

We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined -

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and

to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

and for these ends

to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and

to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

to insure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.

Empty words? Certainly they are only words, and there have been many times since 1945 when, seeing what the nations who signed those words actually did, they sounded pretty empty. There will be more such times in the future. But there the words are - aspirations, if nothing more. "Not failure, but low aim, is crime." Perhaps the U.S. Senate was thinking of that well worn, but true, reminder when, on July 28, 1945, it ratified American adherence to the U.N. Charter by the overwhelming vote of 89 to 2.

Note this, however. The Charter of the United Nations did not pledge its members to keep the world as World War II left it, without permitting any changes. In these eight years since the Charter was signed, nine nations with populations totaling more than 600 million have gained independence. And the Charter provided for its own change. In this basic difference between the Covenant of the League and the Charter of the U.N. it is instructive to see that the nations which formed this international organization in 1945 had learned wisdom from one of the great mistakes made by their forerunners in 1918.