

accompanied by a steady improvement in the lot of all peoples would be an unstable achievement of the United Nations. At the moment, however, the unhappy position in which the Free World finds itself is that its long-term objective of social and economic progress must inevitably be subordinated to a considerable extent to the short-term objective of defending itself against the threat to the conditions of peace and security without which social progress is impossible.

Although the importance of economic and social development must not be under-estimated, the major issue during 1950 for the United Nations was the North Korean aggression and the consequences of that aggression, particularly as they affected the principle of collective security.

During the period since the United Nations was founded, the Security Council had had more success than is generally recognized in dealing with outbreaks of hostilities. In Palestine, Indonesia, and Kashmir, by persuasion, conciliation, and mediation the opposing forces had been persuaded to stop fighting and had been assisted in the tedious process of peaceful settlement. While rejoicing in these accomplishments of the United Nations we recognized that the parties concerned basically preferred a peaceful settlement rather than a continuation of war and were prepared for negotiation and adjustment. We knew, furthermore, that these were peripheral struggles in the sense that they did not directly involve the great powers and that they were not a direct manifestation of the cleavage between the Soviet world and the Free World. During these years the Assembly also had been used as an instrument to maintain peace by supporting, through the Greek and Korean Commissions of the Assembly, the efforts to strengthen the democratic governments in those countries. In neither case, however, before 1950, had the responsibilities assumed by the Assembly involved the organization as a whole in a direct military challenge from communist forces.

In June of 1950 the United Nations was faced with a direct military challenge in Korea, which was not only made in great force but had, moreover, the obvious support of the two great communist powers of Russia and China. This challenge, in spite of its gravity, was met promptly and with the approval of the very great majority of the member states of the United Nations.

The action of the United Nations in June of 1950 broke new and significant ground. The United Nations did not hesitate to take a stand even though it realized that the aggressors had the military support of two of the great powers. For the first time, the United Nations now set out to organize and use collective military action against armed aggression. We had assumed that the failure of the United Nations, because of Soviet intransigence, to fulfil the provisions of the Charter concerning collective measures would make it difficult, if not impossible, for the United Nations to organize anything in the nature of a military operation. In a situation of grave necessity, however, member states found means for conducting such an operation under United Nations auspices. In the absence of anything like a United Nations High Command, the practical alternative was to nominate the United States Government as the Unified Command, a policy which has proved efficient in spite of some inevitable