

Nations into isolation, and, second, because almost a third of the present members would be most reluctant to side with the West on such an issue.

5. The question therefore arises: should the United Nations have set its sights lower and attempted some more limited aim? It is difficult to see how we could have acted any differently in view of the passions aroused by Soviet actions last October and November without admitting the impotence of the United Nations from the beginning. The debate served one purpose, however, and that was to focus the attention of the world on Hungary, and to serve as some kind of brake on Soviet repressive acts. The UN probably never had any real chance of doing more than this, of acting, for example, as a mediator between the Russians and Hungarians, and of moderating the demands of each side. Similarly United Nations actions in condemning the USSR could hardly have altered Soviet aims and methods in Hungary. In other words most of what the United Nations did was irrelevant to the basic fact that the USSR was determined to re-establish its dominant power in Hungary and was in a position to do so irrespective of what the outside world did, barring an act of war. The only thing which might have altered this would have been a unanimous Arab-Asian reaction against the USSR and even this would not necessarily have prevented the Russians from their course of action.

6. In the circumstances, therefore, the establishment of the Special Committee on Hungary was probably the only action the United Nations could take to assert its authority, to keep the issue alive, and to try objectively to present a definitive report on the actual events. Its work so far, and its interim report, are unspectacular but satisfactory. It seems likely that the final report will be a sombre and pretty convincing indictment of the Soviet Union.³³ But, basing myself on the reception of the interim report, it seems probable that it will have very little effect on world opinion.

7. As regards the question of the Hungarian Delegation to the United Nations, we were faced with the dilemma of accepting the credentials of a delegation of a government completely unacceptable to the vast majority of the Hungarian people, or having to deal solely with the Russians over Hungary. In the end the Hungarians themselves solved the question by voluntarily absenting themselves from the work of the Assembly.

8. To sum up, I must repeat my conviction that Hungary was the major failure of this Assembly. It failed to liberate Hungary, and it failed basically to change the Arab-Asian attitude towards the Soviet system, or Soviet colonialism. The first was due at least in part to a refusal to accept the basic premise that the United Nations is not yet in a position to force decisions on the USSR without going to war. The second is more serious because it was within the possibilities of the United Nations. The only mitigating factor in absolving it of this guilt is that the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt obscured what otherwise would have been easier to present as a clear-cut case of Soviet colonialism. But this must remain speculation, and I do not think we should exaggerate it. The fact that we did fail is a factor of far-reaching importance. It means that the anti-Western colonial bias is still great enough to prevent the Arab-Asian countries from seeing through the rosy haze in which they regard the USSR. But I also think it means that, subconsciously or not, the Afro-Asians are not prepared to take a high, moral line with a country which is in a posi-

³³ Voir Nations Unies, Assemblée générale, *Rapport du Comité spécial pour la question de Hongrie*, Documents officiels: onzième session, Supplément N° 189 (A/3592).

See United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary*, Official Records: Eleventh Session, Supplement No. 18 (A/3592).