

astonishing degree, most of them succeed in doing that. The longer they serve in the Secretariat, the better they succeed. At the head of the Secretariat, serving as the principal executive officer of the U.N., is the Secretary-General. The present Secretary-General, serving a 5-year term, is Dag Hammarskjold (pronounced Hammer-shield) of Sweden.

This sketches only the barest bones of the United Nations organization. It does not begin to indicate the number of different agencies of one kind and another which are always at work around the world under U.N. auspices. If you want a complete chart of the U.N. organization, write to its headquarters (just address The United Nations, New York, New York.) and the Secretariat will be glad to send you one. In this study we have deliberately kept to a minimum this account of the machinery through which the U.N. functions. We believe that Americans who are trying to decide on the merits of the U.N. are not primarily interested in its mechanics. What they ask is whether the mechanics work.

### What the U.N. Is Up Against

Does the U.N. work? That's the question Americans want answered. There is a widespread impression that all the U.N. does is talk. Perhaps the "Town Meeting of the World" characterization has fostered that idea. Town meetings talk. And the U.N. talks. But does the U.N. do more than talk? Is it true that when the chips are down, when it is confronted by a real crisis--such as Korea--or a real dilemma--such as trying to control atomic weapons--the U.N. can do nothing but talk?

Already we have seen that this is not true. The U.N. talks a lot. Sometimes the talk is largely a play to the propaganda galleries; sometimes it clears the way for action. At any time when hustling Americans are tempted to complain about the U.N.'s habit of talking they can profitably remind themselves that talk is preferable to shooting. But the U.N. does more than talk.

The U.N., as we noted, got the Russian troops out of Iran. It helped to get the British and French troops out of Syria and Lebanon. It stopped the fighting in Indonesia, in Palestine and in Kashmir. It brought independence to Libya. It helped Greece free its northern borders from Communist guerrillas. It took the first collective action in history against the Communist aggression in Korea. It has fed millions of hungry mothers and children. It has shown dozens of regions with low living standards how to increase their food production or the goods they manufacture. It has wiped malaria out in large regions, and is cutting down on T.B. and a number of other menaces to the world's health. It is improving schools--largely by showing how to train better teachers--in many backward regions and it is wrestling with the problem of democratic self-government by pushing literacy campaigns wherever the illiteracy handicap is high.

These are all things that the U.N. has done, or is doing. No fair-minded person, we believe, can look at such a record and say that the U.N. does nothing but talk. On the contrary, when one thinks back about the sort of world this has been since the end of World War II--the bitterness, the poverty, the suspicion, the rivalries, the threats and the armed invasions--one should be impressed by the fact that