

In November last at the United Nations, then, it seemed necessary to act quickly and to improvise, to stop the fighting and prevent it spreading. What we resorted to was an experiment in United Nations intervention never before tried, and which still remains to be proven. Moreover, this intervention had, or should have had, the dual objective of first, bringing what might conceivably have become a general conflagration under control, and then turning men's minds to the removal of the causes which brought about the violence and thereby to secure the rule of law in matters relating to the area of conflict. In my own mind there has never been a moment's doubt as to the imperative relationship between these two things and our responsibility to do something about both of them. Nor has there ever been in my mind any doubt as to which is the more difficult of the two tasks. Events since November have made that clear. Peace is not merely a passive condition of absence of conflict. That, at best, is only hibernation, and it can mean something worse. Peace can be secured only by the agreed solution of problems between nations. It is an arduous and active adaptation to the pressures and changes that come with growth.

Last November, then, we had two things to think of at once - how to prevent the spread of violence and then to order things so as to prevent, if possible, its recurrence. For the latter, the Assembly stood firmly on the ground of full, not partial or prejudicial, but full compliance with the Armistice Agreement between Israel and Egypt.

It has been suggested lately, here and there in Canada, that since there have been many violations of this Armistice Agreement, it would be as well to scrap it. My own view, however, is that peace has not come to Israel yet because the orderly processes and the pacific principles prescribed in the Armistice Agreements have not yet been fully applied by the parties, each of whom has yielded to the temptation which assails all human beings to favour the rigid application of some clauses which favour its own interests while finding excellent reasons for slurring over or arguing away the immediate relevance of other clauses which are considered to be less advantageous to itself.

Particularly do I believe that the United Nations should try to take steps that will be effective in carrying out that part of the Armistice which forbids belligerent or hostile acts by either party. This seems to me to be basic to the whole question of compliance with the Armistice, and if it can be frustrated, for instance, by specious claims to prevent innocent passage for Israeli ships into and through the Gulf of Aqaba, or through the Suez Canal, on grounds of self-defence, justified by a technical state of war, then the rest of the Armistice Agreement means little.