

THE UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY FORCE. By Gabriella Rosner. [New York and London: Columbia University Press. 1963. xv + 294 pp. U.S. \$6.75]

In recent years there has been a growing tendency to refer any apparently insoluble international problem to the United Nations. This has been especially so if the question in issue has involved the use of force. Since the presence of troops wearing the blue helmet and the United Nations insignia has apparently been

successful in keeping the peace — or at least in reducing military activity, suggestions are constantly being put forward which imply that the advocate is in favour of sending troops under United Nations command to the trouble spot in question. As a result, previous experiments of this kind are referred to as precedents, and the Force that went to the Gaza Strip has assumed an importance probably far beyond the expectations of its most ardent supporter.

Dr. Rosner's study of *The United Nations Emergency Force* is not only a careful analysis of the background, origins and operation of the Force, but also a useful work of reference for students of international institutions and those supporting new temporary Forces as well as a permanent military unit for the United Nations. It will assist them to avoid some of the pitfalls and growing pains that befell the UNEF.

It is of some significance that General Gyani, now in charge of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, commanded UNEF in 1959. In words that might almost have been written of Cyprus in 1964, Miss Rosner points out that "the Force was to be a neutral one and not a diplomatic instrument of pressure to enhance the bargaining positions of the invading States. . . . Although para-military in nature the UNEF was not to have military objectives, but was to function solely on the basis of consent of the nations concerned" (p.34). It was because of this insistence upon respect for State sovereignty and consent that the original UNEF and its successors have been hampered in their operations. It was not only that the Secretary-General, Hammarskjöld, considered the consent of the 'host' State necessary, but the participants refused to contribute troops unless this consent was forthcoming (pp.48-9). Nevertheless, it seems to have been an excessively rigid view of his functions that led the Secretary-General to interpret the relevant resolutions so as to make this consent necessary even so far as the Force's national and religious make-up was concerned (p.55).

The learned author regrets the fact that the General Assembly did not take the opportunity offered to it in order to make a real contribution to the final settlement of the Middle Eastern question, or at least to ensure proper observance of the Palestine Armistice Agreements (pp.110-4). Instead, Hammarskjöld and the Assembly took a narrow approach, and the Force as an Assembly organ was denied enforcement functions (pp.69-70). Its purpose was to secure the cessation of hostilities and military withdrawal, not to enforce resolutions (p.34). It is not surprising, therefore, that "UNEF soldiers could hardly have served a useful purpose had . . . Egypt one day decided to carry on a full war of annihilation against Israel" (p.61). Perhaps this explains why so little is heard of any possible function for UNEF if the Arab States under Egyptian leadership carry out their threat to attack if Israel proceeds with its Jordan water proposals.

In Miss Rosner's view it now appears clear that any United Nations Force depends on the following preconditions: (a) agreement between the United Nations and the Members concerned; (b) military contributions may only be made with the consent of the 'host' State; (c) the men and material of the Force can only be used as their home State permits; (d) the Force can only be stationed on the territory of a State with its consent (p.63). This means that UNEF is an independent international institution within limits. The units remain part of their national forces and can be withdrawn on the decision of either the contributing or the 'host' State (p.148), although it might be argued that consent once given cannot be withdrawn until the United Nations is of opinion that the task is completed. Since, in fact, of 5400 members in the Force only 2500 officers and men were available for patrol (p.122), perhaps this was not so serious as it might have been if an effective watch of the whole area could have been maintained, or if the Force's task had been enforcement.

While it is true that since the UNEF has been in the Gaza Strip the number and severity of incidents have decreased, and the Port of Elath is operating (pp.102-61), it is submitted that Dr. Rosner is too sanguine in her belief that "had a UNEF existed in 1956 the invasion of Egypt might have been prevented altogether. . . . Few, if any, nations would have been willing to flout world opinion and attack a United Nations symbol — an almost holy international cause" (p.201). It will be interesting to see if Miss Rosner continues to hold this view in a second edition.

The United Nations Emergency Force will prove a useful contribution for any student or other person interested in the peace-keeping and military operations of the United Nations. The book, however, would have been more useful had Dr. Rosner included as appendices the texts of the relevant resolutions, agreements, military regulations and the like concerning the raising, organisation, status and working of the Force.

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