

Peace keeping involving the use of armed forces has presented special problems. There is now not much doubt, however, that multi-national forces under United Nations control can be mounted and despatched and can commence and carry through their specific functions with considerable efficiency. Hammarskjöld referred correctly to "possibilities for international organization which, once proven, cannot in future be disregarded". The critics of operations administered by the Secretary-General have probably been alarmed by the very speed and good order with which action can be taken. Even in the Congo, where conditions developed in a very dangerous way, rapidly getting beyond the point at which one might envisage effective peace keeping, the discipline and imaginative diplomacy exhibited by those acting for the United Nations was truly remarkable.

The long-term results of peace keeping naturally cannot be judged so quickly or so definitely. The United Nations Emergency Force remains in the Middle East. The Congo operation was concluded only last year. Cyprus is still in a dangerous state and the Kashmir issue has flared up again and broadened. Prospects for permanent stability in an area cannot be easily measured at short range. Peace keeping has not been expected, by itself, to solve basic problems leading to conflict. It is intended to prevent them from getting beyond the possibility of negotiation and diplomatic procedures and perhaps to introduce some lasting elements of stability and confidence into a situation. We must not be too surprised or disappointed when parties to a dispute are slow in working out a political solution. The United Nations is like an army which has committed forces to battle and secured some initial objectives with impressive but limited victories; it must still pursue a long campaign.

We must, of course, see peace-keeping techniques as being essentially diplomatic ones, used in harmony with the realities of power in the world, in order to achieve as much as possible in the way of order, peaceful change and the elimination of dangerous friction.

Considering the problem from this realistic standpoint, I would say that sending observer and truce missions to several areas of the world, placing forces in the Middle East after the Suez crisis in 1956 to prevent further fighting, assisting authorities in the newly-independent Congo in 1960 to establish order under conditions at times approaching chaos, and landing troops in Cyprus in 1964 to help prevent a civil war that might have led to an international war in a very sensitive area, were the only practical and positive decisions the United Nations could have made. These decisions, the follow-up action and the accompanying negotiation inside or outside the United Nations have almost certainly helped to avoid greater disasters. There may be much to learn from experience, but peace-keeping operations do offer promising techniques for the United Nations in its general role as an agent of international peace.

These are what seem to me to be the fundamental issues one must examine before commenting on the specific matters now in dispute or considering future prospects. There is very likely to be a continuing need for such operations. They are likely to enjoy fairly wide support. They can, in fact, be carried out efficiently and offer opportunities for durable settlements.