

it into being has I think been well established. Its continuing value in helping to bring about and maintain peaceful conditions and security in the area in which it operates remains, of course, to be proven. I myself think it should be of a great value for this purpose also, provided it remains genuinely international in control, composition and function, and providing also that its limitations are recognized, especially that it is a voluntary organization which must act strictly within the terms of resolutions which are only morally binding and which must be passed by two-thirds of the Assembly in each case. But even within these limitations the United Nations Force can, I think, play an important part in bringing about an honourable and enduring political settlement in the Palestine and Suez area.

We have been discussing the possibilities of such a settlement with friendly governments in recent weeks and it seems to be the general view among members of the United Nations that the present atmosphere, charged as it is with fears and suspicions which have been exacerbated by recent armed conflicts is not at the moment conducive to the kind of discussion and negotiation which would have to precede such a settlement. I think perhaps we have to accept that position. But if, however, the passions and the bitterness of fighting must be given time to recede, that does not, as I see it, mean we can safely sit back and let nature take its course. There may be some reason for delay; there is none for indifference or for indefinite avoidance by the United Nations of a responsibility which is escapable; to make peace in the area, without which the cease-fire would not have any permanent value.

While the political climate of the Middle East is maturing toward the time when conditions will be more appropriate for a comprehensive settlement it is essential, I think, for the countries of the region, and indeed for us all, that there should be no return to the former state of strife and tension and conflict on the borders; that security should be maintained and, indeed, guaranteed. I suggest that for this purpose there will be a continuing need during the period until a political settlement is achieved for the stabilizing international influence that the emergency Force is now exercising. And this essential stabilizing role might well require the continuing presence of a United Nations Force along the boundary between Egypt and Israel; perhaps also for a time in the Gaza Strip and, with the consent of the States involved, along the borders between Israel and her other Arab neighbours, though that of course would require a further resolution from the United Nations Assembly.

It seems to me that some such United Nations supervision might help to ensure the security of the nations concerned which is so vital if they are to approach with the necessary confidence negotiations toward a comprehensive solution of their conflicts.