

Trygve Halvdan Lie, born 1896, died 1968.



Trygve Lie (right) outside the UN Headquarters in 1952.

Trygve Lie born in Oslo, Norwegian politician (Labour Party), Minister of Foreign Affairs 1941–46, first UN Secretary-General (1946–53). He played a key role in the establishment of the UN and in the construction of the UN Headquarters, and he maintained and consolidated the organisation at a time when there was considerable distance between the superpowers. His personal meeting with Lenin gave him credibility in the East, and he was also able to win the confidence of key Western powers such as the US and the UK. He was thus able to ensure cross-geographical and cross-political support for the UN.

Short biography

Graduate law degree (Cand.jur.) 1919. Secretary of the Labour Party 1919–22 and legal adviser to LO (Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions) 1922–35. He was chair of Aker Labour Party and of Akershus County Labour Party for several years, and was member of the Labour Party National Executive Committee 1926–46. Lie was also extensively involved in local politics and was a member of the Aker council 1923–31. He was appointed Minister of Justice in Nygaardsvold's Government in 1935, and was member of the Storting for Akershus 1937–49. In 1939, he was appointed first Minister of Trade and later head of the newly

formed Ministry of Supply. After the Nazi invasion on 9 April 1940, Lie accompanied the other members of the Nygaardsvold Government as they moved first to Gudbrandsdalen, then to Molde and Tromsø and finally to England. For a while, his Ministry was also responsible for shipping. In November 1940, he replaced Halvdan Koht as Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the period 1941–42, Lie's foreign policy sought first and foremost to establish a relationship of trust with the UK and the US, and he promoted cooperation between the countries linked by the northern Atlantic Ocean. Once the Soviet Union had entered the Second World War and demonstrated its military strength, it became a key task for Lie to establish close relations with all the three major powers. He also put considerable effort into developing contact with the leadership of the resistance during the war years. After liberation, he was Minister of Foreign Affairs in Gerhardsen's first and second governments.

In 1946, Lie was appointed first Secretary-General of the United Nations. In this role, he sought to promote effective cooperation between East and West, but this policy met increasing difficulties as antagonism between the Soviet Union and the Western powers grew. On the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, Lie energetically supported the involvement of the UN to stop the invading forces, for which he lost support from some quarters. In April 1953, Dag Hammarskjöld took over at the helm of the UN.

In 1955, Lie was appointed County Governor of Oslo and Akershus, a position he held until 1963. He also carried out special assignments for the Government, for example he led the efforts to encourage foreign investment in the Norwegian business sector. He was Minister of Industry from the summer of 1963 to January 1964, apart from a break under the Lyng Government. He was Minister of Trade 1964–65. From his childhood, Lie took active part in sports, and 1931–35 was chair of the workers sports association (Arbeidernes Idrettsforbund). He published an account of laws that are hostile to workers, *De arbeiderfiendtlige lover og kampen mot dem* (1929), and several volumes of memoirs *Syv år for freden* (1954), *Leve eller dø* (1955), *Med England i ildlinjen* (1956), *Hjemover* (1958) and *Oslo–Moskva–London* (1968).