SYNOPSIS

I

In the evolution of the United Nations the Secretary General has occupied an important place. The United Nations is primarily an instrument for preserving international peace and security. Therefore, ever since its inception the Organization has had to deal with international conflicts, involving the use or threat of the use of force. It has tried to resolve, regulate and control such conflicts. In these attempts the Secretary General assumed a pivotal role. This study attempts to deal with the political influence of the Secretary General in this process and its effectiveness.

It limits itself to the study of his political role in the resolution of conflicts and therefore his activities in the economic, administrative and social sphere are beyond the scope of this study. The word 'political', however, has not been employed in a narrow sense and its full scope is analysed in chapter III of the thesis. Since the development of the office of the Secretary General reached a crucial stage after 1953- the emphasis in this study is on the period 1953 to 1966.

The work is based on primary sources of information like the published records of the United Nations, autobiographies, published documents of Governments besides other secondary source material. The study is analytical rather than descriptive or historical.

The influence of the Secretary General must be seen against the background of international politics. His influence depends on several factors in a conflict situation, most important of which is the position of the Great Powers. The Secretary General has been able to influence the course of conflicts between the Great Powers or those involving the Cold War only marginally. The margin has varied according to the willingness of the Great
Powers to be influenced by the Secretary General or to avail of his services.

In the conflicts arising from the vacuum left by decolonisation and other international conflicts which are likely to develop into Cold War conflicts, the influence of the Secretary General has been the greatest. Even here, though, the active help of the great powers and their acquiescence in the United Nations' preventive diplomacy is needed to augment the influence of the Secretary General in controlling the conflict.

Even in conflicts involving the small powers which were outside the Cold War, the Secretary General has needed the resources of the Great Powers to influence the course of the conflict.

II

1. The political role of the office depends upon the constitutional framework within which it operates, on the precedents and the strength of its constitutional position. Chapter I traces the evolution of the office of the Secretary General and its powers since the League of Nations. It examines its position in the constitutional structure of the United Nations, and its relation to the other United Nations organs, its deputies and to the Member States as well as non-Member States. This determines its saliency as a third party in international conflicts.

2. The personality of the Secretary General and his own concept of the office and its role has a great bearing on the part that he might attempt to play in a conflict situation. Chapter II, therefore, analyses the concepts of the office, of the United Nations and of world politics that the successive Secretaries General entertained. A critical analysis of these in their actual role in conflict resolution and regulation is attempted.

3. International conflicts, in many respects, resemble industrial and social conflicts. Some of the insights obtained from the study of such
conflicts have been utilized in this study. Chapter III analyses the bases of the influence of the Secretary General in international conflict situations as a third party and the various factors which affect his influence.

4. To add depth to this study six case studies of international conflicts, where the United Nations and the Secretary General attempted to act as third parties have been made. These are arranged in three chapters. Chapter IV studies Cold War conflicts or conflicts between the Great Powers. The Hungarian crisis of 1956 and the Cuban crisis of 1962, from the two case studies. From these the limits of the Secretary General's role become evident.

5. Chapter five, deals with conflicts where the United Nations and the Secretary General practised preventive diplomacy. The two conflicts which are studied in detail are: the Middle Eastern crisis of 1956-57 and the Congolese crisis 1960-1963. These outline the role of the Secretary General in regulating such conflicts.

6. In chapter six the role of the Secretary General in resolving Cold War conflicts involving small powers and which do not involve the Cold War, is analysed. In particular, the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1965, and the Cyprus conflict 1964-1966 are studied in detail.

7. The last chapter attempts an over-all survey of the subject and summarises conclusions of the earlier chapters and the case studies.