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THE UNITED NATIONS AND COLONIALISM: A TENTATIVE APPRAISAL

HAROLD KARAN JACOBSON

I.

Colonialism, at least as it is generally defined in the United Nations as Western rule of non-metropolitan areas, is rapidly being brought to a close. As a consequence, within a few years some of the activities of the United Nations will be reduced to almost insignificant proportions. Seven of the eleven territories that were once included within the trusteeship system have already achieved self-government or independence,¹ and another, Ruanda-Urundi, will soon attain that goal. Unless new territories are added, only Nauru, New Guinea, and the Pacific Islands will remain under trusteeship. The list of territories which according to the General Assembly are subject to the provisions of Chapter XI of the Charter has not been cut as drastically, but in terms of the number of people involved, the reduction is equally impressive. Even with the high rate of population growth and the addition of the Spanish and Portuguese dependencies, the number of people living in such areas is about one-fifth of the 1946 figure of 215,000,000. With a few important exceptions such as Kenya, Uganda, Nyasaland and the Rhodesias,

and Angola and Mozambique, the territories which in the UN's view "have not yet attained a full measure of self-government" are small and have populations of less than one million. It has already been recommended that the future of the Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories² and the possibility of allocating its duties to other departments be reviewed in the light of these developments. Although colonial disputes will probably continue to occupy prominent places on the agendas of the Security Council and the General Assembly for a time, the number of possible controversies of this nature is quickly diminishing. On the other hand, the passing of colonialism has also confronted the United Nations with new problems and tasks, as the Congo dramatically illustrates. Thus, an important chapter in the history of international organization is almost concluded, while another is just beginning.

It may be an appropriate time therefore to attempt a tentative appraisal of the work of the United Nations with regard to colonialism: to consider the manner in which the UN has performed its tasks

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¹ British Togoland elected to join Ghana, which became independent in 1957. The French Cameroons, French Togoland, and Italian Somaliland

attained independence in 1960. The trusteeship for the British Cameroons was terminated in 1961 when the Northern Cameroons became part of the Federation of Nigeria on June 1 and the Southern Cameroons joined the Republic of Cameroun on October 1. Tanganyika became independent December 9, 1961. Western Samoa gained that status January 1, 1962.

² See the report of the Committee of Experts on the Activities and Organization of the Secretariat: Document A/4776, p. 61-62.

and to ponder the effects of its actions. Since there is a definite connection between earlier events and some of the problems of the post-colonial era, an analysis of the UN's work in this field must neces-

sarily extend beyond the actual period of colonial rule; to a limited extent a review of the last chapter must also include a preview of the next.

II.

Before examining the substantive aspects of the UN's activities with regard to colonialism, it may be useful to consider the institutional and political framework within which these activities have been carried on. From reading the Charter, one might expect that most of these functions would have been conducted within the Trusteeship Council, and, in the case of colonial disputes, within the Security Council. This has not been the case. The General Assembly, for reasons which are common to nearly all aspects of the UN's work and others which are especially related to this field, has overshadowed both organs. The Assembly has set up its own subordinate bodies to deal with colonial problems: the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories and the Committee on South West Africa. It has belabored the Trusteeship Council and has in a sense reversed some of that organ's decisions and recommendations. It has considered colonial disputes which the Security Council has refused to view and has acted when that body would not.

Since the broad reasons for the development and enhancement of the General Assembly's role are well known, we need only consider those which are especially related to colonial problems. Here, the basic reason for the Assembly's becoming the most important center of activity is that the advocates of change—the side really interested in involving the UN—have been in a stronger position in this body. Mustering support for anticolonial actions has always been easier in the As-

sembly than in either the Trusteeship Council or the Security Council. In terms of the UN's total membership, the colonial powers have constantly been overrepresented on the two Councils, and as the membership has grown, so has the disparity between the political composition of these organs and the Assembly. Moreover, the two most important colonial powers have held veto rights in the Security Council, and while they have seldom used this privilege, it no doubt has had a deterrent effect. Another important factor, given the nature of the power of the United Nations, is that the Assembly has been more productive of world headlines and a world-wide audience.

There are also other explanations for the Assembly's prominence. Had South West Africa been put under trusteeship, the Assembly probably would not have become so deeply and persistently involved in that question. Had the colonial powers given meaning to the provisions of Article 77c of the Charter by voluntarily putting some of their colonies under trusteeship, the pressure to develop the Committee on Information might not have been so great. To be sure, the movement to develop Chapter XI began before it was certain that this sub-paragraph would be a dead letter, and it would have been a potent force as long as any dependent territories remained outside of the trusteeship system. Perhaps few, if any, seriously expected that the colonial powers would make extensive use of Article 77c. As it was, however, the anticolonial forces could take the

position, trenchantly expressed by the study group which analyzed India's role in the UN, that:

. . . the division of dependent areas into non-self-governing territories and trust territories was merely an accident of history; the former were the possessions of the victors of the two world wars and the latter those of the defeated.³

This attitude nourished the already existent desire to provide the same degree of international supervision for both types of territories.

Nor would one gain a sense of the importance of the Secretariat in this phase of the United Nations work from reading the Charter. Nevertheless, in routine matters, although not in crises, the Secretariat has been extremely influential. The Secretariat's expert knowledge concerning some of the more technical issues in the colonial field has caused many delegates to rely heavily on it as a source of advice. They have also been willing to allow it considerable discretion in handling day-to-day colonial issues. Moreover, the UN's procedures for dealing with such matters have enhanced the Secretariat's influence. Reports have figured prominently in this phase of the UN's work. Members of the Secretariat usually draft these reports, and then the delegates amend and approve them. When the pressure of time is great and little national staff assistance is available, as in the case of visiting missions, the power to draft verges on the power to commit. By and large, the Secretariat's

influence has benefited the anticolonial forces. For one thing, although the Secretariat's knowledge has been available to all, it has been more useful to these delegations, for their national staffs could hardly match those of the colonial powers. More importantly, the sympathies of the UN Secretariat appear generally to have tended in this direction.

Turning from international institutions to states, we find that both major protagonists in the Cold War have played distinctive roles in the UN's activities concerning colonialism.

Many commentators have attributed an obstreperous and obstructive quality to the Soviet Union's participation in this phase of the UN's work.⁴ Without question the USSR and the Soviet bloc have been the most outspoken critics of colonialism in the United Nations. Vyacheslav M. Molotov, in a press conference at San Francisco, gave a forecast of this when he stated: "We must first of all see to it that dependent territories are enabled as soon as possible to take the path of national independence."⁵ Soviet policy has not deviated from this line; it has granted the colonial powers no quarter.

One effect of this has been to encourage the development of more extreme positions on both sides and thus to constrict the possibilities of agreement. In this sense, the adjective "obstructive" can accurately be applied to the USSR's conduct. Soviet behavior has had a demonstrably inflationary effect on the actions of the anticolonial forces.⁶ Extreme Soviet proposals could

³ *India and the United Nations* (New York: Manhattan, 1957), p. 101.

⁴ See for example: Annette Baker Fox, "International Organization for Colonial Development," *World Politics*, April 1951 (Vol. 3, No. 3), p. 340-368, p. 353-354; and, Sherman S. Hayden, "The Trusteeship Council: Its First Three Years," *Political Science Quarterly*, June 1951 (Vol. 66, No. 2), p. 226-247, p. 229-230.

⁵ *New York Times*, May 8, 1945.

⁶ For a few examples see Elliot R. Goodman, "The Cry of National Liberation: Recent Soviet Attitudes Toward National Self-Determination," *International Organization*, Winter 1960 (Vol. 14, No. 1), p. 92-106.

not be ignored. The advocates of change have been forced either to support them, or to introduce alternative proposals. Then too, the Soviet bloc has usually supported anticolonial initiatives made by others. Western commentators have sometimes characterized this Soviet support as a "mixed blessing," but the record gives little indication that the beneficiaries have been seriously bothered. To the contrary, in parliamentary situations support is generally welcomed, regardless of the source, and by taking the most extreme positions, the USSR has allowed others to appear fairly moderate in comparison. On the other side, the colonial powers have recoiled before the Soviet accusations, becoming more and more defensive and less willing to submit their colonial affairs to international scrutiny. One unfortunate consequence of all this has been the occasional tendency of the administering authorities summarily to dismiss as propaganda any criticism voiced by the USSR. As a result, valid points have sometimes been obscured.

Viewed in a somewhat different perspective, it is striking how little the Soviet bloc has been involved in the UN's activities relating to colonialism. By virtue of Article 86 the USSR has always held a

seat on the Trusteeship Council, but no member of the Soviet bloc has ever been elected to this organ. The Soviet Union has always been a member of the Standing Committee on Petitions, but beyond that it has held few positions on the Trusteeship Council's subsidiary organs. No Soviet national has ever been a member of a visiting mission or of a plebiscite or election inspection team.⁷ Soviet bloc representation on the body now known as the Committee on Information has been limited to the membership of the USSR from 1946 through 1952.⁸ No member of the Soviet bloc has ever been a member of the Committee on South West Africa or of any of the *ad hoc* bodies concerned with this territory. One of the most important factors in the decisions concerning the Italian colonies was a desire to preclude Soviet influence. The Soviet bloc (although not Yugoslavia after its break with the bloc) has been excluded from all of the committees and commissions which have been established to deal with colonial disputes. Despite its determined efforts, the USSR was unable to gain a seat on the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), a body of potential importance for the immediate post-colonial era.⁹

⁷ On the one occasion when the question of the USSR's participating in a visiting mission was formally raised, the Soviet representative immediately replied that "his delegation would be unable to take part . . ." (Trusteeship Council *Official Records* [5th session], p. 257). The discussion occurred in July 1949. It concerned the composition of the mission which would visit the trust territories in the Pacific in the late spring and early summer of 1950.

⁸ In the 1952 election the USSR was defeated by China, 27-24, on the second ballot. In 1955 China won a place over the USSR again, this time on the first ballot. Three years later, the Soviet Union again seriously offered its candidacy, but withdrew at the last moment in favor of Ghana so as not to split the vote against China. Tactically the move was successful as China was not elected.

⁹ The Sudanese draft resolution defining the terms of reference of the Economic Commission

for Africa (Document E/L.780 and Rev.1) gave membership to both the United States and the USSR. The African states which were then in the UN strongly supported this provision. The USSR was eager to serve on the Commission. The United States, however, argued that membership on the Commission should be limited to the states of Africa and the relevant metropolitan powers. The Council finally rejected the paragraph in question by a vote of 5 (Indonesia, Poland, Sudan, USSR, and Yugoslavia) to 12 (Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, France, Greece, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, United Kingdom, and the United States) with one abstention (Finland) (ECOSOC *Official Records* [25th session], p. 86). ECOSOC Resolution 671 (XXV) April 29, 1958, provides that membership on the Commission is open to independent states in Africa and to states which have responsibilities for territories in Africa as long as these responsibilities continue.

These facts give some point to the Soviet Union's insistence at San Francisco that the Charter should require that the five Great Powers be represented on the Trusteeship Council. Indeed, it might be argued that one of the central themes running through all of the activities of the United Nations with regard to colonialism has been an attempt to minimize possibilities for Soviet influence in the process of decolonization and to exclude the USSR from the colonial settlement. Sometimes this has been done under the guise of keeping the Cold War out. It should be remembered, however, that excluding the two major protagonists, as in ECA or the United Nations Emergency Force, or even the members of the two alliance systems, does not necessarily exclude Western influence. Interestingly, hardly any non-communist states have objected to the Soviet bloc's exclusion, except in the case of the Economic Commission for Africa.

These comments are not made to pass judgment on the justice of the situation. The Soviet bloc generally did not have historical interests in or connections with the areas which were the object of this aspect of the UN's work. From the point of view of the West, there have been sufficient reasons for excluding the USSR and its allies. Nor are these comments intended to indicate that the USSR's participation has been unimportant or without influence. Their purpose is merely to delineate more precisely the impact of Soviet policy.

In contrast to the USSR, the United

States has been deeply involved in most aspects of the UN's work concerning colonialism, and it has been extremely influential. The United States has occupied a key position in the Trusteeship Council and consequently has often been able to mold this body's actions. American proposals have provided the basis for much of the work of the Committee on Information. Countless General Assembly resolutions have been shaped so that they could gain American approval. In crisis situations, such as that involving Indonesia, the United States has frequently exercised a determining role.

The UN has been a useful instrument in this respect for the United States. It has provided an access to problems which might otherwise have been beyond the realm of American influence.¹⁰ For one thing, the United States had few intrinsic reasons for becoming involved in unextraordinary developments in Africa. Furthermore, advice from an international organization is sometimes more acceptable and more effective than advice from an ally.

Of course, membership in the United Nations has also forced the United States to take stands when it might have preferred to remain silent. In short-range and tactical terms, actions in the UN obviously have often placed the United States in a difficult dilemma.¹¹ If the United States were to side with the anticolonial majority in the UN, it would anger the colonial powers, several of which were important allies of the United States.¹² On the other

¹⁰ Annette Baker Fox foresaw this at an early date and urged the United States to take advantage of it. See "International Organization for Colonial Development," p. 340-341.

¹¹ The best treatment of the way in which the United States has met this dilemma is Robert C. Good, "The United States and the Colonial Debate," in Arnold Wolfers (ed.), *Alliance Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), p. 224-270.

¹² For a detailed description of several instances in which allies put pressure on the United States see Senator Wayne Morse's supplementary report to the Committee on Foreign Relations on his experiences as a delegate at the fifteenth session of the Assembly: *The United States in the United Nations: 1960—A Turning Point* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1961).

hand, if the United States were to support the colonial powers, it would violate the much vaunted American tradition of anti-colonialism, disappoint the anticolonial group, and leave the field open for the Soviet Union. Moreover, the problem which the United States has faced has not simply been a matter of deciding which side to support. Americans too frequently forget that the United States is a colonial power, of however modest proportions, and that it has been unwilling to take some of the actions which have been demanded by the anticolonial forces.¹⁹ Further, at times the anticolonial pressures have almost taken the form of a campaign against foreign investment, which has definitely put the United States on the defensive. Military considerations have also posed problems for the United States, and it has been hesitant to support independence for territories which might not be able to maintain internal stability or be impervious to communist pressures. Some, of anticolonial persuasion, regard the United States as the foremost neocolonial power.

Frequently the United States has sought to resolve its dilemma through refuge in a kind of neutralism, and the record contains a large number of American abstentions on colonial issues. However, neither side has regarded abstention as a neutral course, and in fact it has not been without political significance. Among other things, it has affected the number of votes required to achieve a majority, since according to the UN's rules of procedure, abstentions are not included within the meaning of the phrase "Members present and voting."

But even in these short-range terms "the dilemma" has not been the only aspect. The United States position as a

"progressive" administering power, which it sometimes flaunts to the discomfort of its allies, has had its compensations. Although being placed in the middle may have been painful, it has also frequently resulted in unusual opportunities to influence the outcome: for instance, in the Indonesian and Suez crises and in the decisions relating to the Committee on Information. Whether one emphasizes the problems which the UN has created for the United States by its actions in this field or the opportunities that it has offered depends at least partially on one's estimate of the inevitability of the changes which have occurred in the colonial field during the past two decades.

There is some justification for dividing the remaining Members of the UN into two groups; for putting the western European states, the older members of the Commonwealth, Iceland, and Israel in one category, and the Latin American, African, and Asian states (often including Nationalist China) in another. In broad terms, the activities of the United Nations concerning colonialism have been characterized by a struggle of the latter group—the anticolonial forces or the advocates of change—against the former. On this level the Soviet bloc must be added to the anticolonial forces, and the United States to the West. However, a division on exactly these lines has prevailed only occasionally, on such issues of principle as the question of including the right of self-determination in the draft covenants on human rights and the passage of Resolution 637 (VII) of December 16, 1952, "The Right of Peoples and Nations to Self-Determination." Thus, although this gross distinction may describe the tenor of the UN's proceedings, it has little meaning beyond that. Even on general issues the two

¹⁹ See Harold Karan Jacobson, "Our 'Colonial' Problem in the Pacific," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1960 (Vol. 29, No. 1), p. 56-66.

groups have not been completely unified, and on more specific questions their inter-national divisions have been pronounced.

Within the West, the states which are, or previously were, responsible for dependent territories have formed a special subcategory. The colonial powers have often felt beleaguered in the United Nations. Several of them have charged that the United Nations has exceeded its proper jurisdiction in this sphere. As a group, they have felt that the UN has unfairly scrutinized their colonial practices in detail, while it has given much less attention to what they have considered the more serious offenses of others in different areas. They have resented criticisms of conditions in their dependent territories by delegates from states which may not have had even equal standards of economic, political, and social life. They have often regarded the UN's recommendations as utopian schemes, untempered by concern for reality.¹⁴

However, there have been differences among the colonial powers. The Union of South Africa, Portugal, and Belgium have been the least sympathetic to the United Nations activities concerning colonialism. The Union of South Africa has refused to place South West Africa under trusteeship. It has bitterly criticized the UN's work with regard to this territory, and on occasion has boycotted the Assembly in protest. Portugal has refused to admit that it is a colonial power and

to transmit data to the Committee on Information. Belgium ceased participating in the Committee on Information in 1953. If a continuum were drawn with these three states, in the order listed, at one extreme, moving toward the other end, an appropriate rank order would be: France, Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Australia (after the Liberal-Country Party gained power in December 1949) and, close together, the United States, New Zealand, and Denmark. There have been occasions, though, when this ranking would not apply. For example, during the early years France submitted political information on Morocco and Tunisia as well as the required economic, educational, and social data, and from time to time France has voted for resolutions concerning non-self-governing territories which the United Kingdom opposed.

The other Western countries, particularly the Scandinavian states, Greece, Turkey, Iceland, Ireland, and Israel, have been much more willing to go along with, or at least not to oppose, the Assembly's anti-colonial majority.

On the anticolonial side, there has been a basic distinction between the Latin American states and the African-Asian group. The Latin American states have usually supported and have sometimes even led the anticolonial forces. However, this group has contained a wide range of views.¹⁵ Some Latin American states, such

¹⁴ For a sample of this opinion see Sir Alan Burns, *In Defense of Colonies: British Territories in International Affairs* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956). Sir Alan served as the delegate of the United Kingdom to the Trusteeship Council for nine years and also participated in the General Assembly. Even Sir Alan's more moderate successor, Sir Andrew Cohen, has occasionally shown signs of similar feelings. See his *British Policy in Changing Africa* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1959).

¹⁵ This has been graphically illustrated by two

statistical analyses: Thomas Hovet, Jr. *Bloc Politics in the United Nations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 141; and, Leroy N. Rieselbach, "Quantitative Techniques for Studying Voting Behavior in the UN General Assembly," *International Organization*, Spring 1960 (Vol. 14, No. 2), p. 291-306, p. 300-306. For a more detailed analysis of the position of the Latin American states see: John A. Houston, *Latin America in the United Nations* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1956), p. 162-221.

as the Dominican Republic, have consistently taken positions which were very close to those of the colonial powers, while others, for example, Haiti, Mexico, and Guatemala, have been among the UN's most rabid anticolonialists. Furthermore, as a group, the Latin American states have generally been somewhat less extreme than the African-Asian group. Since they had few direct ethnic and cultural ties with the peoples of the dependent territories, and since their own colonial experiences and revolutions were different from those being considered by the UN, the anticolonialism of the Latin American states has not had quite the same emotional content as that of the African and Asian states. At times the Latin American states have even acted as if they felt closer ties with the metropolitan powers.¹⁶ Perhaps because of their own emphasis on the doctrine of nonintervention, some Latin American states have paid greater attention than the African and Asian countries to the legal niceties which were involved in colonial issues. The Latin American states have generally been more sensitive to the Cold War implications of the UN's actions in this field and more responsive to United States leadership. Since the Latin American states were not uniformly and unalterably committed to the most extreme anticolonial position, and because of the political composition of the United Nations, this group has occupied a key role in the UN's decisions concerning colonialism. The support of some members of this group has been a virtual requirement for the adoption of any reso-

¹⁶ Latin American concern for Italy was an important ingredient in the decisions relating to the Italian colonies. The sympathy which some of these states felt for France appears to have been a major factor in the General Assembly's decision, at its sixth session in Paris in 1951, not to discuss the Moroccan dispute. In 1956 the Latin American relationship with Spain and Portugal apparently was the key factor in the General Assembly's

lution, and this has frequently served as a moderating influence.

Although the African-Asian group has generally taken a more extreme anticolonial position, this group has not been a solid unit either. Among the Asian states, those which have alliances with the West have often taken a somewhat less demanding stand. The African group has also been divided.¹⁷ The relatively moderate position of several of the former French sub-Saharan territories has been well documented.

Just as many in the West have become critical of the UN's activities concerning colonialism, and some have even grown embittered, similar reactions, although with different content, have developed among the anticolonial states. On this side, the criticism is not that the United Nations has violated the terms of Article 2, paragraph 7, by intervening in essentially domestic matters, but rather that this article has illegitimately been used to frustrate the Organization and to preclude constructive action. The anticolonial forces have been as distressed about the slowness with which the United Nations has become involved in colonial disputes and the limited extent of this involvement as the colonial powers have about the fact of the UN's involvement. To those of anticolonial persuasion, Chapter XI has been "given meaning" through the activities of the Committee on Information, not "amended." This view has it that the colonial powers, rather than having magnanimously cooperated with an enterprise of dubious legality, have dragged their reinstitution of the requirement that certain categories of decisions regarding non-self-governing territories required a two-thirds majority for adoption.

¹⁷ See the interesting analysis of the reactions of the African states to the UN's actions concerning the Congo: Robert C. Good, "Four African Views of the Congo Crisis," *Africa Report*, June 1961 (Vol. 6, No. 6), p. 3-4, 6, 12, 15.

feet and have violated the spirit, if not the letter, of Article 73 by not supporting

the work of the Committee on Information more fully.

III.

The first task of the United Nations in this field was that of providing a measure of international supervision of colonial regimes. Chapters XII and XIII of the Charter gave the UN an elaborate mechanism for this work. With provision for annual reports from the administering authorities, petitions from the indigenous inhabitants, and visiting missions to the field, the system was well designed to maintain a close relationship between the World Organization and dependent territories. Its application, however, was limited to the eleven territories which were voluntarily put under trusteeship. Counting the dependencies of Portugal and Spain, there were more than eight times as many non-self-governing territories outside the trusteeship system, and they contained over ten times as many people. For these, with the exception of South West Africa which was given special treatment, the UN's machinery was the much looser and less substantial structure derived from Chapter XI.

The differences between the two principal systems have been analyzed in detail elsewhere.¹⁸ The continual drive of the anticolonial forces to endow the Committee on Information with the attributes of the Trusteeship Council is proof that these differences exist and are significant. Granting this, it is important not to become so engrossed in the legal and formal distinctions that decisive similarities between the two systems are obscured.

Probably the most significant proce-

dural difference between the two main sets of machinery has been that through the acceptance of petitions, the dispatch of visiting missions, and the attendance of special representatives from the territorial administrations at Trusteeship Council sessions, the United Nations has been able to have direct contact with the trust territories. This has not been the case with the other territories, or in UN parlance, the non-self-governing territories.

Governments are required to supply more data to the Trusteeship Council, but there is a relationship between the Council's Questionnaire and the Committee on Information's Standard Form. Although Article 73e does not require political information, five of the ten (if Portugal and Spain are included in the total list) administering powers have transmitted such data regularly. In addition, as mentioned above, France also did this for a limited time with respect to two territories, and in 1961 the United Kingdom announced that it would henceforth submit political information for all dependent territories which remained under its administration. Moreover, at one of the most important points, the termination of dependent status, the United Nations has required and obtained political data concerning non-self-governing territories.

The Committee on Information is not formally authorized to make recommendations concerning political matters, but as one delegate with strong anticolonial views put it in private conversation, "we

¹⁸ See James N. Murray, Jr., *The United Nations Trusteeship System* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957); Emil J. Sady, "The United Nations and Dependent Peoples," in Robert E. Asher and others, *The United Nations and the Promotion of*

the General Welfare (Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution, 1957), p. 815-1017; and Charmian Edwards Toussaint, *The Trusteeship System of the United Nations* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956).

have gotten around that." To some extent he was right. There is a difference between recommending that the number of unofficial representatives on the Tanganyikan Legislative Council should be increased and recommending that there should be greater participation by indigenous populations in the formulation of economic plans in non-self-governing territories, but the difference is not one of kind. Perhaps the most important distinction is in the degree of specificity. This probably accounts for the intense opposition of the colonial powers to the suggestion, which was made in 1955, that the Committee on Information should be given the right to make recommendations concerning regional groups of territories.¹⁹

The substantive recommendations of the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on Information have been strikingly similar. Because of its composition and method of operation the Trusteeship Council could generally only pass judgment on actions which had already been taken and adopt exhortations.²⁰ This is also what the Committee on Information has done, albeit in more general terms. Both bodies have advocated the same things: increased educational facilities for the indigenous inhabitants; enlarged social welfare programs with emphasis on community development; more extensive and compre-

hensive economic programs which would aim at diversification; and, greater opportunity for the indigenous inhabitants to participate in decision-making. Although the colonial powers have been asked to take steps to preserve (or discover) traditional cultural values in the dependent territories, basically the UN's recommendations have been directed toward encouraging social, economic, and political change. When the General Assembly has adopted resolutions concerning colonial practices it has underscored these themes. In the case of the trust territories the basic themes have been embroidered with such things as expressions of hope that the administering authority would take steps to develop a national consciousness in the territory under scrutiny. But at their core the recommendations concerning trust territories and non-self-governing territories have been the same.

The most salient motive force underlying the UN's recommendations seems to have been a feeling that all racial discrimination should cease and that the indigenous inhabitants of dependent territories are entitled to a position of full equality.²¹ The anticolonial forces appear to have been convinced that in almost all instances logically, and as a practical matter, full equality could be achieved only through independence.

¹⁹ The United Kingdom threatened to withdraw from participation in the committee if it were given this power (General Assembly *Official Records*, Fourth Committee [10th session], p. 108-109). The UK and other colonial powers have also used this threat to block proposals that the committee be given permanent status.

²⁰ Or as Annette Baker Fox put it: "The Trusteeship Council tends to ventilate existing practices rather than to analyze alternative solutions for problems perplexing conscientious administrators." ("International Organization for Colonial Development," p. 347.) One wonders, though, whether the administering authorities would have been willing to accept a different role for the Council.

²¹ It can be expected that the anticolonial forces will continue to advance similar demands even after colonialism as such passes. The resolution that the International Labor Organization adopted in the summer of 1961, on the prompting of Nigeria, which recommended that the Union of South Africa withdraw from membership (ILO Conference, *Provisional Record*, 1961 [45th session], No. 38, p. vi. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 163 to 0, with 89 abstentions), and the actions against this country at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly are surely an indication of things to come. To the anticolonial forces, it will be a continuation of the same battle.

They have also taken the position that "good government is no substitute for self-government." Thus, most of the UN's recommendations have been aimed, directly or indirectly, at hastening the transfer of power to the indigenous inhabitants. The opponents of colonialism have rejected the thesis that certain minimum economic and social standards are a prerequisite to independence. They have buttressed their case by citing data submitted to the UN showing the slow pace of progress by dependent territories in these fields. They have argued that progress will be accelerated when the indigenous population has control. However, they have never allowed this contention to be scrutinized. After a brief attempt, the Secretariat was in effect forbidden to compare conditions in non-self-governing territories with those in neighboring independent states.²²

It is not going too far to state that the majority in the United Nations has viewed the task of supervising colonial administrations principally in terms of bringing these regimes to a close. Nowhere is this more evident than in the long-standing and acrimonious debate concerning the establishment of intermediate and final target dates. In this sense, General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) of December 14, 1960, The Declaration on Colonialism, could well be read as a capstone to the UN's attempt to supervise colonial regimes.

There is little reason for believing that this conception will change with the contraction of colonialism. On the contrary, the anticolonial powers seem determined to push for the final liquidation of colonialism in the shortest possible time. With their strength augmented by the UN's new Members, they are in a better position to advance their cause. Now the African,

Asian, and Latin American states by themselves constitute a two-thirds majority. Further, the states which have been admitted to the UN since 1959 have not tempered the position of the anticolonial forces. Indeed, some of them—Mali for instance—seem to favor even more extreme stands.

Since the majority in the United Nations has taken this view, it is inappropriate to compare the work of the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on Information with that of the Permanent Mandates Commission, for the League defined its role in quite different terms. The League was chiefly concerned with improving standards of colonial rule, while the UN's aim has been to liquidate colonialism. Political bodies, like the Trusteeship Council and the Committee on Information, are probably better suited for the latter task than groups of experts, such as the Permanent Mandates Commission. The two concepts also call for different types of recommendations.

In the UN's drive to liquidate colonialism the nature of the post-colonial political regimes has largely been ignored. This has been true even with regard to trust territories where there have been no constitutional barriers to the discussion of political issues. The UN has championed a few democratic precepts, such as universal suffrage and majority rule, but in practice this has generally amounted to urging that a plebiscite should be held to accept or decide the method of terminating dependent status and to approve the successor government. Illiteracy has been held to be no barrier to the right of suffrage.

Assessing the effects of the UN's attempt at supervision is difficult. In the case of the trust territories, there appear to have been a few instances when UN

²² General Assembly Resolution 447 (V), December 12, 1950.

recommendations had a direct and immediate effect. The UN's involvement was apparently a factor in New Zealand's revision of its regime in Western Samoa in 1947.²³ To meet Council criticisms, Australia changed certain provisions in the law which provided for the administrative union of Papua and New Guinea.²⁴ But it is hard to find many cases in which the correlation between UN recommendation and action by the administering authority was so clear-cut.²⁵ More often, the UN's function, lacking all but moral sanctions, seems to have been to affect the climate of opinion: to create and support attitudes favoring change.²⁶ It has exposed the actions of the administering authorities and has made colonial officials more aware of the implications of their actions. Progressive forces have sometimes used the UN to buttress their case in arguing for liberal colonial policies. In these respects the World Organization has occasionally been a counterbalance to settlers and old-style imperialists. The UN has also been used as a scapegoat for actions which were unpalatable to certain groups. Finally, the UN has provided a measure of support and protection for indigenous nationalists by focusing attention upon them and by giving them a forum in which to expound their views.²⁷

²³ See Lawrence S. Finkelstein, "Trusteeship in Action: The United Nations Mission to Western Samoa," *International Organization*, May 1948 (Vol. 2, No. 2), p. 268-282.

²⁴ See Norman Harper and David Sissons, *Australia and the United Nations* (New York: Manhattan, 1959), p. 193-196.

²⁵ For analyses of this issue see the Secretariat study concerning the implementation of UN recommendations concerning trust territories (Document A/1903 and Add.1 and 2); Margaret L. Bates, "Tanganyika: The Development of a Trust Territory," *International Organization*, February 1955 (Vol. 9, No. 1), p. 32-51; and B. T. G. Chidzero, *Tanganyika and International Trusteeship* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

²⁶ See the interesting discussion of this matter in Annette Baker Fox, "The United Nations and

The UN's general proclamations concerning self-determination and its actions with regard to South West Africa and other non-self-governing territories have obviously been designed with the hope of achieving the same effects. The difference has been that in the case of the trust territories the UN has had immediate access to both colonial administrators and the indigenous population. Since the issues involved generally have not commanded wide public attention, this access has been extremely important. No doubt, this explains why the anticolonial forces have argued so persistently that the administering powers on the Committee on Information should include in their delegations representatives of the indigenous population and functional specialists.

A system of the type that the United Nations has developed for supervising colonial regimes depends for its effectiveness in large part on a fundamental agreement on values: those affected by recommendations must concede the premises on which they are based. That the UN's system has had as much success as it has reflects the fact that the anticolonial and nationalist demands were derived mainly from the intellectual tradition of the West.²⁸

Colonial Development," *International Organization*, May 1950 (Vol. 4, No. 2), p. 199-218.

²⁷ Certainly the 1954 visiting mission to East Africa which suggested, *inter alia*, that Tanganyika should become self-governing or independent in less than 20 years (Trusteeship Council *Official Records* [15th session], Supplement No. 3, "Report on Tanganyika," p. 67-68) had a profound effect on the Tanganyika African National Union (see Thomas R. Adam, "Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories," in Clyde Eagleton and Richard N. Swift (ed.) *Annual Review of United Nations Affairs, 1955-1956* [New York: New York University Press, 1957], p. 117-140, p. 125 ff.).

²⁸ See Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation: The Rise to Self-Assertion of Asian and African Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

The UN's system of supervision has also had secondary effects and by-products which so far remain largely unexplored.²⁹ Developments in one territory have probably affected other areas. One writer (a British official in Tanganyika) has speculated that the greatest impact of the trusteeship system "is likely to flow from its progressive disintegration."³⁰ So far as by-products are concerned, observers have noted that some petitioners seem to have used their opportunity to appear before the United Nations primarily to advance their political fortunes at home, and that certain states have tried to structure internal political developments in trust territories to the advantage of more or less radical forces.³¹ The Soviet Union has sought to use its position on the Trustee-

ship Council's Standing Committee on Petitions to create the impression that it alone fully supported the demands of the downtrodden in the trust territories. One suspects that fear of neocolonialism was not the only factor which prompted Ghana and several Latin American states to press for studies of the effects of the European Economic Community on the trust and non-self-governing territories; their own commercial interests were deeply involved. Nor is it overly Machiavellian to think that some offers of scholarships and fellowships for students in dependent territories have been made in the hope that this would be a way of molding future elites. It is far from clear, however, what these efforts have achieved.

IV.

A second task of the United Nations has been that of officiating at the liquidation of colonialism. In most instances this has meant participating in the birth of states. Articles 83 and 85 of the Charter made it clear that the Organization would have this function with respect to trust territories. Article 73c has been interpreted as giving the United Nations a similar role with regard to non-self-governing territories; the majority has asserted that the UN has the right to determine whether or not a colonial power is justified in deciding to cease transmitting data concerning the economic, educational, and social conditions in a given territory. In the case

of the Italian colonies, the United Nations became involved by default when the Great Powers could not agree. Finally, despite the protestations of several colonial powers, the UN has assumed a role in colonial disputes, such as those involving Indonesia, the French North African colonies, Cyprus, and Angola.

In performing this task the United Nations has first of all provided support for nationalist forces. It did this by demanding and supervising elections at crucial points in French Togoland and Ruanda-Urundi. When the Assembly decided in 1949 that Libya should become independent no later than January 1, 1952, and

²⁹ Among other things we know very little about the reactions of the inhabitants of dependent territories to the United Nations. The only detailed analysis of this question is: Camilla Wedgwood, "Attitudes of the Native Peoples of Papua and New Guinea to the United Nations 1945-1954," Appendix D in *Australia and the United Nations*, p. 384-400.

³⁰ John Fletcher-Cooke, "Some Reflections on the International Trusteeship System, With Particular

Reference to its Impact on the Governments and Peoples of the Trust Territories," *International Organization*, Summer 1959 (Vol. 13, No. 3), p. 422-430, p. 430.

³¹ See *ibid.*, p. 427; and Ernst B. Haas, "Dynamic Environment and Static System: Revolutionary Regimes in the United Nations" (paper read at the 1961 Convention of the American Political Science Association), note 47.

that Somaliland should also gain that status by the end of 1960, it must have given encouragement, as the French feared that it would,³² to nationalist forces everywhere and especially in the neighboring territories. Probably these decisions relating to the former Italian colonies were among the most significant of the UN's actions in this field.

In the case of Indonesia the support was more direct and tangible. At several key points in the struggle the United Nation's role was decisive, and its influence generally redounded to the benefit of the Republicans.³³ It might be argued that the United States played the crucial role—for example, its decision to cut off Marshall Plan aid to the Netherlands East Indies and apparent willingness to go even farther had a telling effect—but it is hard to see how the United States could have become as aroused as it did or as involved as it was without the UN. The point is not that traditional forces ceased to be operative, but rather that the United Nations became an important new ingredient.

The United Nations has played the same role, although with much less intensity, in the cases of Morocco, Tunisia, Cyprus, Algeria, and Angola. Although brief, ambiguous, and sometimes innocuous resolutions may seem to be of minor importance, the strenuous efforts of both sides to influence the outcome provide evidence that at least the parties which are most immediately concerned think that

they are significant. An interesting pattern of events has developed over the years with respect to the UN's discussions of the French North African colonies. First there is increased tension and violence; next, a new French proposal for settlement; and finally, the Assembly debate. The same sequence was repeated when Cyprus was considered. Rupert Emerson explained it this way:

At least until the unlikely event of the creation of an international organization empowered to decide when and how each colony should attain self-government, the dependent peoples who receive an international hearing will usually be those who have resorted to self-help.³⁴

Those who allege that action by the United Nations has complicated negotiations are in a sense correct in that UN support has probably made nationalist elements more potent and demanding. On the other hand, when the UN failed to support the nationalists, the colonial powers occasionally became more intransigent.³⁵ The broader point, though, is that the United Nations has provided an arena which has been used to mobilize pressure and in that way has contributed to the liquidation of colonialism.

Secondly, the United Nations has performed a validating function. UN membership has become an important symbol of national independence.³⁶ Each time that a new state is admitted to membership,

³² See Peter Calvocoressi, *Survey of International Affairs, 1949-1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 545.

³³ See the fascinating study by Alastair M. Taylor, *Indonesian Independence and the United Nations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960).

³⁴ *From Empire to Nation*, p. 399. The nationalist forces clearly recognized this. In 1952 the French censorship disclosed two letters which were allegedly written by Dr. Habib Bourguiba in 1950 (*Le Figaro*, April 7, 1952). In them Dr. Bourguiba told Mr. Abed Bouhafa, a representative of

the Arab League in the United States, among other things, that violence alone would force the United Nations to consider Tunisian affairs.

³⁵ France certainly acted this way in 1952. See Richard P. Stebbins, *The United States in World Affairs, 1952* (New York: Harper, 1953), p. 362.

³⁶ See the place accorded to it in General Assembly Resolution 742 (VIII), November 27, 1953, "Factors Which Should Be Taken Into Account in Deciding Whether a Territory Is or Is Not a Territory Whose People Have Not Yet Attained a Full Measure of Self-Government."

the World Organization acknowledges that the colonial tie has been broken. Presumably, this action also endows that state with a degree of legitimacy and enhances its status as an entity. Further, UN membership has importance for the domestic prestige of the new governing elite. In many cases this is all that the United Nations has done.

In others, however, its involvement has been more extensive. By approving the termination of the trusteeship agreements for the French Cameroons and Tanganyika, the United Nations formally sanctioned the grant of independence. In the Indonesian case, its involvement was even deeper, for the UN played a major part in shaping the settlement. It has also done this, although not to the same degree, with respect to French Togoland and Western Samoa by its supervision of plebiscites or elections which will have immediately preceded independence, and it will have performed the same role in the case of Ruanda-Urundi. With regard to Somaliland, the United Nations helped to keep a messy border situation from becoming explosive by providing a mechanism for settlement and meanwhile more or less endorsing the provisional line.

The UN's validation may have been even more important when colonial status was ended through the union of a dependent territory with an independent state. In Eritrea, British Togoland, and the British Cameroons, the UN-supervised plebiscites were essential elements in the solutions. However much one might deplore the gyrations of the Assembly in the last two instances,³⁷ the plebiscites did provide acceptable solutions to what otherwise might have been very troublesome issues.

The United Nations has also given its approval when a non-self-governing territory became fully integrated into the political structure of the metropolitan state. While this action with regard to Greenland and Alaska and Hawaii may not have had too much significance, it established a standard. Having granted approval, the Assembly presumably could refuse to do so in other cases. Given these precedents, the United Nations may well be in a better position to dispute the Portuguese contention that its "overseas provinces" are not non-self-governing territories.

The United Nations also gave its approval to the status of Puerto Rico and to that of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles. But in these cases it did something beyond validating the liquidation of colonialism. Here, in the discussions of the "factors," and in the debates which occurred in 1956 and 1957 concerning the future of French Togoland, the UN began to explore ways of ending colonial rule which involved neither full independence nor full integration with an independent state. In the case of French Togoland, the United Nation's involvement was clearly a factor in the alteration of the territory's status, and the subsequent grant of full independence. The UN's action may also have had some impact on the formulation of the constitutional provisions for Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles.³⁸ What the UN has done in these cases is to attempt to define a new and internationally approved status to substitute for colonial rule when it was impossible to apply either of the two more obvious solutions. Such a status is not easy to construct, and the skepticism which was expressed in the debates is warranted, at

³⁷ For a detailed description of the UN's involvement in one of these cases see James S. Coleman, "Togoland," *International Conciliation*, No. 509, September 1956, p. 1-91.

³⁸ See Emil J. Sady, "The United Nations and Dependent Peoples," p. 914.

least in general terms if not in the cases which were discussed. On the other hand, many of the remaining dependent territories will probably require such a solution. Many of them are relatively minute and have small populations; they are hardly economically viable in modern terms. Independence, therefore, is not a realistic alternative, unless the concept is changed.³⁹ Nor will the metropolitan states be willing—rightly or wrongly—to integrate all of these territories into their own political structures on equal terms.

Clearly the United Nations has not progressed very far in defining this new status. The relevant part of the List of

Factors contained in General Assembly Resolution 742 (VIII) is far from an adequate set of criteria for it.⁴⁰ However, a start has been made, and the concrete cases have provided some experience with the problems of the practical application of broad principles. As the fate of the major dependent territories becomes more and more clear, it may be easier to consider this issue again in the UN. Since precedent will not be so important, the anti-colonial powers may be less doctrinaire. On the other side, the colonial powers will have no ulterior motives, if they ever did have.

V.

The third task of the United Nations has consisted of providing assistance to newly independent states and facilitating their participation in the world community. This task has been regarded as a logical and necessary extension of the UN's activities concerning colonialism. One reason for this view is the awareness that the liquidation of colonialism inevitably left a void which had to be filled. Whatever its faults, colonialism performed a number of useful functions.⁴¹ It frequently provided the motive force for processes of social, economic, and political change. It was always a source of some technical assistance, and it was often a source of financial aid as well. Colonialism provided a system for managing relation-

ships both between the dependent territories and metropolitan states and among the dependent territories themselves. Another reason is the general recognition that not all of the newly independent states have been as well prepared for their new status as might have been desirable. The nature of this third task is still evolving; much will depend on the outcome of the UN's involvement in the Congo. Although it is therefore far too early for a detailed appraisal of the UN's performance of this third task, the record of events so far is not without significance.

The United Nations has helped the newly independent states in developing their economies. In most instances, however, the Organization's greatest contribu-

³⁹ It may well be though if Western Samoa is a harbinger. Certainly independence does not mean the same thing for Western Samoa—an area with 1,130 square miles of land and a population of about 106,000—as it does for larger and more populous territories, such as Tanganyika.

⁴⁰ For example, the list mentions eligibility for UN membership as one criterion. It is hard to believe, however, that full membership would be appropriate. More thinking needs to be done along the lines of Lincoln P. Bloomfield's sugges-

tion of associate membership. See *The United Nations and U.S. Foreign Policy: A New Look at the National Interest* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), p. 199–200.

⁴¹ See Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation*; Max F. Millikan and Donald L. M. Blackmer, *The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961); and Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Structure of Nations and Empires* (New York: Scribner's, 1959).

tion has not been in directly providing concrete aid; the UN has been more important as a catalytic agent. It has provided means of publicizing the needs of the newly independent states and of the less developed countries generally. It has also provided a mechanism which could be used to put pressure on the more wealthy countries. This pressure appears to have been a factor in the expansion of both multilateral and bilateral aid programs.⁴² The Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East has served as a catalytic agent in a different fashion. Through its advocacy and support of the Mekong River Project it has provided an important stimulus for national development efforts and cooperative endeavors. In time, the Economic Commission for Africa may also perform this function.

The United Nations has recognized an obligation to provide concrete assistance to newly independent states. This was first done in the case of Libya in 1950. Since 1959, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have proclaimed that the UN has a special responsibility with respect to former trust territories and a more general obligation to all newly independent states.⁴³ ECOSOC has completed a study of the available international assistance, and both the Council and the Assembly have urged that this be supplemented. However, on the basis of results thus far, the outlook is not promising. Libya's experience gives little reason for optimism, and although the general aid programs of the UN and the specialized agencies have been enlarged in response to the process of de-

colonization, they are still greatly overshadowed by programs which are conducted bilaterally or through agencies with restricted membership. Realistically, there is little reason to expect that the liquidation of colonialism will make either the West or the Soviet bloc significantly more willing to channel their aid to underdeveloped countries through the UN and the specialized agencies. Also, the debates on the resolutions which have been adopted in the Assembly and ECOSOC indicate that if too much preference is given to newly independent states, other underdeveloped countries will certainly object.

There is, of course, one extremely important exception to these generalizations. In the Congo the United Nations has launched an unprecedented program of technical and financial assistance.⁴⁴ As of June 30, 1961, the Civilian Operations of the United Nations in the Congo had an international staff of 750. There were 100 medical specialists alone. In addition, the United Nations had granted the government of the Republic of the Congo \$15,000,000 to meet its urgent requirements for foreign exchange. However, the circumstances which led to a program of this magnitude were also without parallel. Few states have been as ill-prepared for independence as the Republic of the Congo, and the situation there could easily have sparked a major conflagration. Even if an analogous case were to arise in the future, in view of the difficulties which the United Nations is having in financing its activities in the Congo, it is an open

⁴² See John G. Hadwen and Johan Kaufmann, *How United Nations Decisions are Made* (Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1960), p. 109-111.

⁴³ See particularly General Assembly Resolutions 1414 (XIV) and 1415 (XIV), December 5, 1959.

⁴⁴ For general descriptions of the UN's Civilian Operations in the Congo see General Assembly

Official Records (16th session), Supplement No. 1, "Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, 16 June 1960-15 June 1961," p. 47-51; and "Chaos Averted in the Congo," *United Nations Review*, September 1961 (Vol. 8, No. 9), p. 29-31.

question whether such extensive operations could be undertaken again.

The UN's task of aiding newly independent states has also included significant political functions. So far the UN has done three things in this realm.

First, it has played a role in the relations among the new states. The liquidation of colonialism can result in difficult and explosive situations, as it did when the British rule was ended in India and Palestine. The UN's peacekeeping activities with respect to Kashmir and the Arab-Israeli dispute are well known; presumably they could be repeated. Moreover, imperialistic desires are found not only in the West. By its actions with regard to Lebanon and Jordan, Cambodia and Thailand (the Beck-Friis mission), the Sudanese-Egyptian border, Laos, and Kuwait, the United Nations has attempted to provide security for newly independent states. The existence of the UN may well have been a deterrent in other cases. The United Nations has also facilitated contacts among the representatives of the new states. This is a significant, natural outcome of the processes of parliamentary diplomacy.

Secondly, the United Nations has played an important role in the relations between the new states and their former metropolises. The debates concerning West Irian, Suez, and the Tunisian-French imbroglios are examples. Wherever justice may lie in the controversy between Indonesia and the Netherlands over West Irian (or the Netherlands New Guinea), the UN has provided a channel for airing the

dispute peacefully. Whatever views may be in the West, the UN's role in the Suez case was widely interpreted by anticolonial forces as the frustration of an attempt to reassert colonial rule. Similarly, Tunisia has regarded its appeals to the UN as efforts to protect its sovereignty. It can be expected that the new states will continue to attempt to enlist the assistance of the United Nations in cases of this nature. Given the almost paranoid fear of neo-colonialism in many of the newly independent states, the colonial powers might find it useful to involve the UN frequently in their relationships with their former dependencies.

Finally, in the Congo, the UN's role has been to buttress the internal structure of the state and to bring some stability to a chaotic political situation.⁴⁵ Although it is impossible to tell how successful this endeavor will ultimately be, even the achievements so far are significant. However, the difficulties involved in the UN's playing this role are also apparent. Efforts to achieve internal stability cannot be neutral, for they inevitably have far-reaching domestic and international consequences. Moreover, since the United Nations was created with international disputes primarily in mind, it has been difficult to define the basis for the Organization's actions in the Congo. Initially, there appears to have been some hope that such Western concepts as federalism and parliamentary rule would provide helpful guidelines for the UN's operations,⁴⁶ but the inapplicability of these principles soon became apparent. Thus far the United Nations has

⁴⁵ See Inis L. Claude, Jr., "The United Nations and the Use of Force," *International Conciliation*, No. 532, March 1961, p. 325-384, p. 376-379; and John Holmes, "The United Nations in the Congo," *International Journal*, Winter 1960-61 (Vol. 16, No. 1), p. 1-16. For a discussion of some of the legal aspects of the UN's playing this role see E. M. Miller, "Legal Aspects of the United

Nations Action in the Congo," *The American Journal of International Law*, January 1961 (Vol. 55, No. 1), p. 1-28.

⁴⁶ See especially Document S/4417, "Second Report by the Secretary-General on the Implementation of Security Council Resolutions S/4387 of 14 July 1960 and S/4405 of 22 July 1960."

successfully surmounted these obstacles, and hopefully, it will continue to do so. It would be rash, however, to expect that the UN could again easily undertake political responsibilities similar to those which it has assumed in the Congo.

The record is mixed, but it indicates that serious attempts have been made in the United Nations to deal with many of the problems of the post-colonial era, and at this stage, a summing up would show relative success in several areas.

VI.

Evaluations of the activities of the United Nations with regard to colonialism will vary, depending as they do on personal values. Final judgments will be impossible until the outcome of events still in process is clearly known. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be stated without entering the debate over the merits of the UN's role and without going beyond the bounds imposed by the available evidence.

It is clear that the UN's part in the revolution which has occurred in the colonial system in the last two decades was modest. Many of the most important motive forces were at work before the Organization was established. The British Parliament adopted the Colonial Development and Welfare Act in 1940, and the independence movement in such places as the Indian subcontinent and Indonesia was already under way by the end of the Second World War. Even after it was established, the UN played no part in some important developments concerning colonialism—for instance the settlement in Indo-China—and was only peripherally involved in others.

It is equally evident, though, that the United Nations has contributed to raising standards of colonial rule and to hastening the liquidation of colonialism. For various reasons, the UN was constitutionally

committed to become involved in the struggle.⁴⁷ Once engaged, it inevitably altered the balance of forces and thereby affected the outcome. On balance, the colonial revolution has probably been more peaceful because of the UN's involvement. A case can also be made to the effect that the UN has contributed to international stability through its activities at the time of the accession of dependent territories to self-government or independence and in the post-colonial era. It would be going too far to state that the United Nations has provided adequate substitutes for the colonial system or that it has devised wholly effective measures for bringing what some have termed "teen-age states" to responsible maturity, but the Organization has made significant progress in these areas.

Establishing a connection between the activities of the United Nations and the nature of the emerging states is more difficult. The UN has generally favored modernizing over traditional elements. It has upheld the goal of racial equality and advanced the concept of the plebiscite, but beyond that it has done little to implant concepts of democratic rule. This is understandable. There is certainly no agreement among the UN's Member States that democracy as practiced in the West is the most desirable form of government. More-

⁴⁷ See Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Swords into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization* (New York: Random House, 1959, 2d ed.), p. 341-371; and, Ernst B. Haas, "The

Attempts to Terminate Colonialism: Acceptance of the United Nations Trusteeship System," *International Organization*, February 1953 (Vol. 7, No. 1), p. 1-21.

over, democratic concepts (again as understood in the West) may have little applicability in primitive contexts where national unity is not even established.⁴⁸

Some scholars and statesmen have decried the fact that in its activities concerning colonialism, the United Nations has been more an arena for combat than a focal point for international cooperation. Perhaps this view overstates the facts. But even if the allegation were correct, it would not necessarily be a cause for despair. Peaceful cooperation requires consensus, which was clearly lacking in this case. Any observer of the San Francisco proceedings could see the deep dichotomy between the views expressed by Lord Cranborne of the United Kingdom on one side and those voiced by Fadhil Al-Jamali of Iraq, Carlos Romulo of the Philippines, and Professor Awad of Egypt on the other.⁴⁹ Lord Cranborne argued the necessity of empire; he maintained that liberty could not have been preserved in

the Second World War without it. He regarded independence as an appropriate goal for only a few territories, and even for these, he felt that it was a distant objective. To the others, imperialism was an evil which should be terminated with haste. In their view, the best solution, almost without exception, was national independence. What is significant is the extent to which such a deep and important struggle has been carried on within an international organization.

From the perspective of those of anti-colonial persuasion and of those whose prime interest is the achievement of a combination of international stability and orderly processes of change—including most Americans—the results of the UN's involvement in this struggle have generally been beneficial. In the end, probably even many of the colonialist critics of the United Nations will admit that the outcome was in their best long-run interests.

⁴⁸ See Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation*, p. 272-292; and Max F. Millikan and Donald L. M. Blackmer, *The Emerging Nations*, p. 68-90.

⁴⁹ UNCTAD Documents (Vol. 8), p. 143-146 (see also the milder revision, p. 155-159), 133-134, 137-142, and 147-149 respectively.