

FOREWORD

The activities of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies during 1958 and the part played in them by Canada are reviewed in the following pages. I hope that the reader will find, as I do, much reason for encouragement and hope in the record which is presented here.

In the United Nations we find a mirror of our times. There are occasions when the picture may seem to recall the primitive morality of a previous age when civilizations and peoples could afford to work out their problems alone, and isolation could be practical international politics. Yet it would be mistaken to allow such an impression to blur the achievements of the Organization or to overshadow its purpose of bringing into being the single world society which the growing interdependence of nations in our modern age demands.

The United Nations cannot do more nor move more quickly than its members will permit. Nevertheless, the record of recent years has shown that the United Nations has effective means of its own for drawing its membership into greater co-operative effort. It can organize significant moral pressure by providing the means for the creation and expression of international opinion. By requiring the governments of the world to consult together at regular and frequent intervals, it provides both the opportunity and the necessary facilities for fruitful negotiation. Its procedures are available to any member state which may feel its security threatened by the actions of another state. Through the process of its debates, it can assist in defining problems which are at issue and in making clear the respective positions and interests of the parties concerned. Whenever its resources are utilized to deal with dangerous problems, the United Nations provides the whole of its membership with opportunities to encourage and contribute to the search for peaceful solutions.

The United Nations is already operating over wide areas of human activity. Demands arise on all sides for expansion of its functions, and it is increasing in many ways the scope and effectiveness of its efforts. This was particularly so during 1958 with regard to activities both of the United Nations and of the Specialized Agencies in the economic, social and cultural fields, and in the encouragement of respect for human rights. This work, while not directly related to grave political and security problems, must be in the long run a significant factor in the improvement of the conditions which give rise to international conflict.