

ment military interposition. Unless the details are clearly worked out in advance and fully understood by all concerned, and there is an evident reservoir of power and credibility behind the peacekeeping force, none is likely to be mounted in the future by the OAU.

INDEPENDENT PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Regional organizations do not currently display either the intent or capability to become involved in peacekeeping operations. Outside of the continuously dangerous Middle East, the UN has not mounted a peacekeeping operation since 1965. The trend, if we can call it that, is toward the use of independent arrangements.

Two early and by now almost forgotten peace observer missions were conducted in Vietnam. One began in 1954 and the other in 1973 when cease-fires were agreed and procedures for political settlements were established. In the first case the sponsoring "agency" consisted of the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, in the second, the four belligerents. In each case there were thousands of violations. The composition of the observer commissions included a western state (in each case Canada), a communist state and a neutral state, which made it difficult to agree on anything of substance. Such reports as were filed, were ignored. The Vietnam experience is not likely to be repeated.

In the Middle East there were three independently sponsored peacekeeping operations: the Sinai in 1975, again in 1979, and in Beirut in 1982. In October of 1975 Israel agreed to a staged withdrawal from the Sinai and its return to Egyptian control. The UN was on the spot with UNEF II. But a specially designed technological early warning field station was required to monitor any possible infiltration by Egyptian forces through two key mountain passes after the Israelis withdrew. The parties agreed to a US civilian technical operation, the Sinai Field Mission, which worked very successfully and co-operated with the UN forces. When it was no longer required, the Field Mission was withdrawn.

When Israel completed its withdrawal from the Sinai in 1979 a peacekeeping force was still required to monitor the border. The USSR, however, threatened to veto the adaptation of UNEF II to these new circumstances because it opposed the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. The parties therefore agreed to an independent arrangement headed by the United States. Ten other countries participated, for a total force of about 2,500, known as Multinational Force and Observers, with Canada a recent contributor. Because the former belligerents fully support the arrangements, the functions of border observation are very precise. And because the US is trusted by both parties, the

system has worked well. It is likely to be in place for many years to come.

The next case occurred in Beirut in 1982. The United States, at the behest of Israel, would not permit the redeployment of the UN forces from Southern Lebanon to supervise the withdrawal of Palestinian forces from Beirut and to "facilitate the restoration of Lebanese government sovereignty and authority in Beirut." Therefore a substitute agreement provided for the return of the Multinational Force (MNF) consisting of 800 US marines, 800 French Legionnaires and 400 Italian troops. After the task was accomplished without serious incident within three weeks under the eyes of the world's press, the MNF was withdrawn.

Almost immediately, however, factional fighting broke out again, when Israeli forces re-entered Beirut and the Palestinian refugees in the Shatila and Sabra camps were massacred at the hands of Lebanese Phalangists. The Multinational Force (MNF) was called back to stop all fighting and establish order in the area. This time the British also participated.

The task was beyond them. They saw themselves as an interpository peacekeeping mission. But Syria, which had thirty thousand of its own so-called peacekeeping troops in Lebanon, and several of the Lebanese factions viewed the MNF, especially the Americans, as a military buttress to the Gemayel Christian Government which they opposed, and as an ally of Israel. Neutrality, the fundamental principle of peacekeeping was, in this chaotic 'war-torn' situation, meaningless. The same became true for the principle of the non-use of force. The MNF very quickly came under heavy artillery fire and terrorist attacks, and became engaged in hostilities. In the end the US contingent was bombed and 237 soldiers were killed.

The MNF had been heralded as a peacekeeping operation. But was it? Perhaps it was more like a partisan attempt to keep the peace under very unstable conditions. Whatever history will say, the MNF certainly defied all the norms and practices of what is generally known as peacekeeping. This effort is discussed here to point out that when peacekeeping is so badly misinterpreted or misapplied, the consequences can be disastrous.

Yet there is one very successful story to tell about independent peacekeeping — the transitional process from white minority to black majority rule in 1980 in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Guerrilla war had been going on for more than ten years. And though a victory for the blacks was a certain eventuality, incessant warfare and the devastation of the countryside exhausted all the parties. Consistent pressure from African states and the Commonwealth convinced Britain, the former colonial power, to take the lead in pressing for a negotiated settlement. They succeeded. The parties agreed to a cease-fire, the confinement of opposing forces to their bases and to a "Common-