

As a consequence the Council, although unfortunately still lacking the powers necessary to fulfil its primary function of maintaining peace and security, has worked out flexible and adaptable procedures which have often been effective and, at least, constitute a useful method of doing international business.

In the international political situation that exists it is surprising, not that the Security Council has done so little, but that it has done so much. In particular, very valuable experience has been gained, and some good results achieved, in the handling of three troublesome and dangerous questions which have been brought before the Council - Palestine, Indonesia and Kashmir. The Security Council has not solved any one of these problems, and it is clear that their ultimate solution must be worked out by the people who are directly responsible for the circumstance and whose daily lives are actually affected. The Council has, nevertheless, played an important role in preventing the outbreak of general war in all three areas. That must be admitted even by those who are disappointed because the Council has not been able to take final and definite action in regard to any one of them.

Our delegation hopes that, in carrying out its further responsibilities, the Council will be guided by certain principles of action which have emerged in the course of the past two or three years. These principles in default of an improvement in relations between the communist and democratic worlds, would seem to mark the limits that we can now reach. To attempt to go beyond these limits in present circumstances is merely inviting failure. The first is that the Security Council shall not initiate action that it cannot complete with its present resources. There have often been demands that the Security Council should intervene in some area or another with force, and that when fighting occurs, the Security Council should take steps to suppress it. There would be a great deal to recommend such intervention if it could be carried out firmly and quickly, but the fact is, of course, that the Security Council has at present no effective way of imposing its will. In consequence in many cases it can do little more in the first instance than call upon the parties engaged in the dispute to stop fighting and start talking, offering them the means by which they can work out a settlement by negotiation rather than by conflict. This is not a dramatic or spectacular method of procedure, but in the circumstances it has served fairly well.

The second principle which, in our opinion, should guide the actions of the Security Council is that to the greatest extent possible the responsibility for solving a political problem should be left with the people who are immediately affected by it. In respect of Palestine, Indonesia and Kashmir, for instance, it is still the case that the parties directly concerned and the people who live in the area must seek to determine the measures by which peace will be maintained in these areas. This is not only the most practical principle of action, it revives and strengthens a sense of responsibility at the point where it is most vital to healthy, political life, and it sets the objectives of an agreed, rather than an imposed solution.

The third general principle which seems to us to have emerged is that the Security Council should in all cases immediately concentrate its influence on putting an end to hostilities or disorders whenever they occur. By insisting on this principle, and by insisting equally that fighting shall be stopped without prejudice to the ultimate political solution, the Security Council has been on strong ground. It has not, of course, been able to command complete obedience. Fighting has recurred even in areas where a firm truce seemed to have been established, and it has not been possible to guarantee absolutely that the ultimate outcome of a dispute would not be affected by the military action which had taken place. In general, however, the primary concern of the Security Council, that peace should be kept while negotiations proceed, has been respected and has contributed materially to the progress which has been made in the settlement of disputes. The moral authority of our world organizations - which seems to be all that it is now permitted to have - is no slight thing, and no state, great or small, lightly disregards its decisions.

It is an encouragement to those who believe in the United Nations and hope for its success to observe the practical results which have come from the application of the principles which I have mentioned. It is encouraging also to have found that, when demands were made on the United Nations, people came forward and offered their