THE UNITED NATIONS AS A PERMANENT WORLD ORGANIZATION

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Even those of us, who still are young, have lived in the time of the Yeague of Nations. We know that that attempt to create a lasting world organization for peace and friendly collaboration between the peoples did not succeed. We now have the United Nations. Is there a prospect that this new attempt, with the same purpose, will prove more capable of surviving?

To clear our minds on this question we should begin by considering on general lines the tasks of the organization. We shall then be in a better position to see, how it must be constructed so as to be able to perform these tasks and survive.

The tasks are two-fold: political and non-political. Two world wars made it natural to place the political task — to secure peace — in the foreground both in the Covenant of the League of Nations and in the Charter of the United Nations. But both documents gave also the organization the task to solve economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.

Let us first examine the political task: consideration and settlement of international disputes. On this subject the system embodied in the Charter of the United Nations is in general the same as that of the Covenant of the League of Nations: the Member States undertake to stand one for all and all for one against the State which violates the peace. The system failed in the days of the League, because the States which violated the peace were Great Powers and because the United States of America remained outside the organization. The only serious attempt to apply coercion was made, when Italy attacked Ethiopia. It was, however, too weak and proved unsuccessful. In the United Nations a further and more determined step was taken. It led to the war in Korea, in which 16 States took part on behalf of the United Nations with armed forces and a number of other States with different auxiliary action. The war in Korea is not ended. Only an armistice has been achieved. And it seems that communist China in understanding with the Soviet Union in-
tends to keep North-Korea in military and political dependency, as the Soviet Union keeps Eastern Germany and the European Satellite States occupied. The United Nations will not proceed to renewed armed action in order to throw the Chinese out. What the President of South-Korea, Syngman Rhee, may do, is quite an interesting problem. We should know it before very long.

Another important political task of the United Nations — as previously of the League of Nations — is to deal with the disarmament problem. The League worked on it through many years, and the United Nations has continued the work — up to now without success. The reason for this negative result is here, as so often when the United Nations proves deficient, primarily the existing tension between the communist and the non-communist world. The deepest reason may, however, be that the peace-movement itself seems to be passing through a particularly difficult time. We hear so often expressed fear of a third world war. We meet all round us the one explosive international problem after the other: Trieste, Suez, Sudan, Tunis, Morocco, Gibraltar, the Persian oil, Israel against the Arabic countries, the racial problem of the South-African Union, the Kashmir question between India and Pakistan, the very serious war in Indo-China, and — of particular importance for Europe — the German question. The world is in uninterrupted commotion. The situation does not invite disarmament. — The Charter of the United Nations prescribed organized military co-operation between Member States already in peace-time so as to enable the organization to dispose of sufficient military power against a State which might violate the peace. Mainly because of the attitude of the Soviet Union this scheme has not yet been brought into being, and the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (N.A.T.O.) was created in conformity with article 51 of the Charter. The armaments have increased and continue to increase — on both sides of the «iron curtain». A most intense armaments race is going on. It is sad that it should be necessary to work for the maintenance of peace through measures which hitherto in the course of history usually led to war. But the N.A.T.O. was the natural and necessary defence measure against the menacing attitude of the Soviet Union. We must hope that this mighty defensive alliance will prevent a great war. Let us hope that the Soviet Union's leaders will finally be prepared to withdraw the armed Soviet forces from the foreign countries which the Union now occupies. The N.A.T.O. countries can then cease their enforced armaments, and the cause of disarmament will at last have a chance of success.