

UNITED NATIONS REPORT

UN Fate Turns On U. S. Intentions

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Two events are happening almost simultaneously at the UN which have direct bearing on the true intentions of the United States toward the future of the World Body:

1—The 19th General Assembly is slowly grinding to a halt having accomplished almost nothing due to the argument over Peacekeeping and past financial debts. Regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case, there is serious doubt that there will be another General Assembly if the United States still insists on meaningful accommodation concerning past peacekeeping debts.

2—The war in Viet-Nam has increased in violence and contains all the aspects of getting out of control and of being a direct challenge to the mandate of the United Nations to keep the peace.

On February 10 Ambassador Stevenson gave an important speech before the American Bankers Association in which he reiterated complete faith in the indispensable role of the United Nations: "The modern world, the nuclear age, without collective security, without the United Nations, is unthinkable." And in talking about the dangers of little wars becoming big wars, he said, "Perhaps we are edging

toward a consensus on the proposition that nobody can afford an uncontrolled skirmish anymore . . . that the only antidote to escalation is ceasefire."

The question in everyone's mind is whether these remarks are consistent with what the United States Government is actually doing. If the United States insists on solving past peacekeeping operations, namely, the financial debts for the Congo and the Middle East, it is a sure bet that the deadlock will remain and the UN will gradually fall apart. History will put heavy blame on the United States for adopting a rigid policy involving limited amounts of money instead of looking to the future where there is hope.

Ambassador Stevenson said, "There are those who, like Russia and France, feel that, irrespective of the Charter, it is not realistic or practical to force a major power to pay for peacekeeping operations to which it is opposed. Frankly we are prepared to concede that, in developing a financing formula for the future, this view cannot be ignored." The point is that the Charter is the same today as it was in 1960 when the dispute started. Therefore, if this is indeed the position of the United States for the future, why does it not also apply to the past? This is a point that both Russia and France have been making from the beginning and will continue to make.

The other concern is United States intentions in Viet-Nam. Though the Assembly is unable to function, the Security Council still remains in full force. Under Article 99 the Secretary-General "may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of peace and security."

There can be no doubt that the war in Viet-Nam is a threat to peace. Nor does it come under

the applicability of Article 51 which gives any Member state the right to self-defense, because the United States has already notified the President of the Security Council that the U. S. air attacks are "retaliatory."

Very soon now the United Nations and the world may learn the truth about U. S. intentions . . . whether Mr. Stevenson's words of February 10 are merely pious expressions of goodwill or accepted U. S. foreign policy. The United Nations can only survive if its mandate of peace applies to all nations, big and small. If it is to become a divided policy, a policy for control of the small nations but freedom for the big, then it will become an empty shell with no meaning.

If a great Power like the United States, with its democratic principles, its wealth, its military power, insists on its right regarding past peacekeeping functions, then the UN will die. If it insists that its war in Viet-Nam is its own private affair, the peacekeeping mandate of the United Nations will be undermined.

In these crucial days one can only hope that Ambassador Stevenson spoke for the United States when he said, "The modern world without the UN is unthinkable."

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