

U.N. WATCH

A Mote in Whose Eye?

Having had difficulty being heard over student protests on Eastern college campuses, U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick recently journeyed to the Far West to present her views. Mrs. Kirkpatrick was shouted down by hecklers at the Berkeley campus of the University of California; but in Seattle, though there were noisy protesters outside, the ambassador addressed a capacity crowd at Plymouth Congregational Church—and they paid close attention.

Speaking her mind, as she usually does, Ambassador Kirkpatrick attacked the human rights policies of the U.N. as “unbalanced and outrageous.” Documented cases of mass genocide, including the killings by Pol Pot and Idi Amin, were ignored by U.N. rights organizations, she observed. “Only certain countries are brought before the human rights body, specifically those that are small, non-Communist, and don’t belong to a bloc. This leaves as scapegoats the largely unorganized Latin American countries—except Cuba—and Israel.”

Kirkpatrick maintained that there were two U.N.s: one consisting of the humanitarian agencies (World Health, UNICEF, Food and Agriculture), which do a creditable job; and one consisting of the political units (General Assembly and Security Council), which have been unsuccessful in keeping the peace or settling international disputes. Some member nations, she remarked, have objectives other than peace. For example, current conflicts between Iran and Iraq, the Sudan and Somalia, Libya and Chad, will not come before the U.N. at all.

In explanation, Kirkpatrick said that regional groups with much at stake often try to resolve such problems themselves. Or, a nation might seek to compel acceptance of an aggressive act through the use of force.

The ambassador continued her attack on bloc politics, a theme of many of her public speeches. She characterized the automatic majority at the U.N. as “underdeveloped, unrich, unhappy, and often undemocratic.” The U.S., always in the “automatic minority,” is a nation without a bloc. Nevertheless, Kirkpatrick called the U.N. the most important peace-keeping institution in existence and urged less harsh political rhetoric and more sober debate on security questions.

United We Stand

Two of the political blocs scolded by Ambassador Kirkpatrick met in March and April. The so-called non-aligned countries, constituting the majority of U.N. members, gathered in New Delhi from March 7 to 11. The site was appropriate. One of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement was Jawaharlal Nehru, father of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi—herself the newly elected leader of the movement.

Nehru, together with Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia and other powerful figures, sought a coalition of nations strong enough to influence the actions of the wealthy industrial countries. But over the years non-alignment has developed some peculiar aspects. During the past four years, for instance, Fidel Castro used his position as head of the movement to chastise the U.S. with the sort of violent rhetoric that throws conferences into turmoil. And non-

alignment has proven almost invariably anti-Israel.

Addressing the delegates in New Delhi, U.N. Secretary-General Cuellar asked them to consider whether current methods were adequate to the challenges of a period of extreme tension. He said the Non-Aligned Movement had a worldwide constituency, with eight of its members currently in the fifteen-member Security Council. He, like Ambassador Kirkpatrick, called for a U.N. that would serve more as a forum for negotiation and “less as a place of confrontation and endless debate.”

Meeting a few weeks after the New Delhi session, the group of 77 (now more than 120 developing countries) held a conference in Buenos Aires. Foreign ministers and trade officials from Asia, Africa, and Latin America discussed the provisions of a draft paper to be presented at a U.N. Conference on Trade and Development in Belgrade this June.

The disarray of the world economic system has frightened the economists, politicians, and bankers of developed and underdeveloped countries alike. The massive international debt, running into hundreds of billions of dollars, is retarding worldwide recovery and growth. The Group of 77, organized in the 1960s, has demanded a New Economic Order (NEO), which the industrialized nations see as merely another attempt at a massive transfer of funds to poorer countries. The nasty language used in attacking the industrialized West during what is known as the North-South dialogue did nothing to advance the talks. Faced with their own depressed economies, the “well-to-do-seven” dug in their heels.

The Buenos Aires meeting witnessed a change in attitude. Opening the conference, the president of Argentina—a nation with a \$40 billion international debt—made no demands for drastic changes in the economic order but emphasized the need to find solutions to the world recession and to ease the financial burdens of the Third World.

The countries in the Group of 77 are experiencing low prices for their exports at the very time they are struggling to meet their debt payments. The high cost of oil and petroleum products has limited development of industry and agriculture. The International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) are expanding their activities to meet some of these problems, but the Group of 77 is looking to the Belgrade conference for a more permanent solution.

Bypass

As Ambassador Kirkpatrick called attention to the possibility of regional solutions to interstate problems, so too did the Security Council recently, when it suggested that Chad and Libya seek help from the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Chad had complained to the Council about Libya’s occupation of a disputed section of the northwest desert. The United States favored a resolution that would have sent the case to the International Court of Justice (the World Court); but the USSR, supporting Libya, objected and, with Third World support, had the resolution weakened and changed.

In fact, the OAU has had little success in settling quarrels in Africa. It is an organization of unity in name only and once had as its head Idi Amin, this when all Africa was stunned by the killings he directed in Uganda.

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