

"I must fairly say that I dread our own power and our own ambition. I dread our being too much dreaded. ... We may say that we shall not abuse this astonishing and hitherto unheard-of power. But every other nation will think we shall abuse it. ... Sooner or later this state of things must produce a combination against us which may end in our ruin."10

If the go-it-aloners in Great Britain needed that warning in 1793, how much more is it needed by the go-it-aloners in the United States today!

One of the most thought-provoking sights in today's harried world is to be seen these days at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York. It is not the striking buildings, the soaring, glass-walled home of the U.N. Secretariat and the great domed hall in which the General Assembly and the U.N. councils and committees and commissions hold their meetings. These were designed by a company of foremost architects recruited from all over the world, and as they stand in their massive beauty beside the East river they challenge the eye in that city of eye-challenging skyscrapers.

But the impressive sight is not the U.N. buildings. It is, rather, the long lines of people--ordinary people, drawn from every nation, people like ourselves--who form day after day to visit this place where the nations meet in council. About 20,000 of them every week pay a dollar each to be guided through the buildings. Nearly twice as many, when the Assembly is in session, come as absorbed, tense observers at the meetings which may be in progress. They queue up before the doors open in the morning. The long lines are still waiting there seeking admission when darkness falls. No other tourist attraction in New York draws half as many visitors.

Why do they come, day after day, these thousands on thousands? Not simply to look at buildings. There are other more impressive buildings in New York. And not simply to be able to go home and say that they have "done" another sight tourists are supposed to see. But the reason for these seemingly endless lines, we are convinced after watching this phenomenon and talking to some who have helped to make it, is the deep though often inarticulate longing of the world's ordinary people for peace. They want peace for their nations and for the world. And they come to see whether in the U.N. war is being warded off and peace shielded.

We think they come to the right place. We think that most of them go away convinced that this U.N. they have seen in action, young and struggling and handicapped as it is, is in truth a shield against the ominous forces working to produce world tragedy.

As you study the working of the United Nations, as you ponder what the alternatives to this organization of the nations would be, we believe that you too will see in it such a shield. And you will, we trust, accept as one of the responsibilities of your citizenship an obligation to see that in your community, wherever your personal influence can reach, this great venture for peace and international cooperation receives the support it merits. To evade that obligation is to surrender the future to chaos.