

# Saturday Review



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a vital role in ending the war in Vietnam. It has not been able to deal with the basic causes of war in the Middle East or to achieve a workable and durable settlement of the issues that threaten once again to erupt in open and dangerous conflict. It has not been empowered to create a situation of stability and security on Earth or to put an end to the world arms race.

It may be said that it was never intended that the United Nations should be able to cope with problems of this size. What matters, however, is that the world's peoples have given the United Nations the assignment to deal with such questions, whatever their complexity or magnitude. This assignment cannot be set aside.

Strong support, therefore, was expressed for your statement of May 26, 1970, that "peace and justice and freedom depend upon law and law enforcement. No nation can progress, or even survive, without laws, without police, without courts. The United Nations . . . cannot progress, or even survive, without enforceable world laws, world police, and world courts for the maintenance of international peace and justice."

There is encouragement for the acceptance of these new concepts in the growing spirit of world community and citizenship that is becoming apparent in many parts of the Earth. Among  
(Continued on page 64)

## On Human Survival

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *A group of men and women from all over the world met at the United Nations for four days last month to consider the condition of man in our time and the prospects for the United Nations in the years ahead. The meeting was called a "Conference on Human Survival." It began with an address by U.N. Secretary General U Thant, who challenged the group to think beyond existing limitations on the functioning of the world organization. At the conclusion of the conference, Lester B. Pearson, chairman of the group, sent the Secretary General a letter covering the main points discussed at the meeting. Excerpts from the letter follow.*

**D**ear Mr. Secretary General:  
We meet at a time when human existence on this planet is in jeopardy.

We see a world in which human population is increasing at a rate that will strain to the breaking point the ability of the earth to sustain human beings in dignity, welfare, and freedom.

We see wars in Indochina and the Middle East, and threats of war in the south of Africa. Remnants of colonialism persist.

We see the blight of racial discrimination in many lands.

We see an escalating arms race, which the superpowers seem unable to halt or contain, with more than two hundred billion dollars being spent last year on arms.

We see a deteriorating human environment brought about by the mis-

handling and improper use of the Earth's resources.

We see youth protesting a world in which they feel they may have no future, a world in which nations exempt themselves from the orderly and rational behavior they demand of their citizens, a world in which an accident or miscalculation could obliterate civilization and make a farce out of human evolution, a world in which force is immediate and total and justice is indefinite and partial. . . .

Our mood is somber but not despairing.

We view the human condition with great apprehensions, but nothing is clearer to us than the fact that answers to the problems of our time are well within human capability. We are confident that a world can be created in which all peoples may lead lives free from the threat of man-made holocaust, free from hunger, disease, and homelessness, free from the environmental menace we have brought upon ourselves.

The extent to which these hopes can be realized is directly tied to the full development of the United Nations. Indeed, it is difficult to contemplate the future of human society with any genuine optimism unless the United Nations is given the means and the authority to act effectively in those matters concerned with common dangers and common needs.

The one point that was stressed time and again during our meetings was that the United Nations never has been fully used. It has not been able to play

### Conference Participants

SIR ADETOKUNBO ADEMOLA; Chief Justice of Supreme Court; Nigeria

HARRISON BROWN; foreign secretary of the National Academy of Sciences; U.S.A.

NORMAN COUSINS; editor; U.S.A.

RENE DUMONT; agronomist; France

R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER; engineer, inventor; U.S.A.

JOSEPH KI-ZERBO; historian; Upper Volta

KONRAD LORENZ; ecologist, ethologist; Austria

ALLA MASSEVITCH; astronomer, astrophysicist; U.S.S.R.

LEO MATES; economist; Yugoslavia

VIJAYA L. PANDIT; former president of the U.N. General Assembly; India

(CHAIRMAN) LESTER B. PEARSON; former Prime Minister, Nobel Peace Prize winner; Canada

PAUL PREBISCH; economist; Argentina  
CARLOS ROMULO; Minister of Foreign Affairs; Philippines

JAN TINBERGEN; Nobel Prize Winner in Economics; The Netherlands

C. F. VON WEIZSAECKER; physicist; West Germany

KISABURO YOKOTA; former Chief Justice of Supreme Court; Japan

# Letters to the Editor

## Welfare Reform

THE SPECIAL SECTION on "Welfare: Time for Reform" [SR, May 23] has made a tremendous contribution toward better understanding of the welfare and poverty situations. However, I disagree with Daniel P. Moynihan that the Family Assistance Plan is "One Step We Must Take." The President's Commission on Income Maintenance declared we can and should eliminate poverty in America. The Family Assistance Plan is merely a reform that benefits about 15 per cent of the families now on welfare with no elimination of poverty. President Nixon declared the welfare system is a colossal failure; yet he leads people to believe his band-aid proposal is a major reform.

Senator Fred Harris has proposed legislation (S 3433) that would eliminate both absolute poverty in America and the dehumanizing welfare system along with other poverty programs. Senator Eugene McCarthy has introduced an Adequate Income Bill (S 3780) that would eliminate poverty and all poverty programs and income maintenance systems; this proposal reflects the fact that the average urban family of four needs \$6,300 annually.

VIVIAN WASHINGTON,  
San Diego, Calif.

THE SERIES of articles dealing with welfare was quite good, and has already been of use in my graduate classes in social work. However, regarding Yale Brozen's "Toward an Ultimate Solution" I [would] quarrel with Mr. Brozen in his patently silly argument that a negative tax would reintroduce "competition" into the provision of medical care. Using a classical economic model, he argues that patients "could shop for medical services instead of having to accept inefficiently produced, high-cost services." This idea of competing entrepreneurs (doctors) vying for business from the unhealthy is not an option for the future and did not, in fact, exist in the past. And anyone needing help through a negative tax would hardly be a hot little competitor for a medical professional's services.

Some form of government-subsidized medical program should be recognized as a separate need apart from income maintenance. Just about one good illness would wipe out the family of four's total income of \$3,500. A negative tax would hardly make the "consumer-king" theory a reality. It never existed, and, given the uncontrolled and exorbitant rise in all medical costs, to suggest that people would "shop" around and lower costs and improve the delivery of services in our antiquated medical care system is foolishness.

PROFESSOR RUSSELL E. SMITH,  
Sacramento State College,  
Sacramento, Calif.

## Art-less Museums

KATHARINE KUH's "Letter to a Nature Lover" [THE FINE ARTS, Apr. 25] is so

right: The museum directors have no clothes.

While in New York last summer, I took a friend from Missouri to the Whitney, which she had never seen. There, on exhibition, carefully roped off, were three bowls of dog food—kibbles—arranged on the floor on newspapers, with some of the dog food scattered about. My friend, furious at having to pay a stiff admission price for something she does daily in her own home (granted, without roping off her dog's food) could not contain her protests. She went up to an impassive guard and asked him, "Do you really have a feeling of guarding anything in this exhibition?" After a moment of deliberation, the man smiled sadly and said, "You know, I don't!"

MARGARET LEFRANC,  
Miami, Fla.

## Pei Rejoinder

IN HIS CRITICISM of my article "Prospects for a Global Language" [SR, May 2], Professor Harvey Minkoff [LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, May 23] puts into my mouth words that I have never spoken or written. He is evidently unfamiliar with the fact that for the past thirty years, while advocating a world language as a needed tool of communication, I have disagreed with the idealistic view that it would eliminate wars. As a single sample of my thinking, I quote from p. 244 of my book *One Language for the World*, first published in 1958: "Some of the advocates of international tongues optimistically assure us that an international language will abolish them (international conflicts and wars) forever. This is, of course, wishful thinking. History is there to recite to us a long list of civil wars among peoples speaking the same tongue. The most that we can claim is that the international tongue may succeed in removing such forms of

national and racial antipathy as are engendered by linguistic lack of understanding."

If I speak with sympathy of the idealism of Zamenhof and his followers, it is simply because we do not need to agree with a point of view that is highly idealistic and humanitarian to respect and even admire it. An international language all by itself will not lead to the abolition of war; but, combined with other factors and movements, it will help.

Dr. Minkoff's second point concerning the eventual breakup of an international language into a series of different languages is probably in error. Quoting again from the same page of the same book: "Those who claim that an international language, once established, would break up into a series of local speech-forms ignore the lessons of history. Language becomes united and standard when there is communication among all the speakers. It becomes a series of dialects when there is no such communication. Communications have never been so good as they are today."

Latin flourished, expanded, and became more and more standardized while the Roman Empire stood, with its roads, trade, schools, and system of political administration. It broke up only when communications, commerce, education, and institutions collapsed, and, even then, it took centuries after the collapse of the Empire to bring about complete fractionalization in the language. The unifying forces the Romans had at their disposal were excellent for their historical period; they were rudimentary compared with what we have today—radio, TV, Telstar, tapes and spoken films, universal compulsory education, widespread literacy, and train, automobile, steamship, and airplane travel. Only a catastrophe of major proportions, a full-fledged atomic war or a mighty upheaval of nature, could break the communication links of today.

MARIO PEI,  
Columbia University,  
New York, N.Y.



"... That's it. Then you cut the rope that hurls the boulder at the enemy. I'd do it for you, but I'm only here in an advisory capacity."