

the United Nations was not prepared to meet. Certainly it had been recognized, when the permanent members were allowed a veto, that the United Nations could not expect to settle a clash of this kind by the enforcement of sanctions. Members of the United Nations recognized, however, the extreme danger of the situation and the fact that whatever the Organization's limitations, the issue could not be ignored.

The response of the United Nations was encouraging. It immediately offered facilities for negotiation, conciliation and, if necessary, mediation in keeping with its experience in other matters. In the first place, this response took the interesting form of an entirely unofficial committee composed of the non-permanent members of the Security Council with the exception of the Ukraine. The Ukraine was excluded because it had, along with the Soviet Union, denied the competence of the Security Council to deal with this matter. The so-called "Six" attempted by negotiation, through the President of the Council, with representatives of both parties to find whether there was any common ground for an agreement. When the first negotiations failed, the matter was turned over to a committee of experts from the non-permanent members working with members of the Secretariat. An interesting fact was that although the Soviet Union continued to deny the competence of the United Nations with respect to Berlin, Mr. Vishinsky was willing to negotiate with the "Six", and Soviet experts were prepared to sit down for technical discussions with the experts.

It cannot be claimed that the United Nations solved the Berlin dispute or even that it was responsible for securing a lifting of the blockade. The United Nations did what it could, however, to provide machinery through which an agreement could be reached if and when both parties wanted to agree. Although the importance of this function ought not to be exaggerated, it should not be underestimated. At a time of crisis, negotiations such as those which took place through the non-permanent members of the Council may well serve to reduce tension and to find ways out of a dilemma which might otherwise lead to war. The work of the "Six" and the committee of experts is an interesting example of the kind of methods which the United Nations can initiate. Nevertheless, since every effort at conciliation of mediation must be *ad hoc*, and since it is unlikely that an exactly similar response would be appropriate to deal with any possible future clash among the Great Powers, there would appear to be little reason for establishing a committee of non-permanent members as a permanent feature of the United Nations. It is possible, however, that this precedent might be recalled in some form if it were warranted by circumstances in the future. In conclusion, it should also be mentioned that the United Nations did provide the meeting ground for the Malik-Jessup exchanges which led to the lifting of the Berlin blockade. It is true that representatives of the two countries could have discussed this question in Moscow, Washington, or Berlin, but with neither side anxious to take the first step, there is no doubt that the U.N. Headquarters provided a unique atmosphere. The fact that the meetings between Mr. Malik and Dr. Jessup were not unrelated to the discussions which had previously taken place through the committee of experts and the "Six" did also provide some continuity which may not have been without significance.