By MICHAEL J. BERLIN

The Assembly's legal committee, under Filipinos prowling and with a helping hand from the Russians, whipped out a resolution calling for the first time for punishment or extradition of skyjackers by nations in which they land. This and other principles adopted by the Assembly were swiftly incorporated into an international convention by a UN affiliate—the International Civil Aviation Organization—at a conference in The Hague just this week.

Assembly action on the Middle East was, as usual, hot, heavy and, for the most part, pro-Arab, because the Arabs have a built-in plurality.

The final resolution split the militant Arabs from the moderate ones, by supporting the world leaders who dropped in to help celebrate—and even there the turnout was smaller than expected. Soviet Premier Kosygin failed to show, and thereby thwarted Secretary-General Thant's hopes for a summit meeting.

If this were all there were to the UN's 25th anniversary balance sheet, the question might legitimately be asked: What's the UN good for?

The answer is that politics isn't all there is to UN. There are other UN activities which alone justify its existence, and just can't be done anywhere else. These are in the economic and technical fields, and they are becoming the tail that's wagging the UN dog. Some smaller nations don't like this emphasis—they charge that the UN is not a world wide and has not yet reached its full potential.
Assembly action on the Middle East was, as usual, hot and heavy, and, for the most part, pro-Arab, because the Arabs have a built-in plurality.

The final resolution split the militant Arabs from the moderate ones, by supporting a peace settlement under the formula laid out in the 1967 Security Council resolution that established Gunnar Jarring as the Middle East mediator.

It so held the effect of extending the Middle East cease-fire for three months, until Feb. 5, and cementing the shaky position of the Arab moderates in the wake of President Nasser's death, by giving them a timely victory, and an excuse to pursue peace, rather than war.

Israel didn't like it, but to the U.S. the end result was a less serious case of "diplomatic disaster prevention."

The U.S. managed to rack up one political victory—a resolution calling on North Vietnam to abide by the Geneva Convention on humane treatment of U.S. prisoners of war. But the Russians countered with a resolution condemning U.S. acts in Vietnam that violates the rights of civilians in armed conflicts.

Except for these few acts of real significance—China, skypacking, perhaps the Middle East—the Assembly remained stalemated or inactive on a long list of political issues.

There was no action on UN peacekeeping; on the establishment of a UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (a sort of ombudsman, who could look into individual complaints against governments); on Korea; on measures for strengthening the dispute-settlement mechanisms of the World Court; or on the renewal of the right of the UN relief agency for Palestine refugees and little real progress toward disarmament.

There was an Assembly endorsement of a treaty to bar atomic weapons from the sea bed, but this was a non-controversial cosmetic sort of action.

Many delegates regarded even the little that was done as a bonus, because they had not expected much from the ceremonial session to begin with. Much of the Assembly's time was taken up by the speechmaking of这不是联合国在小国中的作用。这些问题应由联合国全体成员共同讨论，而不仅仅是那些支持力有限的国家。