

Surprisingly little is known by most Americans about this aspect of the U.N., perhaps because it is another instance in which the old analogy of the iceberg applies. Nine-tenths of an iceberg is never seen, but that is the part ocean navigators have to take into account. In much the same way, the part of the United Nations which operates most constantly and successfully to reduce human distress, and thus to ward off the international trouble which rises out of it, is far below the surface of the sensational headlines in the newspapers.

While this study was in preparation, for example, the press was filled with accounts of international crises involving the U.N. which were gravely testing its capacity. In Korea the effort to get a peace conference under way and to dispose of the prisoners who had said they did not want to be repatriated seemed hopelessly snarled. In Palestine it looked as though fighting might break out again along the U.N. truce line almost any day. In Trieste mobs were howling in the streets and Yugoslavia and Italy making threats. The world picture, as the press printed it without exaggeration, was very black. No one could be blamed for wondering whether the U.N. could cope with it.

But while these political crises were being debated in the Assembly, the Security Council and in various standing committees, that was far from all the U.N. was doing. While the diplomats glowered and occasionally shouted and sometimes even shook verbal fists at one another, the constructive, under-the-surface humanly helpful work of the U.N. went steadily forward. Here, for instance, are some of the other things which took place in U.N. operations during only three days while the Korea-Palestine-Trieste crises boiled.

Twenty-one more nations pledged financial help for the technical assistance program, of which more will be said a few paragraphs farther on. Some of these nations had never given to this cause before; the others almost without exception increased their pledges. Representatives of 37 organizations met under U.N. auspices to work out plans to ease difficulties in migration, with special attention given to ways of helping the Arab refugees who can be admitted to the United States under recent legislation. Experts from Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Haiti and Jamaica were invited to a conference on the training of community workers to be held in Bogota in December 1953.

The chairman of the Costa Rican delegation signed the protocol for the suppression of the international opium traffic, making the 22nd country to join this coordinated campaign to end an ancient human curse. The U.S.S.R. turned in its report for the Yearbook on Human Rights to show what had been done to protect such rights - they are outlined in the U.N.'s Declaration of Human Rights, concerning which more presently - in Byelorussia and the Ukraine. The U.N. received and referred to its Economic and Social Council 173 communications alleging that religious persecution was taking place in Poland. Other communications, handled in the same way, alleged violation of human rights in Austria, Cyprus, Hungary, India, Peru, Spain, Russia and Yugoslavia. There were four such communications, which would be considered later, charging invasion of the rights of conscientious objectors in European countries.