

# AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR 'THE' UNITED NATIONS, INC.

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Research Affiliate:

COMMISSION TO STUDY THE ORGANIZATION OF PEACE



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To Chapters and Cooperating Groups

From Clark M. Eichelberger

Each one of us should read the full text of the Introduction to Secretary-General Lie's Report to the United Nations Assembly. Indeed, I wish there were some way that it could be read by every congressman, by every newspaper man, by every radio commentator, and by all those whose task it is to inform the people or to help determine their policies. I wish it could be read by every critic -- by the thousands of uninformed or superficial people who brush aside the United Nations with the glib remark that it has not accomplished anything.

For broad comprehension, for excellence of presentation, for philosophic background, for array of facts, this Introduction will be considered a very great document.

Secretary-General Lie begins with a remark which not only means a break with some of the United Nations' past, but, if fully accepted, would mean that the United Nations had finally grown up.

For some time, as Mr. Lie says, emphasis has been placed on the fact that the United Nations was based upon unanimity of agreement among the great Powers, and that it was not created to make the peace but to keep the peace after the Allies had made it. Then the Secretary-General makes the following statement:

"However true this may be, I believe it is time to think of the United Nations in other terms than of an infant which must be protected from the harsh realities of world politics. It is time to stop justifying the setbacks experienced in the work of the United Nations. I believe that we should start by recognizing that the United Nations has become the chief force that holds the world together against all the conflicting strains and stresses that are pulling it apart."

In other words, and this is my own interpolation, stop pleading for unanimity of the great Powers which has not existed since the war, probably will not exist and probably for the good of the small Powers should not exist; stop trying to protect the United Nations from the difficult problems of the world and present it with these problems.

The Secretary-General would have one reservation to the necessity of bringing all major problems to the United Nations -- they must be brought in a

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spirit of seeking agreement. Referring to the question of Germany, he says: "If consideration is given to bringing the whole problem of Germany before the United Nations, I can only urge in the strongest terms that it be done only in the spirit of a genuine attempt to reach a settlement."

After indicating that the United Nations should no longer be treated like an infant which must be protected from the harsh realities of world politics, the Secretary-General goes on to point out, that the "United Nations has interposed law and human decency and the processes of conciliation and cooperation between the world's peoples and the naked, lawless use of power." . . . "Indeed, the organs of the United Nations are now virtually the only places where regular contact and discussion have been maintained on a continuous basis between the Western Powers and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics." And while the Secretary-General says that the conflict between the East and West has been the cause of many disappointments in the work of the United Nations, "yet it is equally true, though far less often admitted, that the United Nations in its turn has acted as a restraining and conciliating influence upon the parties to this conflict."

In eloquent prose, the Secretary-General shows the United Nations as an organization adapted to a changing world. He describes, first, the world in the midst of profound social and political change. He points out that when the United Nations Charter was signed at San Francisco, China was the only fully independent nation of eastern Asia among the signatories, although India and the Philippines were also signatories. Since then, India and the Philippines have become fully independent, and they, together with Pakistan, Burma and Siam, make five independent nations which are members of the United Nations. Then, after reviewing the number of territories, all not yet independent, which have participated as associate members in the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia, he goes on to point out that in three years some twelve or more of the rising nations of Asia, with a population greater than that of Europe and the Western Hemisphere combined, have "in varying degrees begun to make their influence felt in the work of the United Nations."

The Secretary-General reviews economic and social conditions in the various continents: Europe with its four hundred million people, moving toward political and economic stability; the richness of North America in contrast with South America which needs economic development, and finally, Africa, its people far less developed, who find their participation in the United Nations through the provisions of the Charter relating to non-self-governing peoples and the trusteeship system.

And the Secretary-General concludes: "Finally, the United Nations has been designed above all for a changing world. It has been so framed and so constructed that change can be brought about peacefully instead of by force of arms. It has been so built that the old nationalisms of the Western world and the rising new nationalisms of Asia and the Far East can adjust themselves peacefully to each other. It has been built to contain within peaceful bounds any kind of ideological competition, among capitalists, Communists, Socialists, Social Democrats, or adherents to any other economic or political faith, provided that one group does not attempt to impose its will upon the others by the threat or use of force."

Then the Secretary-General gives a brief but comprehensive review, first, of political problems that came before the United Nations during the past twelve months; Palestine, Indonesia, Kashmir, Greece, and Korea. He discusses the work of the Interim Committee, and one of the most discouraging aspects of the United Nations, the failure to achieve any agreement for the control of atomic energy and the regulation of conventional armaments.

The Secretary General's report deals briefly but effectively with the International Court of Justice, the development of international law, non-self-governing peoples and trusteeship. Then he turns to the economic and social side of the United Nations, dealing with the work of the economic commissions, particularly the Economic Commission for Europe, human rights, improved social conditions, and the specialized agencies.

Everyone should read the concluding section of the Introduction, entitled, "Proposals for Further Strengthening of the United Nations". Mr. Lie urges, in the first place, the settlement of the German problem which is like a cloud hanging over the United Nations. He urges fuller use of the existing powers of the Security Council for the settlement of international disputes. The Secretary-General believes, and this has been the position of the American Association for the United Nations, that it is not the perfection of the Charter that is needed at the present moment but rather the full use of the Charter by the Members. He states: "Much has been said about the alleged helplessness of the United Nations, and particularly of the Security Council. I respectfully submit, however, that the powers contained in the Charter would have been more than sufficient to deal with every situation which has come before the Security Council to date, had they been invoked."

And then, after urging the fulfillment of Article 43 of the Charter in the establishment of armed contingents to maintain and enforce peace, Mr. Lie urges the creation of "a small United Nations Guard Force which could be recruited by the Secretary-General and placed at the disposal of the Security Council and the General Assembly." He explains that such a force would not be used as a police force to restrain or stop aggression, but that it would be for guard duty with United Nations missions in such tasks as conducting plebiscites and in the administration of truce terms, and as a constabulary under the Security Council and the Trusteeship Council, in such situations as Jerusalem and Trieste, during the establishment of an international regime.

Finally, Mr. Lie urges that the United Nations move toward universality of membership. After pointing out that eight states had been admitted since the San Francisco Conference, he indicates that there are eleven more states whose applications for admission have been recommended by the Security Council. He urges that the permanent Members of the Security Council reach some agreement so that all applicants can be admitted at the forthcoming meeting of the General Assembly. Such admission would raise the membership in the United Nations from fifty-eight to sixty-nine.

I should like to conclude the survey of Mr. Lie's Introduction by a quotation from it:

"But today the peoples of the world possess a world law -- the Charter, machinery for constructive cooperation -- the Organization, and a flag -- the United Nations flag -- under which they have a good chance to maintain a lasting peace and build a world that is fit for all men to live in."

The report is realistic because it points out the obstacles and the problems, and the great ferment going on in the world the outcome of which no one can see. It is an encouraging report in that it points to very solid United Nations achievements which few people have taken the time to appreciate.

And finally, it is a hopeful report in that it leaves one with a feeling that if there is any determination on the part of the peoples and of their statesmen to use the United Nations machinery, the machinery is sufficiently flexible and adequate to adjust itself to the vast changes that confront us. It is a challenge for every man and woman to do his part.