WAGING PEACE SERIES

As far as is known, the term "Waging Peace" originated with Warren Wells, late husband of Ethel Wells of Santa Barbara, in a letter to President Eisenhower. It was a long-standing practice of Mr. Wells to keep in close touch with key national figures and give them his views on peace issues as well as other vital matters. This series is dedicated both as a memorial to him and in gratitude to Mrs. Wells for her continued efforts in this cause.

Just as peace is more than the absence of war, waging peace is more than supporting arms reductions. In addition, it embraces positive steps toward genuine harmony. In this series the Foundation will distribute short booklets stressing ideas for attaining peace. Some publications will be scholarly, others more popular in style—most will combine elements of both. Concepts expressed will include views of many authorities, and will not necessarily be those of the Foundation.

Suggestions for topics and your reactions to this issue are welcome. Quantity lots are available at minimal charge from the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

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INTRODUCTION

Jan Tinbergen has spent his life trying to create a more just and equitable world. He is well qualified to discuss the revitalization of the United Nations. Not only is he one of the world's leading economists (a co-recipient of the first Nobel Prize in Economics), but he spent many years conducting projects for specialized agencies of the United Nations. He is a man well acquainted with the strengths and faults of the United Nations organization, and with the global need for its increased effectiveness.

As an economist, Professor Tinbergen is concerned with finding the optimal organizational level for reaching decisions in a world of sovereign nations. He recognizes clearly that while certain problems can be solved at the national or sub-national levels, others can only be solved at the global level. Among the latter problems are those concerned with population growth, resource depletion, pollution, nuclear weapons, and misuse of the oceans and outer space. If these problems are not solved at the global level, they will continue to intensify and lead to increased conflict among nations.

The United Nations was formed "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." So far the organization has failed more conspicuously than it has succeeded in realizing this goal. If it is to become effective in preventing wars, including nuclear war, the U.N. decision-making process must be restructured to better reflect contemporary political power. The organization must also be empowered to enforce its decisions. Professor Tinbergen offers a thoughtful proposal for embarking on a process of revitalizing our only existing organization with the potential for global management.

David Krieger
President
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

REVITALIZING
THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

by Jan Tinbergen

Today's world consists of a thoroughly intertwined cluster of nations—more than 150, from very small and weak to very large and strong—all facing unprecedented threats. As a consequence of population growth, exhaustion of certain resources, and new technological developments, problems have arisen with an as yet unknown impact on human welfare. Pollution of the atmosphere, water and soil, erosion, deforestation and desertification threaten the lives of tens of millions of persons and are getting out of control. Perhaps worst of all are the potential disasters nuclear energy may bring. Peacetime accidents have thus far shown only a relatively modest type of danger, although the potential dangers were demonstrated at Three Mile Island in the U.S. and Chernobyl in the U.S.S.R. What is in store in the form of nuclear weapons has been expressed in words, but does not yet seem to have penetrated into human conscience.

On the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations many speakers and writers made an attempt to evaluate its performance. Understandably the evaluation of the complex and many-sided activities differed depending upon activities and according to commentators. Activities in the field of information and documentation were more or less unanimously praised, while activities in maintaining peace or preventing war were found to be of very limited significance. On many other activities, evaluations varied considerably. Very diverse attitudes were also shown with regard to the UN's future. Opinions differed widely on the
importance of new tasks for the United Nations institutions—for instance, the creation of a New International Economic Order, or the introduction of the new Law of the Sea.

Unfortunately, critics of the UN decision-making methods, or of its failure to establish a peaceful world have not offered a set of carefully selected forward-looking proposals. Rather, they appear not to be interested. They are strong at rejecting new ideas, but have not replaced them by better alternatives. At most, they have elaborated details; useful details, to be sure, such as avoiding repetitive addresses or avoiding the politicization of purely technical subjects. In brief, the critics of the United Nations system have not made positive proposals of the order of magnitude which today's world sorely needs.

Filling Power Vacuums: Historical Examples

In a world consisting of sovereign nations only, without any element of superstructure, a large number of activities will be initiated which, when carried out, would appear to be incompatible. The initiatives of the powerful nations have a better chance to be implemented than those of the weak. If two or more powerful actors want incompatible changes, however, supranational structures will be needed if clashes are to be avoided. Clashes imply waste of energy and massive human suffering and hence a sub-optimal development.

If superstructures to settle conflicts are lacking, we have a power vacuum which must be filled. It may be filled by the conclusion of a treaty, or by the establishment of a common institution. In both cases a portion of a nation's sovereignty is shifted to a supranational level. Such conflict settling institutions save the energy otherwise wasted and prevent the human suffering. They do so by, for instance, gathering information and doing research to avoid future conflicts. In other cases, they may invite a number of weak nations (into an alliance) and thus help to implement a larger part of these nations' aspirations.

To illustrate, I shall mention a few institutions, part of the current system of United Nations institutions, which were created to fill power vacuums.

One of the oldest institutions is the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Not long after the organization of national mail services, the international part of this form of communication also had to be streamlined by more uniform national rules and agreements about rates and the distribution of receipts between the nations involved. An international superstructure of mail services became the responsibility of the Universal Postal Union.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) was established at the Washington Conference in 1919. During the nineteenth century workers organized themselves in trade unions in order to exert pressure on employers to improve wages and labor conditions, which in the early part of the century were inhuman. During the second half of the nineteenth century a start was made with legislation prohibiting the worst extremes. Prior to World War I a whole system of social legislation was enacted step by step. The end of World War I brought the eight-hour working day. These improvements became possible as a consequence of continued capital formation and technological development. The improved standard of life of workers in developed countries was threatened, however, by the competition of low-wage countries, and it became clear that social legislation had to be internationalized in order to safeguard worker well-being. This internationalization became the task of the International Labor Organization and its secretariat, the International Labor Office in Geneva. Although the ILO was set up to support Western workers' interests, it gradually also contributed increasingly to an improvement of the well-being of Third World workers, so far as economic conditions would permit.

Jumping from the First to the Second World War we find that at the Bretton Woods conference in 1945 two important institutions were created to respond to another set of
“vacuums” in the financial field. These were the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Bank helped to finance the reconstruction of war-stricken countries to begin with, and later, increasingly, the development of underdeveloped countries. Its loans are long-term loans made to governments, and so the World Bank is part of a public world infrastructure. Similarly the IMF provides short-term loans to countries in balance-of-payments difficulties and illustrates the existence of a common interest of all member countries in an orderly system of international payments.

**Filling Power Vacuums: Contemporary Examples**

One of the oldest forms of international discourse, trade between nations is an area where national interests are still given a higher priority than is desirable. A trading partner's interests should be given **equal** weight. In other words, protective forces are still keeping trade at lower than optimal levels. A long-ago proposed International Trade Organization (1947 Conference of Havana) was not ratified by the United States. As a second-best solution the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was established, which is only an agreement on how to negotiate, from time to time, tariff reductions. Since the developing countries especially felt that their interests were given low weight, a new specialized agency, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was created in 1964, where Third World interests were given higher weight. UNCTAD is presently suffering from the same lack of power as the United Nations generally and so we may conclude that part of the power vacuum in matters of trade is still waiting for a new approach.

A second contemporary example refers to the rights and duties of **transnational enterprises** (TNEs). TNEs are able to profit from the absence of some form of world government. An attempt to fill at least part of this vacuum has been the establishment of a **UN Centre for Transnational Corporations and a UN Code of Conduct for TNEs** and for the governments involved. The Centre collects information on TNE and government behavior.

A third contemporary example relates to the **production and distribution of food**. The world food economy suffers from a lack of equilibrium: Europe and North America are producing too much and a large part of the Third World is producing too little. So far no solution acceptable to all concerned has been found. There have been only partial solutions, not well coordinated.

A fourth contemporary example concerns the draft Law of the Sea. In a nine-year series of negotiations in the **UN Conference on the Law of the Sea** (UNCLOS) this law has been adapted to a number of new facts, technologies and discoveries. The number of ratifications by participating nations is not yet sufficient for the new Law to become valid. The governments of some important countries, including the United States, have attempted to change the draft law; and it is not yet clear what the result will be. It would be a deplorable setback if the draft law, achieved with such painstaking effort, were to be substantially changed.

A fifth example of an existing power vacuum is found in the field of **environmental policies**. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Secretariat in Nairobi is the center of information and research that recommends a number of policy activities in order to stop a further deterioration of the environment and to upgrade it. But again there is a power vacuum since UNEP is not endowed with any executive power.

The last, and by far the most important, example of today's power vacuums is, of course, the **security issue**. As a consequence of a variety of factors we have been forced into a position where two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union have available, among other arms, a nuclear destruction capacity enabling them to kill the planet's population several times over. Moreover, they
adhere to different socio-economic systems, officially often said to be opposite, or mutually incompatible. Political philosophies of the past, adhered to by many citizens and politicians in both powers and their allies (NATO and Warsaw Pact), when applied by the military and civilian leadership, could easily lead to a Third and Last World War. In an attempt to introduce the necessary new thinking alluded to by Albert Einstein, the most astute commentators have formulated some basic points. These are (a) nuclear war cannot be won since it destroys everybody's environment, and hence (b) must not be fought. A prohibition of (nuclear) war lies within the competence of the UN Security Council and it is here that we find the most glaring power vacuum. Decision making by the Security Council is thwarted by the veto power of its permanent members, making implementation of any decision virtually impossible because of lack of consensus.

Having illustrated what power vacuums have been tentatively filled or are in the process or in need of being filled, I now propose to deal systematically with the innovations needed in the UN institutions.

Sources of Inspiration

How can a systematic treatment of the innovation of the United Nations System be undertaken? What, in other words, can be our sources of inspiration? In order to be as realistic as possible we prefer to be guided by two main empirical sources. One is to learn from the history of our own subject, the United Nations. The other is to learn from similar subjects. Their similarity must be derived from the essential features of our subject. We submit that the essential task of the future United Nations is managing our planet. So the other source of inspiration is good management. This may be management of large, well-run enterprises, or management of a successful national government. I will discuss these three sources in succession.

The fortieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1985 gave rise to a large number of evaluations. Many lessons can be drawn from the errors made by the UN system as well as from its successes. Since some types of errors have been, in our opinion, overemphasized, and so are well known, we shall almost automatically apply these lessons.

Other types of errors have not been discussed as much as they should. An example is the recommendation about the amount of official development assistance made in 1969 by the Pearson Commission and in 1970 by the UN Committee for Development Planning. The weak form of decision-making chosen—a recommendation only—clearly is not sufficient and constitutes an error. The governments of the medium-sized and large industrial countries have not taken these recommendations seriously, and actual assistance provided has been about half of the amount suggested by the experts. As a consequence we are now facing the debt problem. If the recommended 0.7 percent of GNP had been made available to Third World nations since 1970, an amount close to the present Third World debt would have been transferred in addition to the official assistance actually transferred. The debt problem is due to that error.

In addition, one success story should be given the attention it deserves. The way the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea was chaired and the discussions organized deserves special mention. One illustration is the fact that several quite different drafts were tabled by various participating representatives or groups of countries. The creation, out of these various texts, of a "unique informal negotiation text," was the key to an orderly and efficient discussion.

Learning from errors, therefore, implies that the various improvements in procedures of decision-making that have been mentioned by many commentators are carried out. Their execution should not only be recommended, but imposed; for instance, by explicitly prescribing them in the regulations and making them part of the task of the chairperson of all meetings.
The idea that in many cases procedures be imposed instead of simply recommended is another example of the need for increased power, the filling of power vacuums which we discussed in a much wider sense.

Learning from well-organized large enterprises means that businesslike approaches deserve attention. These will be forthcoming automatically if the UN institutions are run by persons with outstanding managerial qualities.

Another important characteristic of a well-run enterprise is that its staff forms a well-defined hierarchy, with several levels, and clearly defined responsibilities for each level. This latter characteristic implies that for the resolution of each problem an optimal level of decision making exists. This characteristic applies to details as well as to the main tasks and their execution. It applies in particular to the way in which the world’s most urgent problems are going to be tackled.

Learning from well-run nations consists partly of modes of action also used by well-run enterprises. But there are some fundamental differences between enterprises and nations. Enterprises can select their “population” of employees; nations are given their population, including all sorts of human beings who suffer from old age, sickness or other handicaps, and human beings too young to work and in need of preparing themselves for a job. For a well-run nation efficiency is as desirable as for a well-run firm, but its tasks are different. Clearly the United Nations institutions are more comparable to a nation than to an enterprise. The United Nations organization has to include human beings much more different than in any one nation and so its tasks are more difficult. Whereas one nation can get rid of some less desirable individuals, the world as a whole cannot.

In a sense the commonwealth of all peoples faces problems similar to those of one federal state, and the federal state again faces problems similar to those of one state. The structures repeat themselves “at one level lower.” So far the commonwealth of one well-run federal state is better organized than the world at large, and this is why the latter can learn from the former.

National states tend to maintain as much of their sovereignty as possible, and often prefer that the superstructure is weak. They prefer a set of treaties to regulate their common interests. It remains to be seen, however, whether such a weak structure is really preferable. Would it be wise to replace the United States of America by fifty sovereign states linked by treaties? A set of treaties may be a good beginning, but in the long run a stronger structure is more secure. With this picture in mind let us discuss the optimal structure of the United Nations institutions.

Remarks on the General Structure

The UN institutions are operating more or less autonomously, almost as sovereign entities. Where their activities so require they are consulting one another, and their activities are coordinated by bodies such as the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). The structure is complicated on the one hand and weak on the other hand. Among the reasons for this state of affairs are that the institutions were created at very different times and their creation served the interests of varying groups of countries, competing for increased power. In contrast to the structure of governments of well-run nations the UN structure lacks strength and needs reconstruction around a set of concrete objectives, together aiming at the management of the planet.

There should be a “World Government,” subdivided in “Departments” for separate areas of world governmental tasks, and responsible to a “World Parliament.” The Executive should be a board of the heads of the departments of a number of specialized agencies, grouped in a logical way. Some of the smaller agencies, such as the Universal Postal Union or the World Meteorological Organization, should be part of broader departments, such as a Department of
Transportation and Communication, or a Department of Agriculture, whose main agencies would be the larger agencies, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization in the latter case.

The tasks of the various institutions will be partly determined by this structure and so will the agency to which they have to report. The complete reconstruction will be a subject to be dealt with by the UN Conference on Necessary Reform, proposed at the end of this essay. It should be clear that world government tasks are only tasks that require a decision at world level: few but important ones.

Reforms of Existing UN Institutions:
Representation of Member Nations in Assemblies

Having set out the need for a stronger United Nations system of institutions and the sources of inspiration for its design, I propose to specify a number of reforms in more concrete form. I will do so by, first, discussing the reforms of already existing UN institutions (in the present section) and, then, discussing some new institutions that should be created.

A major reform is needed with regard to the General Assembly. Countries with a large population should have a larger influence on the decisions made than countries with a small population, and for the time being nations with a high income per capita should also have more influence than countries with a low income per capita since contributions to the total budget must be dependent on these incomes. This latter difference in influence need not persist, however, if the historical development of democratic parliaments is followed. This reform should also apply to the assemblies of all specialized agencies.

The credibility and the impact of the United Nations and of any of the specialized organizations depends, to a very high degree, on the composition of the General Assembly or the Assembly of the specialized agency considered. The present system of one nation one vote reduces credibility and impact to a very low level. The way of representation must reflect more clearly the significance to world affairs of the member nations. The history of parliamentary democracy illustrates this. The present situation in Western democracies based on one vote for all adult citizens was preceded by systems where only taxpayers or individuals who had passed an exam were entitled to vote. Similarly the representation of nations in the UN General Assembly or in specialized agencies' assemblies may start with a more limited system and develop in line with the development of the member nations' potential to serve the cause at stake. The assemblies may be characterized by criteria that reflect such potential; criteria adhered to by a sufficient number of experts in all parts of the world.

As a concrete example we shall show the composition of the General Assembly under three possible procedures, each of them with alternatives. Hopefully, this example may serve as a starting point to the official commission in charge of the formulation of a revised UN Charter (see the last section of this booklet). The criteria chosen are: (I) the member nations' agreed on financial contributions; (II) the members' real national product; and (III) the members' population size.

Financial contribution as a criterion is used by shareholders' meetings of corporations and may be nicknamed "one dollar, one vote." It is reflected in the stage of parliamentary democracy where only taxpayers had a vote—although not in exactly the same way: it is more conservative. We will call it the dollar procedure ($).

Real national income as a criterion weights member nations according to what they are contributing to world real product. It reflects the member nations' productivity and will be called the productivity procedure (prod.).

Population as a criterion is used for adults in democratic parliaments and corresponds with "one person, one vote." It
will be called the **population procedure** (pop.).

Since it is agreed upon that nations with a high income per capita should contribute more to the UN than nations with a low income per capita, the dollar procedure (I) leads to a criterion more unequal than the productivity procedure (II), where proportionality to total national income is taken, and (II) is more unequal than the population procedure (III) where differences in income per capita do not matter at all.

Income should not be nominal income, expressed in, for instance, U.S. dollars, but real income, expressed in buying power. In other words national currencies should not be converted into dollars with the aid of exchange rates but with the aid of the currency’s buying power parity. Fortunately an elaborate study by I.B. Kravis and collaborators made for the World Bank and preceded by an application to more than 100 countries supplies us with exactly the material we need of an unprecedented quality. Table I is based on this material. This table shows the number of assembly seats given by each of the procedures to the nations whose criterion entitles them to one or more seats. Provisionally an assembly of 200 seats has been assumed (in order to remain close to the present number of 159 member states). Dividing the total, for all countries considered, of the criterion by 200, we obtain the criterion value entitling a nation to one seat. Nations with more than half that value (so the total divided by 400) are also considered to be entitled to a seat.

Table I shows the result of these initial procedures. Some of the most important features are:

(a) a large number of member countries do not receive any seat;
(b) the dollar procedure gives, for the high-income countries, more seats than the productivity procedure and the latter more seats than the population procedure, for obvious reasons;
(c) in contrast, for low-income countries the opposite applies: more seats under the population procedure than under the productivity procedure and more seats under the latter than under the dollar procedure.

### Table I. Number of seats in Assembly of (provisionally) 200 seats to be occupied by member nations entitled to one or more seats.

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</tbody>
</table>


It will be clear that the results under the dollar procedure strongly depend on the assumptions made with regard to the regime of contribution assumed. Our assumption has been that this “tax” exempts per capita real incomes under $1000. With the figures for 1975 this exemption applies to 64 nations. Ecuador would be the lowest-income country supposed to make a contribution. The “tax” rate applied to 1975 income per capita above $1000 was assumed to be 0.0005 or .05 percent, since that results in a revenue near today’s revenue of international organizations of roughly $2 billion (in 1975 dollars), of which the United States paid $581 million or 29 percent. This matches with the roughly 30 percent of the seats the United States would occupy under the dollar procedure.

The features of Table I require further procedures. It is not acceptable that any member nation is not represented in a future world parliament. There are several alternative further procedures to solve this problem:

I. Member nations may themselves form groups which are entitled to one (common) seat, and so occupy the remaining seats.

II. As a minimum all member nations are entitled to one
seat. This would require the creation of additional seats: 119 under procedure (I), 99 under procedure (II) and 94 under procedure (III). The definitive number of seats would then become 319, 299 and 294.

III. The provisional number of seats of the Assembly may be set higher, for instance 500. This warrants a seat to countries with lower criterion values; for 500 seats down to 0.001 x the total.

IV. Different weights may be given to the member nations' votes, based on the exact values of the criteria; the additional seats and several of the other seats would have a weight below 1. This system may be used also in the present one seat for all members system.

V. Still another alternative is that the smaller countries (in the sense of the criterion used) are grouped into larger units entitled to one or more seats and the groups created have one or more seats in the (General) Assembly. The process of grouping should be organized by the UN Secretariat and discussed with, as well as accepted by, the countries concerned. The groups should have their own assemblies in which the member countries are all represented. As an example, all Spanish speaking Latin American countries (excluding the Caribbean and Central American countries) may be taken. These ten countries as a group are entitled to 7 seats under the dollar procedure, to 9 seats under the productivity procedure and to 8 seats under the population procedure.

Such grouping could be called the system of "indirect representation." It will be more difficult to obtain consensus on grouping in other parts of the world. This requires more research and political discussion, but might contribute to new forms of cooperation so far impossible. This system might be used to drastically reduce the number of seats of the General Assembly and so contribute to more intensive discussions and better decision-making.

Whatever the procedure followed, the criteria (or weights) must be recalculated at regular intervals. In the long run a shift from the dollar procedure to the productivity and eventually to the population procedure must take place, in the spirit of the New International Economic Order formulated in 1974.

Since the reform in representation of member states constitutes a rather fundamental reform it seems useful to compare the procedures proposed with one existing institution of a regional character (at a lower level, to use the language of our general orientation), namely, in the European Community. Table II compares the composition of the European Parliament with the number of seats calculated in our productivity and population procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Seats in EP</th>
<th>Seats acc. to (prod)</th>
<th>Seats acc. to (pop)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (F.R.)</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy*</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain*</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece*</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal*</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland*</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total       | 518         | 519                  | 519                 |

*Less productive countries
There is a clear similarity between the actual composition of the European Parliament and our procedures, in particular if the “further procedures” discussed are kept in mind. The actual composition of the EP clearly favors small countries and less productive countries. The small countries are those in the lower part of the table. The less productive countries are indicated by an asterisk. A distinction should be made between less productive countries disfavored by natural factors and those less productive as a consequence of less appropriate policies. We don’t claim to have succeeded here; more analysis is needed. The distinction is important if we want to avoid undesirable impacts of our procedures on nations’ policies.

The overrepresentation of small countries is based on a country’s right to be represented and to have a particular identity. But it may reduce the country’s willingness to integrate into larger units. In the world at large—more than in Western Europe—there are too many very small countries, hardly viable and economically very much in need to integrate to larger units. The clearest example is the Caribbean and Central American region; but also the island states in the Pacific and parts of Africa suffer from too much nationalism.

The secretariats of the UN institutions should be managed efficiently, and more weight should be given to efficiency in comparison to other criteria, such as the nationality of staff members. Changes in this respect should not be made suddenly, but stepwise so as not to harm the existing rights of persons already engaged. Various ways and means to raise efficiency have been set out by a number of authors and this subject need not be elaborated on. 3

With regard to the World Bank Group the most important reform is in the way of deciding on capital increases. A decision on this subject should be made by the directors (in the same way as other decisions are made), and not depend on the decisions of single nations. Since the existing decision-making procedure is one of as much consensus as possible, preferences of single governments are given adequate consideration; they should not have the right to make independent deviating decisions. In the meeting of World Bank directors a gradual increase in the number of votes of low-income countries should be projected. For the IMF similar reforms apply.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) needs to be endowed with the power to carry through environmental policies to stop further deterioration and to improve the quality of air, water and soil to levels it considers necessary. One way in which a more desirable form of decision-making may be gradually attained is to enumerate a list of subjects on which national governments have to decide in consultation with UNEP, and stepwise to raise the number of votes in such consultative meetings given to UNEP.

The most important set of coherent reforms needed must have as its central theme the elimination of violent settlement of conflicts between nations and its replacement by peaceful change. Changes in the international order will remain necessary, and a vital role will be played by the International Court of Justice. To that effect the Court may need not only legal expertise which by definition it has, but also a wider, let us say sociological, basis in order to deal with questions not yet legally covered or covered by obsolete or contradictory legislation in various parts of the world.

The most important institution involved at present is the Security Council, but it is also the institution most in need of reform. Its decision-making capability is thwarted by the veto power of the Council’s permanent members. This must be eliminated if we are serious in our desire to manage the planet. Imagine the United States if California and New York had a veto power; or the Soviet Union if some of its republics had a veto power! Such a structure would not be acceptable to the other states or republics.
Without the veto power, the Security Council would become capable of making more effective decisions. However, decision-making may be improved by some form of weighted voting here also. Even a different composition may be considered, e.g. a composition equal to that of the General Assembly. The present composition reflects the overwhelming power of the nuclear powers, and so of the superpowers, which constitutes discrimination against the nonnuclear powers.

The next point is how to implement such decisions—which, at the level of a well run nation are decisions by its federal government. In order to make the nation follow the federal decisions there is that nation’s police force and its system of courts, headed by the Supreme Court. Whereas the Supreme Court has its analog at the world level, the police force does not. This brings us to the new institutions to be added to the UN system of institutions.

New UN Institutions Needed

In order to become familiar with the idea that the addition of new institutions is something natural, I shall remind the reader of some additions already under way, or suggested. The most innovative addition is the new Law of the Sea. Its necessity follows from a number of technological developments and a major development in our world understanding of the necessity of peaceful coexistence. There is no way back to isolation; our economies are too intertwined.

A second addition to the UN set of institutions, discussed by others, is an institution dealing with the peaceful uses of outer space. The establishment of a corresponding Law of Outer Space has been proposed, and it may be implemented similarly to the Law of the Sea.

A third addition of a new institution was proposed by this author, and is called a World Treasury. Again it is the example of a well run nation which clarifies at once the central role a Treasury has to play.

These three examples—present in different phases of their existence: almost created, seriously proposed and suggested for consideration—illustrate how natural it is for new institutions to be added to an existing set. It is natural for any social organization.

Creation of a World Treasury

In a well run nation the most important financial institution is the Treasury or Ministry of Finance. It is a serious lacuna in our international structure that a comparable institution at the world level is lacking. Therefore one of the agencies to add to our present structure is a World Treasury. Out of the World Treasury the various UN agencies should be financed. This would allow considerable saving on discussions about each member nation’s contributions, where such repition of arguments now occurs in the deliberations in each of the specialized agencies. For some of the very important agencies such as the World Bank the present situation may be maintained, but for a large number of other specialized agencies one central discussion at the World Treasury would be much more efficient.

The existence of a World Treasury is a logical corollary of the idea of a real management of the world community. So is the introduction of a tax system instead of the system of voluntary contributions to the UN system, and this is of particular importance to the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund. No policy worth that name is possible if it is left to the taxpayers to decide how much tax they pay!

Another aspect concerns the amounts spent on different recipients. These amounts must be determined by the General Assembly in a process of setting priorities in the way the current operation of the world community is best served. Alongside the current operation, development investments may be financed from the current budget without using a capital transfer. Current financing has the
advantage that no agreement is needed on the rate of interest to be paid and on a repayment schedule. This saves much time and effort that in a number of cases—when the debtor is unable to stick to the original agreement—was made in vain, because new negotiations are necessary anyway. Recent experience with the heavily indebted countries of Latin America provides an eloquent example.

Technically the World Treasury will hardly need the introduction of new approaches. The type of activities has been performed by the UN Secretariat and the secretariats of the specialized agencies.

The independent international commission on the reform of the United Nations or the UN Conference on Necessary Reforms that I propose at the end of this essay may wish to elaborate on a number of details of the World Treasury mode of operation.

A World Police

A United Nations system to manage the planet needs the power to implement its decisions. This implies the power to prevent illegal behavior of its member nations. The institution in charge of this task may be called police. Among the tasks of this World Police will be inspection or verification of the member states' behavior.

The instruments to be used to prevent illegal behavior should be geared to the nature of illegal activities. Thus, if that behavior consists of a backlog in payments of financial contributions, instruments of economic policy, for instance financial or trade policy, may be appropriate. If illegal behavior consists of the use of violence, the appropriate instrument will be the use of armed police forces. So far the United Nations has used armed forces only in UN Peace Forces, mobilized temporarily for special purposes. The World Police Force should be a permanent institution, however. Even so its organization may profit from experiences of the UN Peace Forces in the past. In order to minimize the Police Force's dependence on the superpowers it may be better not to recruit troops from these countries. Preferably forces of small or economically less developed countries known for their contribution to worldwide thinking should be invited, such as India, Sweden or Guyana, among others.

Part of the World Police may be the World Disarmament Organization proposed by the Netherlands. This organization would be charged with implementing and monitoring disarmament treaties. Another part of the World Police may be the International Satellite Monitoring Agency (ISMA) proposed by France. This Agency would make the observational capabilities of satellites available to the international community for monitoring troop movements, military exercises and disarmament agreements. An even more far-reaching idea for monitoring the earth from space would be the establishment of a United Nations Manned Space Station which would allow for immediate human observation and verification of military and arms-related activities.5

A question to be studied more closely is under which "Department" the World Police will reside. One possibility is that it would be part of a "Justice Department," under which the International Court of Justice may also be placed. The question then arises whether or not the Security Council should be part of the same "Department." Such a structure corresponds to the usual structure of democratic countries.

Another possibility is that the armed Police Force can only be used when the "Government" as a whole decides to do so, or even a special session of the General Assembly is required.

These questions are a few more examples to be studied by a UN Conference on Necessary Reform proposed below.

Where and How to Start

Although the United Nations Charter indicates an official
procedure for its revision, its application must be, for all practical purposes, prepared outside the United Nations in order to achieve a smooth process of change. As a result of informal discussions of a limited group of interested participants some degree of consensus should first be reached. The "Independent Commissions" on international development issues (Brandt Commission) and on disarmament and security issues (Palme Commission) may serve as models.

The Brandt Commission was established at the initiative of Mr. Robert S. McNamara. Its predecessor, the Pearson Commission, was established by the World Bank, when Mr. McNamara was its President. The Palme Commission was established by its chairman and a few members, inspired by the work of the Brandt Commission.

The next step may be the establishment of a United Nations Conference on Necessary Reform to consider the recommendations of the Independent Commission. The Conference should follow the example of the (third) United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. If the same imaginative initiatives are available as in that Conference, a good deal of success in reforming the United Nations system is possible. This is what we must aim at and work toward achieving if we are to develop a set of global institutions capable of effectively managing planetary problems.

NOTES


2. United Nations General Assembly Sixth Special Session.

3. See, for example, the following publications of the Stanley Foundation: The First Forty Years, Muscatine IA, 1985; and The United Nations: Mission and Management, Muscatine, IA, 1986.


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Jan Tinbergen is Professor Emeritus of Development Planning at Erasmus University in Rotterdam. He was born in The Hague in 1903. He served as Chairman of the United Nations Committee for Development Planning from 1966 to 1972. In 1969 he was the co-recipient of the first Nobel Prize for Economics. He was Coordinator of the 1976 study, Reshaping the International Order, undertaken at the initiative of the Club of Rome. He is the author of numerous books on economic policy and development. Professor Tinbergen serves as a member of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation’s Advisory Council.
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