

allies at the Paris Conference in 1946.

These - and other controversies over Iran, Korea, Poland and Greece - were however incidental to the major one which related to Germany itself.

Both sides were convinced that the fate of Europe would ultimately be decisively influenced by whatever solution was found to the problem of a peace treaty with Germany. So the battle for Europe was launched on this issue and it has continued all these years.

While this frontal clash developed, Communist ideology called for enveloping ideological assaults on the opposing countries. The Communists inexorably exploited for their own purposes any weaknesses among the countries of the free world and they used every trick to infiltrate and to divide us. This called for vigorous and continuous defensive measures both in the military and non-military fields.

In this tremendous conflict which was being waged, there was of course no prospect that the Big Five could agree to develop joint military plans through the United Nations and mobilize their forces to enforce common sanctions against aggressors as they undertake to do in Article 43 of the Charter.

The conflict between the two blocs also generated a tremendous propaganda effort. Each side endeavoured to mobilize world opinion in support of its cause. For this purpose the United Nations provided a unique forum for appealing to the conscience of peoples both in opposing and in neutral nations. It is true, no doubt, that these verbal battles sometimes produced an impression of dramatic frightening, and almost unbearable tension. The unprecedented ventilation of anger and insults at first led people to fear that the worst might happen. The lesson was soon learned, however, that such extreme tactics in the end defeated the purpose they were meant to serve. The effort which then followed to present a case in more reasonable terms was not without a moderating influence. Even though the United Nations meetings did not always result in agreement or develop satisfactory compromise formulae, I am convinced that the debates in the Assembly have on the whole served a useful purpose and have contributed to the maintenance of peace. The United Nations to some extent at least has brought the democratic process - and the pressure of public opinion - to bear in the handling of international issues; even on those totalitarian states which have been successful in isolating their peoples from contacts with others and from the direct impact of United Nations discussions.

There were of course some issues affecting nations not directly involved in the East-West conflict and, in these cases, the United Nations machinery was able to work. I need only mention Indonesia, Palestine and Kashmir to show that in some marginal but potentially explosive cases, the United Nations has been successful in preventing, or in stopping, fighting. No doubt propaganda considerations were involved in the action taken by some members but it is clear also that on certain occasions something approaching the expression of world opinion was made possible through the agency of the Assembly which was thus instrumental in applying effectively moral force in defence of peace.