We can all agree, I think, that the ultimate achievement of a political solution in the Congo is basic to the final success of the United Nations intervention. For whatever may be done - in implementation of General Assembly or Security Council directives - to contain the threat to.international peace and security and to restore order, and whatever may be done by other agencies of the United Nations to deal with the many other tragic problems which beset the Congo, these can be no more than stop-gap measures in the absence of a real and lasting political settlement. Conversely, it cannot but be recognized that a clear-cut political solution would do more than anything else to remove the threat to international peace and security, and to hasten the solution of the' other problems I have mentioned.

But - and here is the dilemma - it has been clearly recognized that a political solution, with agreement on the constitutional and legal forms which should prevail in the Congo, must of necessity (and quite properly) be matters for the Congolese people alone to decide. Stated in its simplest terms, a political solution is vital to the United Nations, but the United Nations cannot intervene to achieve a political solution.

I am well aware that, while lip-service is paid to a policy of "hands off Congo politics", many if not most states represented here today have their own ideas of what the solution should be - ideas which usually correspond to those of one or another of the contending factions in the Congo itself - and they are not above doing what they can, internationally, to foster the solutions they favour. This is a subtle kind of intervention in the internal affairs of the Congo - and a sort of interference which unfortunately no United Nations operation can prevent.

Yet, oddly enough, for this very reason, it remains true that the United Nations could not - even if it wished - impose a political solution on the Congo, for there could never be agreement on the solution to impose. Differences of opinion, reflecting to