

ONENESS-ARRIVAL-SHORE

OAS88-3

P-1

5 October 1988

UN peace-keepers win Nobel Peace Prize



Peace-keepers on the job: The UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) supervises the cease-fire and withdrawal of troops to the recognized border. Brig. General Venky Patil of India (left), Officer-in-Command of UNIIMOG operations in Iraq, is briefed by UNIIMOG officers at their capital sector Headquarters in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq on 20 August. (UN photo 172152/ J. Isaac)

"In awarding their Peace Prize to the peace-keeping forces of the United Nations today, the Nobel Committee recognizes that the quest for peace is a universal undertaking involving all the nations and peoples of the world," stated the Secretary-General in his address to the General Assembly on 29 September. "The recent achievements of the United Nations have neither been sudden nor fortuitous but are the hard-won results of persistence and dedication over many years, epitomized by the peace-keeping activities of the Organization."

Mr. Perez de Cuellar learned of the probable award to the United Nations from the Norwegian Ambassador the night before the official announcement was made in Norway. All Nobel Prizes except the Peace Prize are voted upon by a committee in Stockholm, Sweden; the recipient of the Peace Prize is determined by committee vote at the Nobel Institute in

Oslo, Norway. The \$390,000 Peace Prize is a bequest of the Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel.

Since UN peace-keepers were first deployed to supervise the enforcement of the 1948 Arab-Israeli truce, nearly 500,000 persons from 58 countries have served the operations. In addition to monitoring cease-fires and other agreements, peace-keepers sometimes act as a human buffer zone between conflicting parties. They are many times unarmed, and those forces that do carry arms may fire only in self-defence. To date, 733 peace-keepers have lost their lives in service.

The United Nations now maintains seven distinct peace-keeping operations in Asia and the Middle East. Officials and staff hope that the award of the Peace Prize will encourage Member States to honour fully their financial pledges for the continued support of the operations.

Throughout Headquarters of-

fices, reactions to the good news ranged from quiet satisfaction to outright exultation. A political affairs officer on the 38th floor projected that the UN would recuperate much of its prestige as a result of the award, having proved that it could indeed perform as a dynamic and efficient organization. In the corridors, staff shook hands and congratulated each other; some were misty-eyed. "I saw a man in the lobby screaming with joy," observed a UNDP staffer with a smile.

It was a proud occasion for the entire UN family of peace-servers - but not by any means the first of its kind. Previous Nobel Peace Prize recipients from the UN system have been the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (1981 and 1954); the ILO (1969); UNICEF (1965); Dag Hammarskjold (1961); and Ralph Bunche (1950). Also honoured was the originator of the League of Nations, Woodrow Wilson (1919).

Wheels of fortune

Just six weeks after her car was stolen, Carolyn Clapp, a clerk in the OGS Traffic Unit, found herself the proud owner of the 1988 Mitsubishi - first prize in the Staff Day raffle on 16 September.

"I had no idea I had won," Carolyn said, "until my friend Jay D'Souza grabbed me Monday morning in the cafeteria and said, 'You won! You won the Mitsubishi!' 'What's a Mitsubishi?' I asked."

During the previous month, Carolyn's 1980 Oldsmobile had disappeared from the Mount Vernon train station. Because she had no theft insurance, she had been left without transportation.

Now she will drive a blue 1988 Mitsubishi Precis, upgraded with air conditioning and alarm system. The standard shift will be a new challenge. "I have to take lessons," she said.

This is the first prize Carolyn has ever won. When asked if she played lotto, she laughed. "No, never. But I'm going to start!"

Praise the living

by

A. Keefe, UNICEF

Many individuals in the UN community have come to know of the finest achievements of some of their colleagues only after these colleagues have passed away. Perhaps much could be learned about our friends and ourselves if we would praise the living.

A few years ago the first head of UNICEF's training section, Eigil Morch, was eloquently eulogized after

his death. People who had never seemed to take Eigil very seriously were overheard to regret their loss and their previous lack of insight. I had spent quite a few hours with Eigil. He had been at times a mentor and always a friend, and his example continues to be a source of inspiration. He was intelligent, educated, experienced, and wise enough to know that he did not have all the answers--an occupational hazard to which many of us are prone.

He knew that, in order to learn, it was necessary to be vulnerable to mistakes and even to failure. He also recognized that, in order to encourage others, one had to set an example. He took personal risks and created an environment where others were encouraged to do the same. He genuinely supported personal growth. Eigil believed that learning and helping others to learn provided some of the most exciting and fulfilling experiences of living.

Eigil believed that there was no reason why organizational goals and personal goals of staff could not be complementary. He gave much of his time, support and concern to the restructuring of the unit I was supervising at the time. I heard of some of his interventions at higher levels, I read some of the papers he had presented and saw some changes take place, but it was only after the eulogies that I gained a

wider awareness of what Eigil had offered to us at UNICEF.

I propose that we could gain much by appreciating our colleagues now -- those who are trying every day, along with us, to meet our common goals. Of course, if someone is physically with us, he is unpredictable and somewhat threatening. Today we may praise him and tomorrow he may disagree with us on some point. The end of the story has not yet been written. But let us not wait until the hour of regret. Let us not hesitate, out of undue reserve, to praise the living.

Bearlift for orphans

Three thousand orphans in Bolivia, Brazil and Peru will receive teddy bears and letters of friendship from US school children thanks to the efforts of an organization called Caring for Children. At a UN press conference sponsored by the delegation of Costa Rica on 20 September, Samantha Grier, president of Caring for Children, noted that there are some 150 million orphans around the world. Additionally, every year between 8 and 10 million children are abandoned. Even those who are housed and fed are often "starving emotionally" and the toys, it is hoped, will symbolize affection - also a basic need.



PHOTOGRAPHIC DOINGS Ruth Massey offers a glimpse at the lives of the Mekong people on Wednesday, 12 October at 1.00 p.m. with her slide presentation on Viet Nam, Laos and Thailand. The showing will take place in GA 30. Shown are Yao Hilltribe women and children in Lao Peoples' Democratic Republic.

ONENESS-ARRIVAL-SHORE is published by Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations.

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