

the Egyptians were reasonably encouraged by the Western reaction, particularly on the part of Canada and Norway, to continue their efforts at reconciliation.

9. This process was largely facilitated through United Nations machinery. The successes of the UNEF experiment and of the Canal-clearing operation have greatly strengthened United Nations influence in the Middle East, and especially in Cairo and Damascus. The confidence which existed between the Secretary-General and Dr. Fawzi not only helped to solve difficult problems like the financing of UNEF and the recovery of the costs of clearing the Canal but paved the way for future developments, like an agreement on compensation for the Universal Suez Canal Company and possibly on a comprehensive programme, linked loosely to the United Nations, for the economic development of the area. This strengthening of United Nations influence in what is perhaps the area of greatest tension in the world today helps to offset the deadlocks and disappointments in such important fields as disarmament and East-West relations in general. It is perhaps the modest beginning of a trend toward greater diplomatic activity on the part of the United Nations Secretariat under the very able guidance of Mr. Hammarskjöld.

10. A further development which gained emphasis at the Twelfth Session was the effort on the part of a few Western delegations, *The Economist* of December 28th has dubbed them the "greater Scandinavian" group, to modify extremist positions and to work energetically for compromise resolutions which while not entirely acceptable to opposing sides would meet with the approval of the substantial majority in the Assembly. This group of Delegations, which included from time to time, and in various circumstances: Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Iran, Ireland, Japan, Norway, Sweden and Thailand kept in fairly close touch throughout the Assembly and tried to bridge gaps between sharply opposed delegations or groups of delegations. The nucleus of the Western section of this "fire brigade" was provided by the Delegations of Canada and Norway. They participated prominently in the consultation and negotiation concerning the main political issues but particularly disarmament, the Syrian situation, Algeria, Cyprus and the Middle East items. By working closely with the United States Delegation and with the Secretary-General, the Canadian and Norwegian Delegations managed not only to keep well abreast of developments in the Assembly but on many occasions to be somewhat in advance of them.

11. It was clear that the United States Delegation favoured the "fire brigade" technique. They preferred to have Western initiatives taken by delegations from small powers, although United States officials expected to be kept fully informed about and to assist in promoting these initiatives. The effort on the part of the Delegations of Canada, Ireland and Norway to amend the African-Asian draft resolution on Algeria was perhaps the most striking example of the cooperation between the "fire brigade" and the United States. This technique proved to be reasonably effective in many of the holding operations which were almost characteristic of the Twelfth Session but it is seriously open to question whether this approach would be as effective at future sessions, when the Assembly would almost certainly be required to do more than adopt watery compromises if it is to survive as an effective international instrument. In an atmosphere in which the Assembly would be expected to take firm and forward steps, the Western delegations which might be called upon to take the initiative would require much more support not only from the United States but from the United Kingdom and France, and this would be particularly true of the latter two when their own interests were directly involved.

12. Perhaps what is most urgently required of the Western Great Powers is that they approach the annual sessions of the General Assembly with fixed policy objectives in mind rather than with the impromptu expedients designed mainly to head off unpalatable proposals. A growing number of states members of the United Nations are treating the annual