

the final solution of the conflict between them. This is a task of great difficulty and complexity, which inevitably makes large demands on the courage, patience and ingenuity of the United Nations Force.

There has been, of course, much comment and criticism of the performance of the United Nations Force in Cyprus. It is, after all, not only a question of the outcome in Cyprus -- the functioning of a United Nations Force is also of the greatest interest and importance for the future and is rightly a subject of public discussion all over the world. It does seem to me, however, that some of the criticisms of the Cyprus operation are based upon a fundamental misunderstanding of its nature and purposes, which is another reason for taking this opportunity to speak of this problem.

We in the United Nations in the past weeks have received a good deal of advice and admonition on the conduct of the Force in Cyprus. Much of it, coming from sources some of which in the past were not always in favour of strong action by United Nations peace-keeping forces, advocates stern measures and the use of force in Cyprus to quell disorders, to disarm irregulars, and to impose peace upon the island, not by common consent but by military force. To some extent, this is understandable enough, for the spectacle of disorder and civilian suffering in Cyprus is deeply disturbing, and all possible efforts must be made to put an end to it. The United Nations Force has undoubtedly had the effect of limiting the bloodshed and misery (in fact, a much greater effect than to date it has been given credit for), but this is not enough, and better results must, and I believe will, be achieved. The problem is how to achieve them without creating worse problems and disasters for the future, and it is here that there seems to be some misunderstanding.

There appears to be a latent assumption in some quarters that the Cyprus Force is a military expedition on traditional lines and should be conducted as such. Leaving aside the question of the adequacy or suitability of the existing United Nations means for the suggested ends, this is a proposition that must be flatly rejected, for it stems from a concept of action which is not, and cannot be, the basis of a peace-keeping operation authorized by the Security Council of the United Nations in the sovereign territory of an independent member state. This is not a collective action against aggression undertaken under Chapter VII of the Charter. It is something far more intricate and, if I may say so, something of the greatest value, if it can succeed, as a precedent for the future. It is, in brief, an attempt on the international level to prepare the ground for the permanent, freely agreed solution of a desperate and dangerous situation by restoring peace and normality. The nature of this operation is far nearer to a preventive and protective police action; it is not a repressive military action.

What are the prerequisites of a successful preventive police action? One essential is the co-operation, understanding and renunciation of violence by the overwhelming majority of the people concerned. No police force in the world could function without such co-operation, and this is a condition we have to get, and are taking steps to get, in Cyprus. A police force does not fight the population it serves or seek a military victory; its business is the protection of persons, the keeping of the peace by enlisting the support of the largest possible number, by persuasion and by establishing mutual trust and confidence. Only in extreme situations may it consider the use of quasi-military methods as an emergency measure.

We are -- and let us be proud of it -- trying to move forward from the age of military force to a saner, more creative period of peace, order and justice. However incensed we may be at brutal killings and the senseless taking of hostages (and, if I may say so, we are deeply incensed), we are not conducting a punitive expedition; we are trying to help the people of an embattled and embittered island to live in peace and prosperity again. We are not guided by martial criteria, however glamorous and momentarily decisive they may seem, but by the deep desire to solve a human problem by civilized means. It may take a little longer -- perhaps very much longer -- but I have