

The Dalhousie Review

Volume 36

WINTER

Number 4

SUEZ AND THE U.N.O.

By SIR ROBERT HOLLAND

WE now possess detailed information about the sensational happenings in the Middle East since the Israeli thrust into Egyptian territory, and the Anglo-French decision to occupy the Suez Canal area. Israeli forces achieved remarkable success, clearing the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula of Egyptian opponents and capturing much war material.

The objective of the Anglo-French expeditionary force was also secured, namely entry into the Canal zone and the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Egypt. If Israelis had pressed their advantage, the whole of the Middle East might have been plunged in war, and the peace of the world would have been endangered. That peril has been avoided for the time being: a cease-fire was effected, and plans were rapidly concerted for a United Nations force to undertake the duty of preserving local peace. A suggestion for such a measure was mooted by Prime Minister Eden during his visit to Washington early in 1956, but it then met with no response. Major General Burns had of course favoured it for a long time. On November 1, Mr. Lester Pearson made his able and dramatic speech in the U.N. Assembly advocating the action, and, on the same day, Prime Minister Eden said in the House of Commons that if the U.N. would be willing to take over the physical task of maintaining peace in the area, "nobody would be better pleased than ourselves."

The embodiment of such a force (now known as UNEF) was enthusiastically promoted. Canada, India, New Zealand, Colombia, Denmark, Norway, Pakistan, Ceylon, Sweden, Finland, and other nations, offered contingents. Britain and France agreed to remove their troops from the area occupied, as soon as

the U.N. force could take over effectively. Israel, at first obdurately refusing to quit her conquests, then agreed to leave the Sinai Peninsula but still held on to the Gaza Strip. Nasser consented to entry of the force, but subject at first to unacceptable conditions. In mid-January, the U.N. Assembly passed and African-Asian sponsored resolution calling on Israel to withdraw troops from the Gaza Strip and Aqaba region within five days. Because these are vantage points for Arab attack, Israel urged that UNEF should move in and police the areas. Nasser doubtless retorts that this would infringe Egyptian sovereignty. The force is of course under the command of Major General Burns, and the outlook for its success in maintaining peace in the Middle East is hopeful.

Soviet Russia, disgusted at the prospect that her influence in the Middle East must suffer from her exclusion as an intermediary, made a futile attempt to induce America to join with her in immediate military action against Britain and France. Subsequently, in a letter to Prime Minister Eden, Bulganin stated Russia's intention to 'go it alone', to 'crush the aggressors and restore peace through the use of force.' These announcements did not commend themselves to the civilised world, especially in view of the Soviet's current actions in Hungary. The reply of America and her allies to blustering threats was positive and unflinching. Russia and China also intimated willingness to permit 'volunteers' from their countries to go to the help of Arab States. An Egyptian spokesman at the U.N. while admitting that an open request for volunteers had been made, said that nothing was being done about it because of recent developments in the U.N. Assembly.

If Nasser's Arab neighbours had been wholeheartedly on his side, they might have been expected to fling forces into the combat, especially against Israel. Their supineness is very suggestive. That there are dissidences and cleavages in the Arab world is a matter of common knowledge, but from the inaction of Jordan, Syria and Lebanon when Egypt was violently attacked by Israel, it may be inferred that they had special reasons for distrust of Nasser. His domineering ways, and his patent desire to make Egypt supreme in a League of Arab countries must have irked them. Iraq, a more distant and independent State, made a diplomatic *démarche* in favour of Egypt, and Syria tardily moved some forces into Jordan, doubtless to discourage further action by exulting Israel, but conceivably, also, for other objectives not connected with support of Nasser. Only on November 11, after the cease-fire, did representa-

tives of eight Arab nations, meeting at Beirut, pass resolutions stigmatising Britain, France and Israel as 'aggressors', and threatening use of force, if new occasions for tension arose.

It looks as though the other Arab nations regarded Nasser as a braggart bully, determined with the backing of Russia to annihilate Israel and to dominate not only the international waterway but the Arab world, and to exclude Western Powers from any share in Middle East affairs.

The Western Powers, and the Arab States also, are reaping a sad harvest from the faulty decision of eight years ago for the partition of Palestine. The writer, in a REVIEW article* nine years ago, endeavoured to shew that Partition must eventually involve grave danger to world peace.

The passage of ships in the Canal is not likely to be resumed for many months, because Egypt blocked it by sinking a number of hulks, and by other damage.

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The United States Government, at a very early stage, indicated its disapproval of Allied action. President Eisenhower, on October 31, told the American people in a televised address that his government had not been informed of the British and French intention to resort to force, and that he believed the move to have been a mistake, because "we do not accept the use of force as a wise or proper instrument for the settlement of international disputes." He said that, in the circumstances, there would be no U.S. involvement in the hostilities, and that he was ever more deeply convinced that the U.N. represents the soundest hope for peace in the world. He admitted, however, that the processes of the U.N. need to be further developed and strengthened, particularly in the direction of increasing its ability to secure justice under international law.

As early as August 28, Mr. Dulles had said that U.S. economy is not dependent on the Suez Canal. That consideration has doubtless influenced the formulation of Washington policy. The President has necessarily to take into account the fact that the American people, rich and prosperous and occupied with their own affairs, want to preserve their isolation from tiresome tensions arising in other parts of the world, unless eventual peril to America's strategic frontier in the Pacific might conceivably be involved. When Congress is in session, responsibility for bolder courses can be shared.

It is significant that, early in 1955, the President, without awaiting action by the U.N., asked Congress for authority to

* "Peril in Palestine" (Vol. XXVIII, No. 1)

take such military action as might be required, including action against the Chinese mainland, if the concentration of Chinese troops there was such as to constitute an immediate threat to the island of Quemoy (and consequently to the U.S. Pacific frontier on Formosa and the Pescadores). Congress sanctioned this by an overwhelming majority.

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The President's attitude as regards British and French action in the Middle East was severely criticised by Mr. Adlai Stevenson, and also by responsible U.S. news commentators who showed sympathy and understanding for Britain and France in their attempt to divorce Arab nationalism from Egyptian imperialism.

The posture of the U.S. Government having been unmistakably defined, and the U.N. police force established, Britain and France announced on December 2 their intention to withdraw troops from Egypt without delay.

Withdrawal was completed on December 22. It is a great pity that, before the cease-fire came into effect, the Anglo-French forces had not reached Suez, or at least Ismailia. Doubtless, premature withdrawal was impelled by U.S. dudgeon, but there seems to have been some military ambivalence. Nasser has apparently emerged from the ordeal with enhanced power in force and Israel, as appears likely, corrective measures will concern the U.S.

The basic fact regarding the Middle East situation is that Soviet Russia, implacably hostile to the Western world has been building up a military position from which to exterminate Israel and gain control over a huge strategic area. If these plans are endangered, Russia may, in desperation, let loose world war against the Western powers. A dangerous situation also exists in the Far East, owing to the concerted plans of Russia and Red China.

Stalin wrote — "It is inconceivable that the Soviet Republic should continue to exist interminably side by side with Imperialist States. Ultimately, one or the other must conquer."

The 'de-Stalinisation' move has only veiled Communist resolve. The volcano may erupt at any moment, and U.N. processes will not quench its flame. Jews now face a searching test as regards how to exert their influence. It has in the past been a powerful lever for use in an American election.

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The deep division between the Western powers was partly bridged when Soviet Russia savagely and ruthlessly suppressed

Hungary's gallant bid for freedom; and when the puppet Communist regime rejected the U.N. Assembly's demand for the entry of U.N. observers into Hungary and declined to fix a date for a visit proposed by the Secretary-General. Revelation of Soviet operations in Syria caused Washington to announce that the U.S. would view "with the utmost gravity" any threat to the territory or independence of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Britain — the members of the Baghdad Pact. Warning was given to Soviet Russia that the U.S. would permit no further aggression in the Middle East. Measures were started for the strengthening of NATO and for possibly endowing it with economic functions, for rendering financial aid to Britain, for emergency supplies of oil, for clearance of the Canal and, in general, for healing the breach between Western Powers.

Discussions at the Paris meeting of the NATO Council early in December may ultimately produce important results through expansion of its duties. A revolt in East Germany against Soviet tyranny would embroil NATO and might spark a world war.

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On Jan. 5, President Eisenhower made a dramatic announcement indicating his belief that America must play a more vital part in measures for preservation of peace. He asked Congress, as in 1955 with regard to the Pacific situation, for advance authority to use U.S. troops "to curb any ambitious despots or power-hungry Communists who might resort to armed aggression in the Middle East." He also said that he would seek a grant of 400 million dollars for a two-year economic aid program for Mid-East Nations; — this, so that new hope may be instilled, as well as respect for law and order. The authority would be used only at the desire of a nation attacked, and with due obeisance to U.N.O. He added that the U.N. cannot be a wholly dependable protector of freedom when the ambitions of the Soviet are involved.

As a matter of fact, the President as Commander-in-Chief and director of U.S. foreign relations can in practice make war, even though he cannot declare it. President Truman did this in Korea by sending in armed forces without Congressional authorization. But one object of the Eisenhower move is to give notice to the world of America's resolve. He seems to be convinced that any Mid-Eastern aggression, especially in Syria, or Communist subversion directly or indirectly led by Soviet Russia, and any development of the crisis in Eastern

Europe, especially in Poland, could start chain reactions necessitating military action by the U.S.A.

The best insurance against such danger is to make clear now America's intention to resile from indecision and to co-operate fully and freely with allies and friends for peace. The President will doubtless obtain the desired authority, but heated and protracted discussion in Congress is inevitable. Theorists who feel that turbulent situations ought to be soothed by generous appeasement rather than by rigour must have their say; and also fervid isolationists. The economic aid envisaged will of course be applied through U.N. specialized agencies.

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Ten years ago, an American author* argued that, because ultimate conflict between Russia and the U.S. is destined, America must break with the past and lead imperially a world federation of democratic nations against Communism. That might generate real hope of world peace in our time, through the setting up of effective authority. Meanwhile, the Afro-Asian bloc will be grieved and disappointed at the President's decisive move, especially since it has come so soon after Pandit Nehru's sanguine visit to him.

The philosophy underlying the Eisenhower statement of policy appears to resemble markedly that which motivated Anglo-French military action. Realisation of this must have brought balm to the wounded spirit of Anthony Eden when shattered health compelled him to resign office on January 9. Overhasty evaluation of the long-term results of Middle-East ferment may also be deterred. History will surely commend Eden's two gallant stands against 'appeasement', in 1938 and 1956.

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Serious schism in the Commonwealth at one time seemed likely when Canada and the Asian-African bloc sponsored Assembly resolutions highly critical of Britain. But later, prominent spokesmen both in Canada and India maintained that acute divergence of opinion over particular issues did not warrant belief that there would be withdrawals from membership. Mr. Lester Pearson, in Canada, said "This is no time to indulge in recriminations. It is a time to look ahead . . . for a restoration and re-assessment." Pandit Nehru, in New Delhi, also deprecated any idea that India would quit the fold.

He, as Prime Minister of India has had a most difficult part to play. When the first news of Hungarian sufferings was

*James Burnham, "The Struggle for the World."

received, Nehru, speaking at a Congress Party meeting in Calcutta, described the émeute as an internal affair of civil conflicts on a rather large scale. The nations of the Asian-African bloc of which India is leader significantly refrained from voting in the U.N. Assembly on a resolution demanding admission of U.N. observers into Hungary. Later, in the Upper House of India's Parliament, Nehru was criticised for not having taken a sufficiently strong stand on Hungary from the beginning. Nevertheless, on December 12, India abstained from voting on an Assembly resolution regarding Soviet barbarities in Hungary.

But India's own perils require that its Government's policy should be staked to 'neutralism' for the present. Soviet Russia looms on the N.W. frontier, and Red China encroaches on the North and East. The Pakistan trouble may flare at any moment. Knotty problems affecting internal unity also await solution, because so many new interests, influences and claims came to birth when democratic independence transformed the social structure.

The roots of discord run deep in this ancient land, peopled by descendants of many invading hosts.

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From the Suez affair the world should have learned three lessons. First, that some form of international control of the Canal is indispensable to secure peaceful maintenance of world trade, and in particular to remove the ban on ships going to or from Israeli ports. Secondly, that Nasser has been the pawn of Soviet policy aimed at assuming control of the whole Middle Eastern area. Soviet ambition is a thunder-cloud on the horizon. A great effort will doubtless be made by Russia to rekindle and stimulate the intrigues which have been fostered in Egypt and neighbouring Arab countries.

But Soviet tyranny in the satellite States is breaking down, and Red doctrine everywhere appears to be changing colour. Possibly, a golden opportunity for redressing the balance of world power was lost when the question of Communist China's admission to the U.N. was postponed for another year.

Now that the situation has been at least partially stabilized, conviction may grow that Anthony Eden, groping and stumbling through a maze of obstacles and pitfalls, was guided by Providence in his crusade to break the evil spell. His reputation has been tarnished by the imputation of 'aggressive' intent, and when a flood-tide of bitter criticism recedes, it leaves wide devastation, especially if the censure has been on supposedly moral

grounds. The full extent of damage to Britain's exchequer has yet to be disclosed.

Thirdly, the whole affair has demonstrated that the United Nations Organization as constituted at present, is not an effective instrument for the maintenance of world peace, but has displayed supineness and incompetence as keeper of the world's conscience.

President Eisenhower was right in saying that the processes of the U.N. need to be further developed and strengthened, particularly in the direction of increasing its ability to secure justice under international law.

For this purpose, there might perhaps be created at the U.N. centre a tribunal constituted in the manner prescribed for the International Court of Justice, to present members of the Security Council and the Assembly with opinions on legal and ethical merits of arraignments as a basis for ensuing discussion.

Such a procedure might tend to discourage partisan manoeuvres and 'Barabbas' clamour.

The specialized agencies of the U.N. have done, and are doing, magnificent work; but the high purposes enunciated in the U.N. Charter are mocked when U.N. policy in matters of grave importance to world peace is directed by a two-thirds majority in the Assembly secured by partisan blocs. "Aggression," today, cannot be defined as a purely military act. The real aggression is the planned provocation, the political decision to pursue plans for destruction or absorption of a neighbouring people. Outbreaks of violence occur because there is no effective mechanism for composing discord between peoples and states before the explosion point is reached. Discord may arise over issues justiciable by the International Court, but its jurisdiction is limited. Where an evil fire is kindled which threatens the very existence of peoples, pious pronouncements against resort to force are farcical. The undermining of Soviet tyranny in satellite states has begun with resort to force through spiritual yearning for freedom, as in Poland and Hungary.

Unfortunately, to rely on prompt U.N. action in grave emergencies is to divorce words from their true meaning. International morality does not exist under U.N.O. guidance.

Dr. Gilbert Murray said on November 10: "The Middle East situation is strictly a question of international law, and our system of international law is not complete. The U.N. was intended to have a means of enforcing the law: it has no such means." On the consequences of the Middle East war spreading, he said: "Such danger, the Prime Minister saw, must be

stopped instantly and, since the U.N. has no instrument, it must be stopped, however irregularly, by those nations who can act at once." Britain and France, acting in complete sincerity in what they did, were closer to the real truth of the situation than the U.N.

It has been well said that "The defence of freedom in world politics now depends on paying to God the things that are God's, because all sovereignty is held from God and is under the judgment of the divine law. More and more, the U.N.O. claims to be its own final law and to make God the servant of Caesar."

As St. Paul said . . . "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He added that, while the feet must be "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," it is "above all" necessary to take the "*shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Ephesians 6.12).

If this is veritable truth, it is clear that that the U.N. cannot succeed unless its members are inspired by righteous convictions. What changes ought, therefore, to be planned in the concept and structure of the Organization?

II

The Charter of the United Nations Organization.

The Purposes of the Organization concerning the maintenance of peace, as stated in Articles 1, 42 and 43 of the Charter, may be summarised as follows: "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of "aggression": the Security Council may take such action by "air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security: all members of the U.N., in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council armed forces, assistance, and facilities for this purpose."

On the basis of these provisions, UNO is expected by many to play the role of arbitrator and enforcer of peace, to make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. There is, however, no hope that, as constituted, UNO will be able to do this. It is not a judicial tribunal which, immune from external influences, can assess impartially responsibility for anarchy. It is certainly not capable, and can never become capable, of preventing out-

breaks of violence by economic sanctions or, in the last resort, through the agency of an International World Force.

In theory, if all the member States were to agree to the creation of such a force, for the execution of UNO decisions, and were to give the project their whole-hearted support, a Sovereign super-State might conceivably be founded, and universal peace secured, by swift suppression of all anarchic outbreaks.

But there is absolutely no prospect of this, because an unbridged gulf separates Eastern and Western nations. The dream of integrating all nations into a World State, has vanished. Even if it could be done, there would still be the danger, under existing conditions, that subversive elements might gain control of the new mechanism, and plunge the world into disaster.

All peoples know in their hearts that war, in this age, must in the long run ruin the victor as well as the vanquished, but they will still fight in desperation, if convinced that their nation's independence, ideology, culture and very existence are imperilled.

It looks as though peace by common purpose will not be attainable through a unity of nations until three conditions are fulfilled: namely, first until all cohering individual States possess, and have learned to operate successfully, systems of government expressing the will of the people and assuring to them human rights and fundamental freedoms; second, until the condition of peoples on the margin of existence is materially improved by concerted measures of the kind planned for the uplift of millions in South East Asia and other countries; and third, until the people of the major States at least, are imbued with a common moral purpose, and can feel confident that the same purpose will infallibly govern decisions of those to whom the reins of the central organization (whatever it may then be) are entrusted. When that point is reached, the need for using force to check aggression ought largely to have disappeared.

In the meantime, ought the forcible maintenance of peace, irrespective of the conditions in which violence arises, to be re-regarded as a proper function of UNO? Surely not. Where violence with evil intention occurs in any area, it must be met, not by non-violence but by violence with right intention, lest evil grow and conquer good. Christ said "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. 10.34.)

The essential issue seems to have been confused by the expedient which raised the U.N. flag above the free countries' armies in Korea. To many people, especially in Asian countries, it appears anomalous and even shocking that the flag

which bears the olive branches of peace should be unfurled in battle.

The primary task of UNO ought to be to enlist the hearts and souls and minds of men in defence of righteousness and liberty; for the development of an international conscience; and for the building of world peace through unswerving adherence to moral principles. In order to achieve this, ought not the ideal of renunciation of war as an instrument for the preservation of peace to be enshrined in the Charter so that the Organization may stand, unequivocally, for the solemn 'Determination' in the Charter's Preamble, namely, "To practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours"? Ought not the United Nations to renounce in positive terms any intention of enforcing peace in the world by such means as were adopted in Korea?

The constitution of an intermediary volunteer force of national contingents to maintain a cease-fire in any area where trouble has flared, pending discovery and peaceful adjustment of the issues, is on quite a different footing.

It seems stupid and futile to brand the use of force by any persons, anywhere, as aggression. What about the Polish forcible resistance to Soviet oppression? And the last-ditch struggles of Hungarian patriots against the inundation?

No nation can really be induced to undertake costly and hazardous military operations against so-called 'aggression' in another land, unless some supreme interest obviously affecting its own survival is at stake. In a democratic State, the people cannot be expected to endorse blindly and carry out a policy merely because it was approved by a majority vote in the U.N. Assembly under the existing Charter provisions.

Such voting does not change the realities of power and position; nor does it necessarily kindle a fighting faith in defence of righteousness and liberty. Men will fight and die, if they must, for an idea, but social upheaval and conflict will not be cured by arming unconvinced levies or by mustering nations. No contingent will be effective unless the men composing it feel that the cause for which they are fighting is such as to inspire devotion and sacrifice.

Unfortunately, the Charter 'Purposes and Principles,' and its aspirations for keeping the bond of peace and for the uplift of humanity, are rooted in a cold and barren philosophy. They are worded in terms intended to promote and foster enthusiasm for common interests but they do not beget, and are incapable of begetting unity of spirit among governments or peoples. The

reason is that there is no mention whatever of divine purpose or of man's moral duty in the Preamble and the Purposes and Principles of the Charter, or in other scattered references to basic aims.

The objectives set up by the Charter are secular, or at least they are defined in purely secular terms, and therefore they fail to create unity of spirit, the "vision" without which the people perish. No world organization can ever hope to command whole-hearted loyalty and support unless it is rooted in a common spiritual aim.

After the United States entered the World War, President Roosevelt said: "In victory, we shall seek not vengeance but the establishment of an international order in which Christ shall rule the hearts of men and nations." But when the Charter was framed, that thought bore no fruit. Doubtless, the framers shunned the deeper issue through fear of discord, and especially fear lest the peoples who had imbibed anti-God philosophy might be scandalised, and shy away from any agreement for outlawing war. So the Organization was erected on a professedly rationalistic base, though a "Prayer Room" was belatedly opened in recent years in the U.N. Building.

There is no hope that the U.N.O., under the Charter as it stands, will be able to propagate world peace through tinkering with the procedural mechanism of the Charter, through purging of the membership by direct or indirect action, or through mere appeal to ideals which are not acknowledged in the Charter's "Purposes and Principles."

At present, concerted agreement of nations holding the balance of power in the world is required before a U.N. peace preservation force can be despatched to a troubled area. World peace will never ensue through the operation of a balance of power.

Revision of the Charter seems required, in order to make it plain that Man's "right to security" is rooted, not in himself, or in what he thinks are his personal or national requirements, but in his acceptance of moral responsibility, through recognition that the destiny of mankind is controlled by Divine Power.

Any State declining to make such acknowledgement, as challenging its whole philosophy of life, would be automatically excluded from membership of the U.N., and the outlook for world peace would brighten.