The Relation of the United Nations to the United States

The proper relation of the United Nations to the United States is differently appraised by those who think that what is good for the United States is good for the world and those who think that what is good for the world is good for the United States. The first tend to value the U.N. only insofar as it proves a useful instrument of U.S. policy; the second value it because it formulates generally accepted values of the community of nations and thus can serve the U.S. as a guide in long-term policy making. The first want to prevent the U.N. from becoming such a powerful source of decision and action that it might hamper the U.S. in the independent formulation or implementation of national policies; the second want to strengthen the U.N. so that it can realize the purposes of its charter which they also consider to be the purposes of the United States.

The United Nations Reconsidered (University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, 1963. 170 pp. Cloth, $3; paper, $1) consists of 15 previously published articles by persons who, in varying degree, have the point of view of the first group. There is a summarizing introduction by the editor, Raymond A. Moore.

The first ten articles are by Senators, other American statesmen, and commentators who believe that, as a result of recent developments, the U.N. "increasingly confronts the United States and the Western nations with a choice between supporting United Nations resolutions with which they disagree or following policies which they believe to be for their best interests, but which undermine the authority of the United Nations" (p. 12).

This situation, which the contributors believe requires a reappraisal of the U.N., has emerged as a result of the increase in U.N. membership, especially by the admission of many Afro-Asian states with little experience and dominated by the sentiment of anti-colonialism. In their opinion, the influence of these states in the General Assembly, which has come to exert greater influence than the Security Council and which operates by the one nation, one vote formula, "distorts the true facts of mid-twentieth century life and promotes an unhealthy gap between those who have voting power and those who have actual power" (p. 12). This statement raises several interesting issues that are not discussed. What are the significant facts of life in the mid-20th century? What is "actual power"? Is military power a rational instrument of national policy in the atomic age? Is it better to have problems of international relations settled by ballots than by nuclear bombs?

These critics are also disturbed because the communist and the nonaligned states have gained influence in the Secretariat, and because the U.N. is faced with a serious financial problem. Many states, including France as well as Russia and some of the new states, have refused to pay their assessments, and the United States has given major assistance to meet the deficit.

Hamilton Fish Armstrong, editor of *Foreign Affairs*, makes a balanced appraisal in which he recognizes the importance of the U.N. and the significant role which the nonaligned states can take, if they are genuinely nonaligned. Senators Bourke Hickenlooper and Mike Mansfield, who served on the U.S. delegation to the Thirteenth General Assembly, report the problems referred to above, and conclude that "the United Nations cannot guarantee peace in a divided world" but that it "has contributed to the maintenance of peace" (p. 45).

In the second section, former President Herbert Hoover asserts that he has always "believed in a world organization for peace" but that communist nations have "destroyed the usefulness of the United Nations to preserve peace." Nevertheless, the organization should be continued, but, according to Hoover, if it fails to act, "the Council of Free Nations should step in" (pp. 81 and 82). The latter should "include only those who are willing to stand up and fight for their freedom." Apparently this means all of America's allies, whether they respect the "freedom" of their citizens or not.

Former Secretary of State James F. Byrnes and Senators J. William Fulbright and Henry M. Jackson give a similar emphasis, though Byrnes is more worried by the new nations than by the communists, and Fulbright sees the most hope in a strengthening of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Jackson thinks the U.S. representatives in NATO should play a larger role in policy making than the U.S. delegation to the U.N., and that both should be kept subordinate to the President and the Secretary of State. Max Ascoli, editor of *The Reporter*, emphasizes human rights and wants common action by genuine, free democracies. He thinks these states might have prevented the Suez and Congo difficulties from getting to the U.N. if they had acted together.

The third section contains speeches on the U.N. bond issue, made in the U.S. Senate by Senators Thomas J. Dodd, Mike Mansfield, and George D. Aiken. These men believe that the U.S. should not be left holding the bag, but they do not refer to the fact that the U.S., despite its relatively large assessment and considerable voluntary contributions, spends less than one-tenth of one percent of its annual budget on the U.N. and all of the specialized agencies put together.

The fourth and final section includes the views of British and French statesmen. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Lord Home find difficulties in the attitudes of the communists and the new nations, but, "having drawn up the balance sheet [of the U.N.] between pessimism and hope come down decidedly on the side of hope" (pp. 132 and 141). The French are highly pessimistic. Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville and Ambassador to the United Nations Guillaume Georges-Picot support President de Gaulle's position. The latter, after deploring the declining influence of the great powers in the U.N., the "riotous and scandalous" sessions of the General Assembly that have been filled with "invectives and insults" proffered especially by the communists, and the Assembly's frequent intervention (by

resolution) in domestic matters, says:

"Under these conditions, France does not see how she can adopt any other attitude toward the United, or Disunited, Nations than that of greatest reserve. In any case, she does not wish to contribute her men or her money to any present or eventual undertaking of this organization—disorganization. Of course we hope that the day will come when common sense will again prevail and when reasonable nations, noting the results of experience, will wish to resume this great world undertaking on a new basis" (p. 145). He considers the organization of Europe the first step toward this improvement.

Much of the criticism expressed in these articles was prompted by some specific U.N. action, or inaction, which the writer disliked—for example, the incidents in Hungary, Goa, and Angola and at Suez; the fighting in Katanga; the troika debate; the bond issue; and the Assembly resolutions dealing with colonialism and South Africa (p. 18). The criticism, however, tended to be generalized and to lead to the following specific suggestions, which are summarized by the editor: (i) the finances of the U.N. should be put in order, (ii) the authority of the Secretary General should be maintained, (iii) the Afro-Asian nations should abandon the dual standard; (iv) weighted votes should be introduced into the General Assembly, (v) it should be recognized that the U.N. depends on the climate of diplomacy, (vi) cohension in the community of free nations should be increased, and (vii) member nations, especially the great powers, should assume responsibility for national decisions that involve their vital interest.

"The United Nations then must not be 'the cornerstone' of the foreign policies of the Great Powers, especially the United States, but a valuable and indispensable supplement to their traditional diplomacy, alliances and regional organization" (p. 21).

While the last two of these suggestions manifest a nationalistic attitude, the first two would be supported by most internationalists. In regard to the remaining suggestions, it may be noted that the tendency of Afro-Asian nations to subordinate peaceful settlement of disputes to the elimination of colonialism and racialism is to be expected in view of their experience with these phenomena; that this tendency is given some support by the Charter provisions concerning the "self-determination of peoples" (Art. 1, par. 2; 55) and the emancipation of "non-self-governing territories" (Arts. 73 and 76); and that the tendency is not likely to last long in view of the rapid progress of the colonial revolution. It should also be noted that, apart from the colonial issue, these nations have, in general, supported measures to maintain the purposes and principles of the U.N., and to strengthen the organization. The fact that neither side in the Cold War wants to alienate them, or to facilitate unilateral intervention by the other side, tends to induce abstention rather than veto in the Security Council—for example, in most of the votes on the Congo situation—and to assure a two-thirds vote for resolutions that maintain the purpose and principles of the U.N. in the General Assembly (p. 10). Consequently, the influence of these states has tended to strengthen the organization and to reduce the capacity of the great powers to use it as an instrument of national policy. This is probably one reason why nationalistic statesmen of these powers have been increasingly critical.

While internationalists often approve weighted voting, in principle, they generally recognize that it will not be practical politics for a long time and that, if population were made a major criterion of voting power, its major effect would be to rectify the present gross under-representation of the communist bloc; although these nations have more than a third of the world's population, if we count China, they have only 11 out of 111 votes in the General Assembly and 2 out of 11 in the Security Council. The Western group with 47 votes and the nonaligned group with 53 are, in proportion to population, about equally overrepresented in the General Assembly, but neither group ever votes as a bloc (see 15th Report, Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, 1962, pp. 35 ff.). The western group is, in proportion to its population, greatly overrepresented in the Security Council.

All scholars recognize that the U.N. depends on the climate of diplomacy, but most believe that the outstanding unfavorable aspect of this climate is the Cold War and the high tensions and rival alliances which it engenders. The last two recommendations would tend to augment this situation.

The editor notes that the contributions do not mention the positive achievements of the U.N. in keeping the peace, in nonpolitical cooperation, in facilitating international contacts, and in enlightening public opinion (p. 21).

The book is significant in that it presents less extreme nationalistic criticisms of the U.N., but it can hardly be said to constitute a just appraisal of that institution or of its appropriate relation to national policies of the U.S. in the atomic age. The three presidents of the U.S. since the U.N. was established have accorded it a more important role than have these critics.

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Archeology and Anthropology

Digging Up Bones. The excavation, treatment, and study of human skeletal remains. Don R. Brothwell. British Museum (Natural History), London, 1963. xiv + 194 pp. Illus. Plates. 19s. 6d.

Human biology looks for experimental data largely to the records of disease, demography, growth, race mixture, and evolution held in the skeletons of past populations as they are related to their environments and history. Brothwell tells archeologists and others practicing anthropology (sometimes they "practice" anthropology without quite realizing it) how to get, record, and use these data. He takes up each problem the excavator and student must face, from the proper preservation of bone to the details of determining age, sex, body build, and kind of disease or trauma suffered during life. He outlines useful measurements and observations, some of which probably have a simple genetic background (for example, the presence of a metopic suture), and shows how statistical comparison may measure the closeness of the relationship between populations. He discusses sampling bias (social selection) in cemeteries and describes such ancient surgical techniques as trephining. Finally, he devotes almost 40 pages and most of the plates to the fascinating subject of ancient disease, covering the range from arthritis and poliomyelitis to leprosy, syphilis, and the blood dyscrasias. This is the high point, most valuable to physicians and historians as well as to anthropologists.

My only criticism is that the list of measurements is inconsistently complex for use by a nonspecialist; this would