

In order not to destroy faith in the future of the United Nations, it may be best to look upon the present as a transitional stage during which the usefulness of the principal organs of the United Nations is limited by lack of agreement among the Great Powers. It is a transitional stage in the United Nations because it is a transitional stage in the relations among the powers (including China, of course, as one of the Great Powers). Hitherto, the United Nations has been able to carry on with moderate effectiveness because, although relations between the Great Powers were by no means happy, the *modus vivendi* established in 1945 still worked. In the last year or so it has been breaking down, the most evident indication of this being the inability of the Assembly to reach agreement on the composition of functional sub-committees. It is breaking down not because relations between the powers are becoming worse but because the power relationships are being re-adjusted in accordance with a shift in the balance of real power. The primary cause of the present crisis is the refusal of the Soviet Union and China to accept any longer the positions of strength assigned to them on the basis of relationships in the immediate post-war period and, on the other side, the unwillingness of the Western Powers to put in jeopardy the veto by assured majority to which they consider they have a right in the United Nations.

The failure to reach a new *modus vivendi* in the United Nations does not mean, however, that the Soviet Union and the Western Powers are unwilling to negotiate. They in fact seem more willing than at any time since the end of the war to strike bargains. The agencies of negotiation, however, are conferences, or what sometimes amount virtually to standing committees, created on an *ad hoc* basis that is difficult to justify in theory but does enable the sides to get together. As this seems to be the only practical alternative to negotiation within conventional organs of the United Nations, it would be foolish to try to stop it on grounds of theory alone. For the sake of the dignity of the United Nations, it is well for it to try to throw a cloak or blessing over such conferences, enabling members of the United Nations to comment upon the proceedings, to prod and suggest, but not to interfere.

This kind of activity outside the halls of the United Nations does, nevertheless, derogate from the popular prestige of the institution. The best way, perhaps, to minimize the ill effects is to acknowledge that in the present state of affairs, and probably for some time to come, a good deal of negotiation will have to be done outside the Security Council, the Assembly and other United Nations bodies, but to argue at the same time that this is all complementary, that the virtue of the United Nations is that it brings people together and provides varied and flexible methods for dealing with disputes. In fact, this kind of extramural negotiation need not do great harm unless the Rousseauian purists among United Nations supporters have it so. Instead of wailing over the collapse of a San Francisco dream, one can take the optimistic — and historically better justified — view that the United Nations is groping its way to forms which will more adequately reflect the realities of the world, that this process will involve not altering the Charter but building upon it in the pragmatic Anglo-Saxon way. This Pollyanna approach, it may be argued, is an attempt to conceal the bitter truth. It all depends on what we are doing. If we approach the matter not in a spirit of self-delusion but rather as an effort to find a workable philosophy adapted to the exigencies of the times, there is justification for putting the best front on what is happening.

As for the particular aspects of Canadian policy, following are a few suggestions for consideration.

In the first place, there is no alternative to continuing patiently and understandingly to build bridges between the races, even though the task is perhaps more discouraging than