

FOREWORD

The purposes of the United Nations, expressed in their broadest and most enduring terms, were inscribed once and for all in the preamble to the Charter. To achieve these ends, the peoples, not the governments or parliaments, but the peoples of the United Nations, pledged themselves to practice tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, to unite their strength to maintain international peace and security, to ensure that armed force would not be used save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the economic and social advancement of all. Whether these principles can be translated into policies and practices, into action for peace, depends in the last analysis on public opinion — the fundamental attitudes, sentiments and feelings of men and women everywhere towards the United Nations, its failures and its achievements. Governments themselves can do little if there are not these forces behind them.

In free countries, public opinion must and should be built upon an understanding of the facts, the discouraging as well as the hopeful, and upon the sober judgment that comes from the willingness to see things as they are. On the one hand, the facts must be accessible and on the other, the public, both as individuals and in groups and associations, must be prepared to make the effort necessary to reach a balanced view of world events. This is particularly important, in a country such as Canada. The so-called middle powers, especially in the absence of great power solidarity, can usefully take active responsibilities at the United Nations in the working out of limited agreements which may continue to help in averting the catastrophe of general conflict. We can be proud, as Canadians, that we have shown ourselves on the whole willing to master the facts and accept their full implications without either excessive discouragement or excessive optimism. I hope that this series of *Canada and the United Nations* makes a modest contribution to the body of information about world events and Canadian policy to which the Canadian public is certainly entitled.