

The course of these events has been explained fully in Parliament during the past week or so, and in my speech in London I placed these developments in the broader context of the difficulties facing the United Nations in pursuing its peace-keeping responsibilities. There is reason for gratification that the United Nations did succeed last weekend in overcoming the obstacles to the despatch of United Nations military contingents to Cyprus. These new police men for peace are now on the beat -- following the fine tradition of their comrades in Gaza, the Congo, West New Guinea, Yemen, and indeed in Kashmir and Palestine.

Hard Facts of the Situation

Canadians can take renewed pride in the fact that their armed services have once more responded quickly and efficiently to the urgent call of United Nations duty. We should not delude ourselves, however, about two hard facts of the contemporary situation on which I should like to comment briefly.

The first is that the United Nations job in Cyprus is not over, it is just beginning. The organization faces yet another task fraught with complication and danger. Its military servants will be required to discharge their duties with the highest degree of skill, endurance and restraint. They will be exposed to risks and provocations. They must rely largely on their presence and forbearance to bring about the much-needed conditions of calm in the relations between two communities currently in a state of severe emotional upset.

The two communities on the island are sharply divided. There is a legacy of tragic violence. There are elements in the situation which could lead to further disturbance even if the opposing factions have the best will in the world co-operate. The voluntary laying down of arms may be the principal requisite for the easing of basic tensions and therefore of the successful promotion of stability by the United Nations force.

Like any police body, the United Nations force is in Cyprus to assist in the establishment and preservation of order. It is not there as an army of occupation. I do not believe a military solution would be lasting even if the United Nations force were so empowered. A solution will be best pursued by a process of accommodation between the opposing factions with the assistance of a United Nations mediator. The military force is expected to contribute to this process -- by demonstrating the United Nations impartiality, by setting an example of restraint and discipline, by restoring calm, by instilling confidence among the Cypriots generally that they will not be subjected to further violence and bloodshed, and by reassuring interested powers outside the island that negotiation can yield a solution, while the United Nations maintains order.

Mediation and Co-operation

All this underlines two essential needs -- the need for appointing a United Nations mediator at the earliest possible date and the need for the fullest co-operation from the two communities and the parties to the treaty of guarantee. The present Security Council resolution authorizes the stationing of the peace-keeping force for only three months. No time must be lost in appointing a mediator because the opening of the mediation process must be co-terminous with the operational deployment of the peace force.