

FOREWORD

On October 24, 1955 was celebrated the tenth anniversary of the ratification of the United Nations Charter, and appropriate ceremonies were held both at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and in many centres throughout the world. It seems to me appropriate, in the foreword to this volume dealing with the ninth and tenth sessions of the General Assembly, to say a few words about the first decade of the United Nations, and something further concerning the problems which confront us for the years to come.

No one, I think, would now maintain that the United Nations has been able to achieve all that was hoped for it at the time of its creation in 1945. In fact, a rather dismaying number of the problems considered at the first session of the General Assembly are still unresolved. Some of them, such as disarmament or human rights, have acquired over the years a greater difficulty and a greater urgency than ever. There have been disappointments, setbacks and delays. Although at the 1955 General Assembly we and the other 59 members of the United Nations were happy to welcome 16 new members, two great countries, Japan and Germany, are still not represented. To this degree the United Nations is still not yet a universal body, and is consequently handicapped in its activities.

The effectiveness and the unity of the United Nations has on occasion been seriously tried. There has also been undoubtedly some short-circuiting of the world organization through the establishment of *ad hoc* councils to deal with certain immediate problems for which it was considered that the procedures of the United Nations were too deliberate or its authority too weak. There has, of course, been no lessening of the vast sums spent on defence preparations, and recent sessions of the Assembly have been held in the shadow of grim and fearful weapons unknown in 1945. The problems and the duties facing the United Nations in maintaining peace and, for that matter, in preserving the very existence of the civilized world, remain complex and difficult. These difficulties and the dangers inherent in them we now recognize pretty fully. We are now aware also that there are no easy ways to resolve the problems which confront us.

We should not forget however, that the United Nations has to its credit some very considerable achievements which should reassure us. First of all, throughout these turbulent ten years, many of the urgent economic and political problems of the world have been discussed fully and publicly and often constructively. Even in those problems for which adequate solutions have not yet been found, the earnest debates in the Assembly have undoubtedly clarified the principal issues, and the areas of disagreement have been narrowed. There has also been a vast increase in the scope of United Nations responsibilities. The Specialized Agencies and the many United Nations bodies for financial and technical assistance have continued and developed their unspectacular work, and have made important contributions to the well-being of citizens