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BROADCAST BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Secretary-General Trygve Lie will make the following broadcast tonight over the United Nations radio:

"As we stand today at the mid-point of a century, we may ask, perhaps, what we have learnt from the two generations that are gone, and what hopes and fears fill our minds for the fifty years to come?

The age we have lived through has presented a curious contradiction. Man has learned more secrets of science than ever before, and new worlds have opened before him. Yet twice in fifty years, he has had to use that knowledge for the destruction of his fellow-men and the widespread ruin of civilization.

Our wisdom, in fact, has not kept pace with our invention.

And yet, when today we weigh our chances for the future, I think we can say we are wiser. I believe the majority of statesmen and peoples realize that, in our modern world, war is rapidly becoming outdated -- outdated by the very advances of our science, outdated because of the atom bombs and germs which could bring no victory to anyone, but only chaos.

Do not misunderstand me. I see no golden age of glorious peace and tranquility ahead of us. Disagreement will continue to exist, political, social, economic. In fact, we could not do without it. That would mean stagnation. But normally, we think of war in military terms. That is what we fear most and that is what I think is too old fashioned for our age. Today, we may face years of political tensions, economic warfare, psychological and even cultural warfare. But these, I believe, are controllable types of warfare, controllable through peaceful international action. That is why the United Nations with every passing year becomes more and more indispensable.

Just a few days ago, a new nation was born -- the United States of Indonesia. It emerged peacefully in the end, as the result of conciliation undertaken by the United Nations. War and violence could not solve this problem. We have other examples too, from recent history, of effective United Nations mediation bringing results which could never have come from the use of force.

Still, there are many many problems ahead of us.

Our newspapers and books are filled with the fantastic tales of the scientist's progress. At the same time three quarters of the human race still lives in poverty and hardship far below the level in more developed countries. Malnutrition and even hunger threaten the lives of millions. The share of the world's majority in what we call modern civilization is still extremely modest.

(more)

These conditions are a disgrace to the human intellect.

Here again recent action has shown signs of increasing wisdom. The last General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously voted a program of technical assistance to under-developed areas. All Member States as well as the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies have found a common starting point for this gigantic task. So a beginning is being made in this field too.

But the greatest single question before us today is this: Can man be as wise as he is bold?

After the First World War we made great advances. We tried with the League of Nations to adjust our national differences and live together in harmony. We failed. Another more ghastly disaster befell us as the world plunged into a new war in 1939. Now we try again with the United Nations. We have advanced again. It may still be an incomplete instrument. But this time we are stronger. Our organization is better-founded and it is universal. And we are more pressed for time.

The point is simply this: Has the wisdom of statesmen and peoples advanced sufficiently to permit us to make this instrument work? Or do we still need more lessons to teach us what to do?

Many people ask this question. Millions and hundreds of millions still live in fear. They do not know what the second part of this century will bring to them. No one knows, as yet.

May I on this New Year's Eve only say this:

Have faith!

Don't despair!

Work for peace, and we shall get it.

Do for your neighbors what you want them to do for you.

Be aware that the world is one and must remain one.

Remember that we are all sharing each other's fate.

It is my firm belief that in the coming years, we shall have the courage and wisdom to use our common platform, the United Nations, to control our differences, to spread wide our knowledge, and advance our civilization. There is no rational alternative to choose.

And maybe our children's children will cross the threshold of the twenty-first century with a clearer conscience and a surer step than we who shape their world today.

They can, if we will.

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