The Search for Peace ...
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It has been evident since the Egyptians mobilized and massed armor on the Israeli border, pushing aside the United Nations Emergency Force and illegally blockading the Gulf of Aqaba, that peace in the Middle East, and perhaps in the world, was at the mercy of an incident.

That incident now has occurred. The Security Council, which failed to act last week to forestall the war, now faces in similar disarray the far more difficult task of halting it.

The first need is an immediate call for a cease-fire before the fighting spreads and draws in the major powers. Any attempt to resolve political issues in this initial move can only bring the same kind of paralysis that ultimately destroyed the League of Nations.

The immediate cause of the present fighting is in dispute. Cairo and Tel Aviv have given conflicting accounts of what happened. But the underlying responsibility for the war is clear and the United Nations—and the powers—will ignore this at their peril.

In 1914 Europe no phrase was more starkly familiar than "mobilization means war." It has meant war in the Middle East half a century later for very similar reasons, even if not quite so automatically. Egypt's mobilization and Israel's countermobilization meant economic disruption and a daily mounting of costs that neither could maintain very long. Extreme tension was a concomitant for each, since the adversary, once mobilized, could attack without warning and gain an advantage.

The tension was intensified by the Egyptian calls for a holy war of extermination against Israel—language correctly described by Lord Avon last week as incitement to "genocide." Whatever the past errors of both sides in the Middle East, the basic fact is that Israel is a member state of the United Nations with a right to life which the Arab leaders, whom President Nasser seeks to dominate, have publicly committed themselves to snuff out. The fundamental cause of the present war lies there, whatever sparked the actual outbreak of fighting.

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In these circumstances—and despite the later White House qualifications—the State Department's description of the Administration's position as "neutral" in "thought, word and deed" remains grotesque both in terms of American commitments and American interests in the area. Both will be seriously endangered if the further error is made of following the French in announcing a cut-off of military aid.

Flexibility is vital in a situation that has seen the Soviet Union encourage Egyptian belligerence, after providing the huge quantities of weapons that have armed it. It is well to remember that Moscow continued surreptitious arms shipments to India during the conflict with Pakistan in 1965, while the United States halted aid to both sides. Much the same may happen here if Moscow and Cairo gain the impression that Israel will be denied French and American arms.

The curious behavior of India at the Security Council yesterday—in acting as a front for a Soviet-drafted resolution—may partly be explained by this past debt. India has a right to vote for the Arab side if its domestic politics and search for Arab support against Moslem Pakistan so dictate. But it is incomprehensible that a nation which has stood aside as "nonaligned" in so many conflicts should become an ardent advocate of one side in this one and, by insisting that the blockade of Aqaba be legalized in the process, thwart Security Council agreement on a cease-fire resolution.

Most reprehensible of all, of course, is the adventurism of the Soviet Union. The power politics of the imperialist nations of the past is mirrored in Moscow's effort to exploit, if it did not instigate, the dangerous struggle now under way. The theory that the Soviet Union no longer would risk involvement in a conventional war, lest it expand into a wider nuclear conflict, must now be revised along with all the illusions about the possibility of East-West *détente*, unless Moscow begins to implement its peacekeeping responsibilities as one of the permanent members of the Security Council.

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