

## The United Nations at Nine

THE UNITED NATIONS' ninth birthday finds it plodding along no great distance from the starting point. No fair-minded comparison of its triumphs and failures would justify the conclusion that it has been a smashing success.

On the credit side it persuaded Russia to back down in Iran, had a hand in ending the shooting in Indonesia, and negotiated peace in Palestine. Thanks mainly to American strength and the tough backbones of the South Koreans, it cleared the Communist armed forces from South Korea. It has meanwhile launched some promising but modest-scale projects aimed at relieving some of the poverty and ignorance that are root-causes of war.

Its failures have been more spectacular. It has failed to halt the expansion of the Communist empire. It has given the Communists a platform from which to broadcast lies to the ends of the earth. It has seen Russia, perverting the mechanics of the Charter, block the doorways to a just peace. The Charter proclaims a "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person." Russia, which has openly scorned the Charter since the day she signed it, continues to try to pry the doors open to a Red China whose contempt for UN principles is written in blood across the whole face of Asia. The clamor to scrap the United Nations is understandable. But in spite of the record, withdrawal of American support would be unsound policy at this stage.

The United Nations serves an inescapable need—the need for moral man to try to bring himself abreast of technological man. Science

has lashed the world into a tight bundle, where every man is the close neighbor of every other. At the same time science has handed mankind weapons of such power that a real neighborhood Donnybrook could destroy civilization.

The United Nations is the global town-meeting place where these ill-assorted neighbors can seek the means to escape that destruction.

It is no conclusive indictment of the UN that men have failed in nine years to discover the elixir—the basis for understanding—that men have been seeking for 50 centuries. It is not a cause for despair that flaws have shown up in the UN. The problem is formidable. The solution never promised to be quick or easy.

To belabor the United Nations for the failure to solve the problem is to whip the wrong horse. The main fault is not UN weakness; the main fault is human weakness. The Kremlin's leaders have refused—because they have not dared—to raise the iron curtain behind which flourish fear and suspicion fed by ignorance. The free world's statesmen have failed to muster the wisdom and unity to mount an effective assault against this blockade.

To scuttle the UN now would be little more than a public confession of defeat in this struggle. Ambassador Lodge has said it would lead inevitably to war; at least it would arbitrarily seal off a possible avenue to peace.

There is a spark in the soul of mankind that compelled creation of the UN as a symbol of its hopes and an instrument for their fulfillment. As long as the hope lives, there will be need for such a symbol and such an instrument.

## Public Keep Out?

*Admit One, Admit All*

THE SPECIAL SENATE committee's ban on television and radio coverage of the September hearings on charges against Senator Joseph McCarthy transgresses the American doctrine of equal rights.

The ban was imposed on the ground that microphones and TV cameras might embarrass and confuse witnesses, tempt extroverts to show off, and so impede the search for facts.

The argument is completely beside the point. A meeting transacting public business is either public or it isn't—by no tenable logic can it be something in between. Some kinds of meetings, like grand jury sessions, must, by their nature, be kept confidential. But in any case where a single person is admitted who is not an actual participant—in any meeting opened to a single reporter or other private citizen—160,000,000 other Americans have an unalienable equal right to attend if there is room in the hall.

The science of electronics has now expanded the hall, making it possible for the first time for a majority of these 160,000,000 to attend a given meeting. These millions—barred by the Watkins committee—have exactly the same right as anyone physically in the room.

## Aladdin Was a Piker

ALADDIN, THE STORY RUNS, rubbed a lamp and brought forth a mighty genie to do his bidding.

In Menlo Park, New Jersey, on October 21, 1879, a thirty-two-year-old scientist touched another kind of lamp—a carbonized cotton-thread filament sealed in a crude glass bulb—and produced the bright, steady glow of energy that changed the face of America and the world.

Out of that lamp, in due time, came the regiment of electrical servants that speed and illuminate and ease the day's work . . . miracles in medicine . . . the great powerhouse of energy that turns the wheels of mechanized America . . . the wizardry of electrical computers . . . the new revolution of electronics, with its radar and its television, its facile capacity to set whole factories humming smoothly without benefit of human hands.

Out of that lamp came the energy that endows the average American workman today with the strength of 200 men. And with this prodigious, tireless strength came a life of bright new dimensions of leisure, pleasure and opportunity. This lamp, flourishing in the hospitable climate of enlightened free enterprise, produced the envied phenomenon of America—the strongest nation on earth, the freest and the most rewarding to its people. Out of this same lamp, now, comes the promise of a yet more wonderful era to come, as wizards of the electrical age move on to harness the limitless energies of the atom and the sun.

On this diamond jubilee of the invention of the incandescent lamp, Collier's salutes the great industry which has been built, by the dynamics of American freedom, on the foundation laid by Thomas A. Edison, and pays its respects to his memory. Viewed alongside this flesh-and-blood American, Aladdin was a very ordinary lad, indeed.

Smoother going  
down

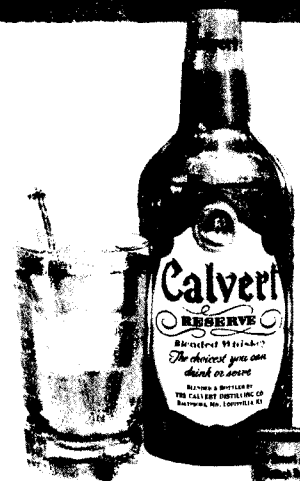


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