

Even open and frank discussion of the conflict between the Soviet Union and its associates and the other countries of the world, though bad for the nerves, also has the effect of consolidating opinion among the nations who are really willing to harmonize their actions and thus serves to prevent the further spread of totalitarian influence and aggressive power. The United Nations in this respect can be said to "ring the bell" even though it may be an alarm bell. If the nations are warned and act in time any nation planning a war is less likely to be able to pick off its victims one by one.

WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT UNITED NATIONS?

I now turn from the consideration of the accomplishments of the United Nations to my last question - Why should we support the United Nations? I suggest at least five reasons.

The first, I suggest, is that the United Nations, for all its present defects is our principle hope for peace. It is an organization which tries to substitute collaboration between nations, and the observance of certain agreed standards of conduct between nations, for a condition of international anarchy and the pursuit of exclusively selfish national purposes and ambitions. It provides a meeting place where nations can try to settle their disputes peacefully by negotiation instead of by means of war. If this process may be thought slow and sometimes frustrating, I think you will agree that even a lot of talk is better than a little war, particularly as little wars have a habit of growing into big wars.

The second reason I would suggest is that the United Nations represents an effort to apply the processes of democracy to the conduct of international affairs. I have already referred to the important influence exercised through democratic legislatures and assemblies, through the press and through public meetings and discussion such as this, upon democratic governments and in turn upon the representatives of such governments in the United Nations. There is another aspect to this question however, when one recalls various secret agreements arrived at in the past, especially between big powers often at the expense of the small, you will appreciate the importance, especially to a smaller country like Canada, of having the United Nations where open diplomacy is the rule, and where all countries, great and small, have the opportunity of taking part in the making of international decisions and of sharing their responsibilities.

The third reason I would give is that the United Nations recognises the essential inter-dependence of the nations of the world. The tremendous technological developments which have taken place since the industrial revolution, and which have brought us with incredible rapidity from the age of steam and iron into the age of the atom are also breaking down traditional divisions between peoples both in space and in time. International collaboration or isolationism is no longer a real choice. This idea has been expressed a number of times, but with particularly appropriate language by our Prime Minister when speaking in Brussels on November 10, 1947, when he said "We are all members, one of the other. What injures one, injures the other - what is done by one to help mankind, helps the other". Recognizing therefore the inter-dependence of the world today, the United Nations offers the only means for all nations to work together for their common welfare and for peace.

My fourth reason follows from the others I have just given. If the world today and our civilization necessarily rests upon the inter-dependence of the nations, our world and our civilization has also become extraordinarily complex and brittle. The most obvious example of what I have in mind is the immense destructive properties of the atom bomb, of the guided missiles and other horrible novelties which appeared at the end of the war. Many wise men have predicted a crisis in our civilization unless these destructive forces are brought under control and turned to constructive ends. But in the economic field also, those of us who recall the last great depression of the '30's will