

CONGRESSMAN'S REPORT

By Morris K. Udall

MUST WE REPEAT OUR MISTAKES?

Forty years ago a small group of sincere and patriotic Americans -- who hadn't the slightest thought they might be wrong -- prevented the League of Nations from becoming an effective instrument for international peace. Another such group of people are in our land today, doing everything they can to destroy the United Nations. I wish I could be as cocksure as they.

Here in Washington there is great concern over the mounting pressure to "get out of the United Nations" and to refuse the financial support which that organization needs from us to survive. A small but vigorous band of well-intentioned people, having decided they know all the facts and are better able to judge them than anyone in Washington, are proceeding to flood all congressional offices with telegrams (at the new bargain rate for "public opinion messages"), newspaper ads, tracts and even bumper stickers, all in opposition to the United Nations and to our purchase of United Nations bonds.

A Midwest congressman described the reaction of many of us in both parties when he said, "Politically, there is nothing I would rather do than vote against this proposal, but there is too much at stake." The fact is, the security of our country may hang in the balance.

Distortion of the facts by a vocal segment of the press has helped shape the thinking of many sincere citizens on this issue. The result is that they are now completely convinced that the United Nations is an instrument of communism, that our State Department is overrun with Communists, and that the only hope for our country is to get out of the U.N., pull out of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, end all reciprocal treaties, raise tariffs, and threaten to bomb Moscow if the Russians don't "stop" whatever it is they're doing at the moment.

"Believe me," one correspondent wrote, "if one woman with a shotgun could do any good in Washington, D. C., I'd be there."

Unfortunately, the people who make the decisions for our country -- the President and the Congress -- can't afford to engage in such extravagant emotionalism. We are living in a trying period in history; the safe road ahead is not easy to find; but I don't

believe the United States can isolate itself from the rest of the world any more than the Russians can ignore the mounting economic strength of the Free World. We live on the same planet, we need foreign raw materials and foreign trade, and we need allies.

Now, what are the facts in the United Nations bond issue?

The United Nations is in debt approximately \$100 million. Its reserve funds have been exhausted. It cannot continue for long without obtaining funds to pay its bills, past and present.

A major factor in this situation has been the violent Soviet objection to the recent Congo operation. Whereas the Communist bloc wanted chaos, disorder and anarchy in Africa, the United Nations action has checked the extremists of the left (such as Gizenga) and right (such as Tshombe) and brought some semblance of order in that country, so pitifully unprepared by the Belgians for independence. The U.N. action may still fail, but it has vastly increased our chances of putting the new African nations on the side of the Free World.

Because of its objection to the Congo operation the Soviet Union has refused to pay the special assessments arising from it. Other Communist nations also have refused, and many nations have been hard pressed to raise the necessary sums. As a result the United Nations is threatened with bankruptcy.

From the standpoint of the United States, the bond proposal offers a means of reducing our share of the U.N. burden. Here is why: present legal opinion leaves some doubt whether a member can be denied membership for non-payment of special assessments, but there is no doubt about regular annual assessments. You either pay or you lose your vote.

Since repayment of the bond issue will come entirely from regular annual assessments, this method of financing will require the Soviet Union and its satellites either to pay up or relinquish their votes. Either alternative has something to be said for it.

The United States currently, with its own special assessments, is paying 47 1/2 per cent of the United Nations costs; the bond issue, spreading the burden more equally throughout the membership, will reduce our share to 32 per cent.

Even so, it would be absurd to say the U.N. bond proposal is a gilt-edged investment. While we can deduct a portion of this each year from our own regular assessments, it is conceivable that we might lose some of this money. In my opinion the proposal has

to be considered, not alone on its financial merits, but on its importance to our nation's security.

It is time the people who oppose the bond issue did some real, hard thinking about the situation we would face if the United Nations were allowed to expire -- to follow the sad road of the League of Nations. Where would the loss of the United Nations leave the Free World? Killing the U.N. will not free one satellite, will not destroy one Russian missile or bomber, will not strengthen our military power one ounce. The Communist bloc doesn't need the United Nations (although it can't afford to stay out if the organization survives), because the Soviet system is welded together as the free nations are not. Without the United Nations it will be easier for the Russian Communists to pick off one free or so-called neutralist nation after another.

Despite its shortcomings the United Nations has been and is an impediment to Communist expansion, and we would be very much worse off without it.

Congress has started hearings on the U.N. bond proposal, and these are expected to go on for some weeks. I intend to listen to all the arguments and take in all the facts. Perhaps there will be a compromise proposal, such as Republican Senator Capehart's suggestion that we match the purchases of other nations dollar for dollar. Perhaps some other way will be found to meet the U.N.'s financial crisis. In the end, however, the security of our country -- and not the possible loss of one-fifth of one per cent of our \$50 billion military budget -- will be the deciding factor in determining my vote.

The cartoonist, Herblock, says, "Buy U.N. bonds -- the world you save may be your own." There may be some truth in this wry observation.

The Communists are doing everything they can to wreck the United Nations. It is a strange fact that they are joined in this effort by another wrecking bar being wielded by sincere but misguided people in our own country. I do not intend to give either of them any help in this endeavor.