

Address
by
The Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey
Senator from Minnesota
Before The
International Weekend Conference
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts
March 8, 1957

THE UNITED NATIONS AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

Ladies and Gentlemen. When you asked me to speak tonight, you graciously told me to choose my own subject so long as it dealt with world affairs. As it turns out, this has not been an easy thing to do. You, I, and almost everyone else in the country these past few weeks have been preoccupied with the crisis in the Middle East, and with all the public uncertainties, Congressional-Executive tensions, and the tremendous amount of action and inaction which has been going on. I myself am still full of the subject of the Middle East. Almost daily for the past month, I have had to address myself to one or the other aspect of this Middle Eastern question--whether it was the trouble over Suez, the ambiguities and insufficiencies of the Eisenhower Doctrine, the troop withdrawal problem, or the threatened sanctions against Israel.

We have undergone two months of tension at the United Nations and careful scrutiny of the Eisenhower Doctrine in the Senate. Fortunately, encouraging action has now been taken in both places.

I am convinced that the progress on both fronts was related. On the one hand, firm bipartisan Senate opposition to President Eisenhower's original advocacy of one-sided pressure against Israel was, most observers feel, a major factor in turning the Administration's policies toward a more constructive and balanced approach. On the other hand, successful negotiations leading to the Israeli troop withdrawals and implied American assurances against renewed Egyptian belligerency won votes for the Eisenhower Doctrine in the Senate. These changes helped convince many Senators that the "vote of confidence" in Administration policy, which the vague Eisenhower Doctrine really amounted to, was at least an endorsement of the beginning of a constructive approach, rather than a blank check vote for largely negative and unimaginative policies.

I finally voted for the Eisenhower Doctrine despite the fact that I considered its original version poorly designed and inadequately explained. I could not have voted for the resolution as it originally passed the House of Representatives. That I was finally able to support the Senate Resolution, despite continued misgivings, was due solely to the fact that important improvements were made in the resolution by several amendments adopted by the Senate.

As the sponsor in the Foreign Relations Committee of the successful amendment changing the "authorization" of the use of military forces to a declaration of support for the President, if he deemed use of troops necessary, I am confident that we avoided a distorted Constitutional feature of the original Eisenhower proposal. With the adoption of an amendment during Senate debate, we strengthened our ties with the United Nations by calling upon the President to continue to furnish facilities and military assistance to the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East. I was pleased to note that every Senate Democrat voted for this appeal to President Eisenhower to sustain the United Nations force. Two Republicans joined us.

M O R E

In another Senate amendment, we sought to promote constructive policies in the Middle East and elsewhere by requiring the President to satisfy himself that no nation receiving military aid from us will use it for aggressive purposes. With these three major amendments contained in the resolution, plus other improvements adopted in the Committee, I felt that an affirmative vote was justified.

Few people in Congress really believe, however, that the Eisenhower Doctrine itself will solve many problems. As originally presented, it was not a policy but an invitation to formulate one. The debate in the Senate has been useful. It has given us the first occasion in years for a full discussion of all the complexities, handicaps, and possibilities of American policy in the Middle East. The debate has shaken us out of our lethargy. We now have been put on notice of the enormous responsibilities which are already ours in the Middle East, as in so many other areas of the world. In this sense, I believe that the debate on the Eisenhower Doctrine has been helpful and constructive.

But both the policy-makers and the people of the United States must now turn their attention to the basic issues which still confront us in the Middle East: cessation of Egyptian belligerency, free navigation of waterways, resettlement of refugees, boundary determinations, an end to border raids, and broadly-based new projects for regional economic development.

We have not been successful in meeting these problems in the past, as I have lately had occasion to appreciate both as a Senator and as a Delegate to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In the latter role I must, of course, represent the official position of our government as far as my votes at the United Nations are concerned. Before I joined the Delegation, however, I made it quite clear that I intended to speak out in my role as a Senator and a private citizen--as I intend to do tonight--whenever I felt that our official policies were misguided or insufficient. By the same token, I shall speak out in support of the Administration whenever I feel that I can honestly give that support helpfully and sincerely.

Let me be frank about it. As far as I am concerned, one of the chief causes of the spotty and deteriorating reputation our country has written in the field of foreign policy in the last few years has been this Administration's inconsistent and abrupt swings from sweetness and light to storm and disaster.

The serious international problems we face do vary in intensity, but they have existed and still exist with a consistency that requires something better than constantly shifting policies of expediency leaving our own people and friends abroad bewildered.

The American people will back this Administration or any administration in asserting real world leadership for the cause of peace, but only if we are told the truth rather than fed palliatives. We cannot exist on an alternating diet of tranquilizers and pep pills. We cannot look at the world through rose colored glasses one day and then be asked to change them for smoked glasses the next.

Now all of this has immediate relevancy to my main subject tonight: "The United Nations and American Foreign Policy." Let me explain why.

In recent weeks, I have watched with considerable apprehension the relationship between our Middle Eastern policy and the functioning of the United Nations. I say apprehension because I am convinced on the one hand that our Middle Eastern "policy" has been either non-existent or deficient, and on the other hand that the way some of our leaders have used the United Nations

in this connection has been detrimental to the United Nations itself. I have in mind specifically the inconsistent attitudes of two of our most noteworthy spokesmen on foreign affairs-- President Eisenhower himself, who speaks for the Administration, and my colleague at the United Nations, Senator Knowland, who speaks for himself and for an undisclosed number of Republicans in the Congress and in the country.

I hasten to say that I do not want my remarks to be taken in a partisan context. This is not a partisan rostrum. It just happens to be a fact of life--an uncomfortable one for me!-- that the Republican Party is in power at the moment and the views of leading Republicans like the President and the Senate Minority leader are unavoidably important to all of us. It also happens to be a fact of life, up to now at least, that world responsibilities have never been an issue which has torn the Democratic Party asunder. Yes, other issues have divided Democrats, but not this one. As far as I know, the United Nations itself has never been a subject of heat or controversy within the Democratic Party.

The same cannot honestly be said about the Republican Party, and this has now become a fact of national importance. The United States is in the United Nations. But, important leaders of the party in power haven't quite made up their minds (1) whether we should be in the UN or out, and (2) what we should do, if we are in.

This dilemma has been clearly presented in recent weeks by the contrasting attitudes toward the United Nations on the part of President Eisenhower and Senator Knowland. I am more uncomfortable about the views of the latter than I am about those of the former, but frankly I am uncomfortable about both. Here is why.

We are all thoroughly familiar with the repeated appeals which President Eisenhower has personally made in special TV broadcasts, press conferences, and State papers. He has stated, in the "strongest possible generalities" that it is our national policy to rely upon the United Nations. The President's attention to the UN is highly praiseworthy. I welcome it. But I also submit that all-embracing reliance seems to occur most often in those instances when the United States government has no policy itself. Passive reliance, especially in such instances, may be highly unfair to the United Nations.

As Senator Mike Mansfield said recently: "It is a policy which would make the United Nations a scapegoat for our responsibility. A scapegoat may relieve the Executive Branch of a sense of frustration, but it will hardly serve the interest of the United States."

Senator Knowland, on his part, devoted a whole speech at the Georgetown University on February 11, 1957, to the deficiencies of the United Nations, raising about as fundamental a doubt as can be raised concerning the President's reliance on the U.N. Senator Knowland's question, as usual, went straight to the point: "Does the record of the United Nations warrant a continuation of our policy and support?" Every implication in his speech cast serious doubt that it does.

The Senator accused the United Nations of frustrating itself by vetoes, of operating on a double standard of morality, of increasingly resorting to bloc voting, of interfering in internal domestic affairs, and of discriminating in allotting its financial burdens. Many of these charges are undeniable--but it seems to me that they spring from the world in which we live. Moreover, they are neither startling or strange viewed from our own American experience.

For these reasons, I have decided to outline tonight the role of the United Nations as I see it. It is a role which does not quite fit either President Eisenhower's fulsome reliance on the UN, or Senator Knowland's implied rejection of it.

Of these two approaches to the United Nations, the President's is the most elusive and the most frustrating. At times he has seemed to regard the United Nations as some kind of vast Univac machine into which difficult problems may be fed and automatic answers provided. This approach in a sense is flattering to the United Nations, but even world organizations can be flattered to death.

A tendency to impose tasks on the United Nations beyond its capacities does a disservice to the UN and its future. Reliance on the United Nations in the absence of both policy and leadership is self-defeating. Without steady injections of specific American policies and hard-working leadership at the U.N., Univac won't register anything except a compromise of other peoples' policies and other peoples' leaders.

So in this case, as in any others, while we often welcome the President's words, we do not always know what they mean. Lip-service leadership is not enough to meet the requirements of the hour, and a comfortable reliance on an infant world organization is hardly adequate to the tasks now facing us as the most powerful nation on earth.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. I should like to see the United Nations used, but used effectively. I should like to see it energized by American leadership. I should like to see it strengthened and developed in a dozen different ways, not only in its political, but in its social, economic and scientific aspects as well. It is this element of constructive, detailed support which I find missing both from the President and from the Minority leader.

Let me turn now to some of the criticisms which Senator Knowland and others have made of the United Nations and its usefulness in the context of the long-term goals of American Foreign policy.

Let me begin by describing for you a scene which has become familiar to me during my service at the U.N. General Assembly. It is a scene which frequently defies the logic of logic-choppers and literal-minded men.

There at the General Assembly are 80 nation states, unequal in power, wealth, and culture. All claim an equal sovereignty. Each pursues, or tries to pursue, an independent policy. Each judges its own best national interest. Each entertains its own private and public opinion about the characteristics of a more perfect world.

The delegates themselves represent historical backgrounds and exhibit such vast cultural differences that most logical men could easily despair over the possibility of commonly accepted standards. Some of the members of the United Nations pay much of the cost of its operation; others pay very little. There are blocs. Delegates frequently think more of their own blocs and their own interests than the overall peace of the world--or rather, I should say, almost all delegates identify their own interests, and the interests of their own blocs, with the overall peace of the world. Lately, it has seemed to be painfully true that those who defy the law of nations seem to get away with more than those that respect the Charter.

And yet, my friends, one hundred seventy years ago, our thirteen colonies attempted the experiment of the United States of America. There is not a single thing said against the

United Nations today that was not said against the early Republic. How could you have a government when a part of the states had slaves? There was a double standard. The agricultural states were afraid of the more industrialized states. Some wanted free trade. Some wanted protection. The smaller states were afraid that the larger states would have more influence in the House of Representatives. Some of them felt that they would bear a disproportionate share of the cost of the Federal Government.

Moreover, the nations in the old world that had not been able to defeat the revolt of the colonists predicted that the colonists would defeat themselves because they could not govern themselves. These struggling colonies, with a few million people--many of them impoverished--with few means of communication, defied the logic of everyone but themselves.

We are foolhardy, if we judge the United Nations by the standards of literal-minded men. I shall not claim that it is able to produce absolute justice or even rough justice for all. I shall not claim that the weak are as powerful as the strong. Neither will I claim that the weak are necessarily wise in some of their voting.

But, I will say, that the United Nations represents the early stages of the evolution of mankind to international law and order. So tenacious is the desire of man for peace, so strong is this impulse for law and order, that within the last twelve years the United Nations has withstood the most terrific shocks and assaults upon it. It has survived the advent of the atomic age and the revolt of a quarter of the world against the colonial system. I earnestly believe that had it not been for this organization, the world might well be in its third and final war.

The United Nations is far from perfect. But all the hopes of man to evolve a just international economic order, to advance human rights, to stop aggression, to disarm, to establish a reign of law, are bound up in the United Nations. It is for us to apply not absolute logic, but rather the test of imagination. It is for us to give the United Nations our leadership.

Let us consider the situation as it really is in view of the attacks against the U.N.

1. Bloc Voting

The United Nations has eighty members. One fourth of them were colonies when the Second World War began. One fourth of the world has thrown off the yoke of colonialism in slightly more than a decade. Some hundred million more are making the final liquidation of the colonial system. Paul Hoffman, my fellow delegate at the present United Nations Assembly, has called this the greatest social revolution in history. We Americans might say that the blow which we struck to the colonial system in 1776 is reaching its full fruition in 1957.

One of the basic facts of our time is the spirit of nationalism which dominates the thinking of most of the underdeveloped areas of the world. We are all familiar with the manifestations of this force--the anti-Westernism throughout much of Asia and Africa and the irresponsible fashion in which the Soviet Union has tried to take advantage of this feeling and use it for its own ends. We are now seeing the re-emergence of this same spirit of nationalism in the Soviet captive countries of Eastern Europe.

The rise of nationalism throughout so much of the world presents a paradox in that it comes at the time when most of the more highly developed countries, such as the United States and the nations of Western Europe, are moving more and more toward forms of international organization which play down nationalism. It is both useless and wrong to try to oppose nationalism--useless, because any such opposition would be foredoomed to failure; wrong, because nationalism springs from basically good, patriotic feelings, which are shared to some degree by all men everywhere. Of course, self-determination of national groups has been a keystone of American policy since the days of Woodrow Wilson--so all this is nothing new to us.

Now here is the important point.

One reason we need the U.N. is to provide a constructive focus for this tremendous force of nationalism which otherwise would be running wild. The U.N. does not control or thwart nationalism, but it does provide a framework in which nationalism can find its proper and responsible place in a world society that is becoming increasingly interdependent. The U.N. can likewise protect and encourage nationalism to pursue constructive ends.

The challenge, both before the U.N. and before our own government, is how we deal with these problems in a responsible manner calculated to promote the principles of the United Nations Charter, to advance the national interests of the United States, and to bring some greater measure of peace and freedom to the people of the areas concerned.

These new people in the underdeveloped nations are very suspicious of the Western World because they identify the Western world with the colonialism which they have struggled to overthrow. Some of them, not appreciating that the Soviet Union has established a new colonial system by absorbing contiguous territories, have tended to be neutral in what we think are some of the great moral issues of our time. Naturally they tend to bloc voting. We hear of the Bandung Bloc, of the Asian-African bloc, etc.

Many of these nations are without the long experience in government of the nations in the West. But they are entitled to feel their way as did our American forefathers. Many of these nations lack the trained civil service and the industrial technicians of the older states. But they tend to give the highest kind of priority to economic development.

Under these circumstances, I think we should rejoice that these new governments, still absorbed with the birth pains of nationalism and revolution, nevertheless want to join and play an active role in the United Nations. This is the most significant fact of all. Together with the dignity and security which their UN membership brings them, these new countries are developing a sober sense of responsibility earlier than they might otherwise. Our responsibility in turn is to work with them,--giving guidance, help and sympathy. We should cooperate, not dominate.

I recognize the difficulty of blocs. At the moment there are leaders in this large Asian-African bloc who are sometimes so blinded by their fear of colonialism that they cannot be objective in such matters as Suez, Hungary, or Kashmir. But the Government of the United States must live with these blocs and must do its best to dispel fear and suspicion. It must hold a place of leadership because of its singlemindedness and devotion to the principles of justice and the Charter.

Moreover, of course, blocs are not so unusual. It is particularly ironical, I might add, that the distinguished Minority Leader of the Senate professes to be so upset about them. For some time now, Senator Knowland's official duty on

Capitol Hill has been bloc organizing, if not bloc busting. (May I say parenthetically that bloc busting is preferable both in the Senate and the UN to bloc busting on the battlefield.) In any case, Senator Knowland knows all about blocs, and his rich experience in Washington should help make him feel at home at the UN. After all, the Senate and the General Assembly have a lot in common: blocs, unequal representation, flamboyant personalities, odd alliances, even lots of politics!

Indeed this last point is worth stressing. The fact that the members of the UN take it seriously enough to engage in politics there, is one of the most encouraging signs we have. It is a tribute to the UN's growth and future possibilities. We engage in politics and political maneuvering when we feel strongly about something.

2. Double Standards of Morality?

It is not necessary to blame the United Nations for decisions that are beyond its control. The United Nations is not responsible for the double standard of morality which is involved in not punishing the Soviet Union while attempting to enforce the Charter elsewhere. The double standard exists and is deplorable. We should do all we can to remove it, and I think we could go farther than we have in attempting to remove it. But is it a false emphasis to criticize the United Nations for failing to act against the Soviet Union, when strong nations themselves have refused, to risk the final terrible gamble of atomic war?

In this sense, the "double standard of morality" is built into the international situation these days. It exists in or outside the United Nations. The only legitimate question to ask is whether the United Nations diminishes or increases the operation of this double standard. I am convinced that this international vehicle for the expression of moral force not only diminishes the double standard, but is our very best hope of removing it in the future.

It is true that the United Nations has secured results in the Middle East in the tangible form of securing the withdrawal of the British, the French, and the Israelis. United Nations resolutions have not secured the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Hungary. But in the long process of the development of justice from the frontier to the modern community, justice has scarcely been even.

The strong have often escaped penalty, but they have not escaped censure. Certainly there was no equivocation about United Nations resolutions regarding the Soviet Union in Hungary.

There is a tendency among some people to pooch-pooch the United Nations as a debating society which can do no more than adopt pious resolutions. What these people overlook, however, is that these resolutions express the collective conscience of mankind. Even the mighty Soviet Union is not wholly insulated from the force of world public opinion. It has taken a considerable political beating because of its actions in Hungary. Increasingly, in United Nations votes on the Hungarian question, more and more so-called neutralists shifted from a position of abstention to a position of voting against the Soviets. Soviet fakery, double-dealing, and double-crossing was clearly exposed. Not for a long time, if ever, can the Soviets count on the same kind of open-minded reception in many of the Asian-African states that they were receiving a year ago. The more we can keep the truth about the U.S.S.R. before the people of the world, the better off we will be.

3. Veto Power

For the same reason, I am not so concerned about the use

of the veto by the Soviet Union as are some others. As a real element in the world picture, the Soviet veto exists. Soviet power sets limits to what can and cannot be done. This is regrettable. This power is also a fact which would exist whether or not it is formalized in the veto power of the Security Council.

Through the "Uniting for Peace Resolution" the United Nations has, however, found a technical way around the technical veto. One morning, the General Assembly that was debating the Middle Eastern question recessed at three o'clock in order that there might be an emergency meeting of the Security Council to consider the issue of Soviet troops in Hungary. And when the Soviet Union vetoed the resolution twice within the lifetime of this present Assembly, without leaving their seats the members invoked the "Uniting for Peace Resolution," and the General Assembly met within twenty-four hours in emergency session.

I realize that a resolution of the General Assembly does not have the legal force of a resolution of the Security Council. But I believe that by precedent, and by the exercise of its prerogatives, and through its influence, resolutions of the General Assembly will come to have greater and greater authority. Two years ago, I thought that the Charter would have to be revised before the deadlock on new members could be broken. But the United Nations has now been able to increase its membership from sixty to eighty, without the veto being used.

Of course, I know that many argue that the veto in the Security Council should be removed. I have the feeling, however, that many, if not most, of the politicians who complain most stridently about the current abuse of the veto power in the Security Council, are precisely the ones who would insist on its continuation to protect American interests if the time should come when its elimination were seriously considered.

As far as I am concerned, I am ready at once to strike the veto power from matters relating to non-military intercessions or inquiries between disputing nations. To do so would be to correct an abuse of the veto power which has been added in practice at the UN over the past ten years, but which was never intended when the Charter was signed.

Beyond that, I doubt that anyone really believes that in the world of 1957 the United States would or should surrender its veto power in the commitment of its military forces.

Except for the brilliant ~~improvization~~ of the Uniting for Peace procedure, the veto ~~power remains~~ ~~in an organization of sovereign nations,~~ ~~the veto is not in itself bad.~~ It is the use--or the abuse--of it that matters.

4. U.N. Interference in Domestic Affairs

The United Nations is based on the principle of sovereign equality of states. Hence, it is not supposed to intervene in the domestic jurisdiction of its members. But when does a matter cease to be essentially a matter of domestic concern and begin to threaten the peace of the world?

That is the critical question, and the answers to it don't fall into neat, legal categories. Indeed I think it is less important to formulate or worry about hard and fast legal rules on this issue--rules which cannot in the nature of things be hard and fast--than it is to promote compromise on outstanding questions by trial and error. The recent disposition of the Algerian matter in the General Assembly illustrates exactly what I mean.

The French regard Algeria as an internal problem. The Algerians and the Arabs could not disagree more than they do

with the French on this issue. But in the refining process of General Assembly debate and negotiation at the UN, the collective impact of world opinion produced a resolution which, while not accepting either the French or the Algerian position completely, may promote a real solution.

It may well be that the debate in the General Assembly has saved what remains of the French Empire. The French may now move toward reforms in Algeria as part of a bold program for all French African possessions. I understand that the French Government was pleased with the mildness of the Assembly resolution on Algeria. It will be correct, if it regards this mildness as giving it a one-year respite to produce a better system for Algeria before the Twelfth Assembly meets.

Yes, the Algerian resolution was ambiguous and generalized-- but deliberately so. Its passage may be a practical achievement, far surpassing the effectiveness of any clear-cut legal decision on how far the U.N. could go on interfering with France's "internal" jurisdiction over Algeria.

5. Financial Contributions

The United States pays a third of the budget of the United Nations and more of special refugee and emergency items. This is undeniable. But, as far as the one-third cost is concerned, this is less than the United States would be required to contribute if the United States were actually assessed dues according to its ability to pay. We would then pay forty percent instead of thirty-three. Indeed the national income of the United States is more than the combined national incomes of a third of the U.N. membership. Our total annual share of the UN bill (including the specialized agencies) is equal to what 10 hours of World War II cost us.

Beyond that, I do not believe that we want in the United Nations, any more than in the United States, a property qualification for voting. It may very well be that in time to come the General Assembly will move toward a weighted system of voting. I emphasize that the General Assembly is only twelve years old. It must be given time to grow.

From what I have said about the U.N., you can tell that I am more interested in the possibilities than I am in the dangers. I am less interested in the frustrations than I am in the opportunities for leadership.

Consider for a moment the positive achievements of the United Nations. Here are a few:

(1) In 1951, the United Nations, at the request of the Government of the United States, intervened against the aggressor at the Thirty-eighth Parallel in Korea. I know all the difficulties and the arguments. The United Nations did not have a police force. The United States made a disproportionate contribution of forces, because it had the forces close at hand. Nevertheless the achievement remains: Fifteen other members of the United Nations contributed forces. I understand that had we been willing to arrange for the logistical support of others, the equivalent of another division from United Nations countries would have been obtained. Some forty nations contributed aid of various kinds in the Korean action.

(2) President Eisenhower, in what I think may be his most important contribution to history, challenged the United Nations General Assembly on December 8, 1953, to establish an agency under the sponsorship of the United Nations "to promote the atom for peace-time purposes." Such an agency has now been established and the blessings of atomic energy will not be the possession of a wealthy few, but will be extended to all mankind through the U.N.

(3) In 1947, the United Nations proclaimed the Declaration of Human Rights, which, though only a declaration and not a treaty, is now becoming a source of law. Its principles are being incorporated in new Constitutions, and it is gradually being referred to by domestic courts as a standard of human rights.

(4) The United Nations has demonstrated that a multilateral approach to help the underprivileged peoples of the world help themselves is a more efficient and satisfactory approach than many of the bilateral methods of medical, technical, and economic assistance which we have also used. Millions of children have received supplementary feedings, vaccinations, and clothing as a result of United Nations activity. Hundreds of thousands of people today are benefitting from the expert advice and training of technicians operating under UN auspices. Food production in widely scattered areas of the world has been increased dramatically by new agricultural methods.

We must enlarge our efforts to reach the world's people in ways most meaningful to them--through WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, FAO, specialized agencies which already exist in the United Nations structure. We must go beyond them to the formation of new UN agencies which could go immediately to work. I have proposed at least four of them, repeatedly. I repeat them again: SUNFED (the Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development), a Middle East Good Offices Commission, a Middle East Development Authority, a new International Waterways Commission to help avoid jurisdictional crises over waterways like that of Suez. Here in the area of the UN specialized agencies lie some of the most fruitful, constructive, lasting possibilities for positive advance.

(5) The present General Assembly to which I am a Delegate has also demonstrated its capacity to do important things. Today it has a fleet of forty vessels clearing the Suez Canal. It has the first real international army patrolling an area as military forces withdraw in response to Assembly resolutions. Nothing like that has occurred before in history.

I want to say a word about this international force. I wish to see it perpetuated. I do not think it will ever be large; possibly not more than ten or twenty thousand; possibly equipped with a few patrol boats to keep waters open, such as the Gulf of Aqaba, but always a small force. It will be a very small force, indeed, compared to the customary armies of nations.

A sheriff is one man in a community of many, but he wears the badge which is the symbol of the community and men do not attack him easily. So I believe that a small, available United Nations Force, rushed to a scene of trouble before the trouble gets out of hand, will, in most cases, help prevent violence. I do not believe that there is any government in the world today that would fire upon the symbolical force of the community. Had such a force been in existence when the first appeal came from Hungary, it might have been dispatched there quickly. I doubt if even Soviet commanders would have fired upon it.

I have joined Senator Sparkman in his Senate Resolution for the establishment of a permanent United Nations police force. It seems to me to be crucially important that this opportunity is not lost for the establishment of a permanent United Nations force growing out of the emergency force in the Middle East.

To conclude, it seems to me that the only policy to establish a more just and peaceful world is one which combines law enforcement, through the United Nations so far as that is possible, with careful diplomacy inside and outside the United Nations. We must judge all of our decisions at the UN both as legal obligations from the past and by probable consequences for future precedents. We should urge measures to induce members of the United Nations to

observe their obligations under the Charter which are likely to be successful and which do not unduly risk nuclear war. We should urge conciliation and compromise through the United Nations to settle disputes peacefully and justly. We must not ask of others what we would not accept ourselves. We must strive for an equal enforcement of legal obligations, but must realize that great inequalities of power will sometimes make this impracticable. The discrepancies in the United Nations structure between voting power and financial contribution is inherent in the sovereign equality of states and the necessity to allocate costs by capacity to pay.

The United Nations, though far from perfect, is an asset to the world. While seeking to improve it by practice, interpretation, supplementary agreements and, where feasible, amendments to the Charter, we must not destroy it or weaken it, ignore it or overburden it.

The United States can realize many of its policies more effectively by working through independent diplomacy to create conditions which will permit the United Nations to be more effective--particularly by seeking agreement with the Soviet Union to reunite Germany, Korea and Vietnam, and to moderate mutual suspicions and fears. A general policy of defense without provocation, and conciliation without appeasement, would contribute to this end.

The most important guide to policy is patience. Some factors are undoubtedly on our side. Nationalism is a stronger force than communist ideology. The demands for peace, self-determination, human rights, economic development and social progress, which are principles of the Charter and also of American foreign policy, are demands of human beings on both sides of the Iron Curtain, in developed and underdeveloped countries. The Charter provides opportunities for these universal demands to exert pressure upon the policies of governments otherwise dominated by fear, ambition or fancied necessities. With patience, skill and moderation we can help the United Nations to utilize these opportunities.

Let us see that our own policies are not led astray by resentment, impatience, misinformation, or ambition, into decisions which would fail to reflect the opportunities which the United Nations offers and which would defeat our own objectives.

The United Nations can fail. It can become a futile debating society. It can be afraid to stand for principle or to apply the principles when possible. If so, it will be our failure as much or more than the rest. And failure can well mean an atomic war that will destroy life on this planet.

The processes which began in the United Nations twelve years ago may also go on to curb the forces of evil and make the blessings of atomic energy, of economic well-being, of human rights, of freedom and civilized living, the possession of all mankind. It will be the defeat or the victory of the United Nations, and much depends upon the patience, and leadership which this country gives to the task ahead.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org