

take any peace-keeping action at all. The strongest peace-keeping operation would be one which had the unreserved support, political, diplomatic and financial, of *all* the Members of the United Nations and even the actual participation of the permanent members of the Security Council under the mandate of the Council. This may be unrealistic at present, but it is also the political truth which indeed applies across the whole range of the activities of the Organization.

I give the example of peace-keeping to demonstrate the process by which internationalism becomes discredited in the public mind. Peace-keeping is one of the more successful innovations of the United Nations. But when this technique cannot be used in a situation which obviously requires it, because the members of the Security Council are divided on the matter, the public generally concludes that there is something wrong with the United Nations and with the concept of internationalism. This conclusion is, of course, easier than analysing the conflicting positions and motives of Governments which are the real cause of the impasse and of the failure of the United Nations to act or to respond.

I do not have any simple solutions to offer to this problem. Obviously a radical improvement in the international political climate would make a profound difference, but we cannot rely on miracles. In the mean time we could perhaps work on a few ideas for improving the situation, on the assumption that our common and agreed objective is human survival in reasonably decent conditions.

I myself have put forward some ideas and suggestions on a number of issues — about Lebanon, for example, and the Middle East problem — but the reactions so far have been mixed. I notice that there is a tendency at present in the direction of bilateral or unilateral action, or no action at all. And yet bilateral or unilateral approaches do not seem to be noticeably effective in most cases. Nor is this surprising, for by their very nature many of the disputes that we face around the globe require the building of a wide consensus if solutions are to hold.

¹ I suggest that we review the current tendency in relation to specific situations. I very much hope, for instance, that we shall see real — and long overdue — progress in proceeding to the independence of Namibia on the basis of the United Nations plan. I also hope that in the coming months we shall see the full and concrete co-operation and positive action which are needed to ensure the success of the untiring efforts which the Contadora Group is making for peace in Central America.

In many disputes accusations and counter-accusations are freely traded over a situation which, to most people, is mystifying and complex. What harm would be done if United Nations teams were dispatched to clarify and certify what the real facts are? Surely such clarification of the situation by objective observers might help to reduce international tension and strengthen other efforts. Let us ask ourselves what useful steps can be taken in a given situation rather than starting by thinking of all the extraneous reasons why they *cannot* be taken.

Most of all we need to reaffirm the Charter concept that threats to international peace and security, from whatever source or in whatever region of the world, override ideological or other differences between States and entail an obligation on all States to agree and co-operate. Under the terms of the Charter some situations clearly require immediate consideration and action by the Security Council regardless of political disagreements. Surely one such situation is when

a national frontier is violated and the State concerned calls for United Nations action.

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There must of course be a substantial improvement in the international climate if there is to be meaningful progress in the limitation and reduction of arms. This is a field in which it is essential to utilize the full potential of multilateral *and* bilateral negotiations, both to improve mutual understanding of the reasoning behind military postures and negotiating positions and to reach substantive, balanced arms regulation and disarmament agreements. During the past year there has been little sign of movement in this direction, and the arms race has continued to burgeon both qualitatively and quantitatively.

It is only realistic to recognize that nuclear disarmament will depend primarily on agreement among the nations having nuclear weapons, especially, and beginning with, the two most powerful. It is equally true, however, that success or failure in the reduction of nuclear weapons can have a most important bearing on the future of the entire international community. To approach nuclear disarmament exclusively as a factor in the relations of the nuclear Powers and their allies is to do injustice to the broad and grave responsibility that the possession of nuclear weapons carries with it. It is also unfortunate and, I believe, unnecessary to allow the course of disarmament negotiations on the whole range of issues in the multilateral forums to be largely governed by tension stemming from other causes. The fact is that progress on the issues included in the agenda of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, and especially on those currently before the Conference on Disarmament, could help to restore confidence and improve the critical bilateral relationship on which the international political climate so heavily depends.

It is especially valuable in times of tension that a multilateral structure is available within which nations, despite their differences, can come together for dialogue and serious negotiations, whether in the General Assembly, the Security Council or the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. In fact, the possibility exists in that Conference for nuclear and non-nuclear countries to work together towards agreement on such vital subjects as measures to avoid nuclear war, the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. If, instead, the Conference is used mainly for the public presentation of rigid positions and rhetorical exchanges, the potential of this broadly representative negotiating forum will be largely wasted. I urge all concerned — East, West, non-aligned and neutral alike — to recognize that the need for disarmament measures — both nuclear and conventional — is too compelling to allow this to happen.

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Let me turn to another aspect, namely, multilateral co-operation through the United Nations in the economic and social spheres. We are here in the presence of a slightly different set of political realities and in a predominantly North-South dimension. Global economic relations have changed significantly since the immediate post-war years when most international economic institutions began their work. There has been growing frustration among the developing countries, a large international constituency which has looked upon the institutions of multilateral economic co-operation established after the Second World War as insufficiently responsive to the needs of those countries. This perception has been strengthened in light of the serious economic difficulties which have affected them in the 1970s