

and there is much to make us uneasy about the present position of the United Nations in the Middle East in attempting to carry out Assembly directives which are, in places, too vague and uncertain, I believe that a grave crisis last November was prevented from developing into something far worse by action of the kind which could only have taken place within the United Nations. Our subsequent efforts to move from a cease-fire, to pacification and to a permanent solution, may or may not succeed, but even if they do not, that will not prove that the action of the United Nations in November 1956 was wrong.

The role of the United Nations Assembly, it seems to me, became more questionable later on when the effort to secure an equitable basis for Israeli withdrawal from Egypt was the issue. It is undoubtedly a handicap to have an Assembly with a large number of members committed strongly and in advance to one side or the other. This awkward fact has contributed to the difficulty of securing the necessary majority for any United Nations policy except for one not clear or definite enough to ensure a solution of substantive problems. To get the necessary votes, we have too often watered down resolutions or, even worse, replaced them by "hopes and assumptions". But it is foolish to assume that the situation in question could be handled more easily if the United Nations could only be ignored. Would we be better off today in the Middle East without UNEF or the mediatory efforts of the Secretary-General? In diplomatic activities outside the United Nations, would there be a constructive role, or, indeed, any role at all for middle powers who, without immediate interests involved, should, therefore, be able to take an objective and impartial view of issues? The only feasible alternative to negotiation through the United Nations would be the imposition of a solution by unilateral action by the United States or the U.S.S.R. or by the joint action of the United States and the U.S.S.R. with all the risks to peace that this would involve; which has always been a nightmare of the European countries and is, as we all know, inconceivable at the present time or in the foreseeable future.

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It has also frequently been alleged that the Assembly sanctioned a double standard of morality in its attitude towards the U.S.S.R. over Hungary in contrast with its action towards the United Kingdom, France and Israel over Egypt. Undoubtedly there is a question of a double standard of morality involved. It is a perplexing and worrying aspect of the matter. But it is not the United Nations as a body but certain of its members who are guilty of trying to establish this double standard. The Assembly, as a body, has followed the same procedure in regard to Hungary and to Egypt. It requested the U.S.S.R. to withdraw from Hungary and the United Kingdom, France and Israel to withdraw from Egypt. The Russians treated United Nations resolutions with contempt, and the other members (even though their actions were in no ways comparable with the aggression of the Soviet Union) complied. Is the guilt for this varied response