make possible that settlement over a wider field, which we all seek and will not cease to seek.

In the search for peace which means something more than the absence of atomic war, the United Nations continues to play a vital part. We who believe in the ideals that inspire it, must continue to support it with all the vigour and intelligence and determination we possess.

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