

Canada and the United Nations

THE General Assembly, reconvened in New York on January 2, devoted much of its time during the month to the consideration of the Middle East and Hungarian questions.

With respect to Hungary, the Assembly adopted on January 10, by a vote of 59 in favour (including Canada) and 8 against, with 10 abstentions, a resolution, sponsored by 24 nations, which provided for the creation of a special five-member committee "to investigate and to establish and maintain direct observation in Hungary and elsewhere, taking testimony, collecting evidence and receiving information, as appropriate, in order to report its findings to the General Assembly." The special committee, which is comprised of representatives of Australia, Ceylon, Denmark, Tunisia and Uruguay, was asked to report during the present session of the Assembly. (1)

Middle East Crisis

When the General Assembly adjourned for the Christmas recess on December 21, its deliberations on the Middle East crisis had reached the end of a phase. The UNEF was established at the northern end of the Suez Canal in the area once occupied by Anglo-French forces and was taking over positions in the Sinai Desert from the withdrawing Israeli forces. The Assembly had agreed that in financing UNEF, the first \$10,000,000 should be apportioned among the member states in accordance with the scale of assessments for the 1957 United Nations budget, and that the question of apportioning expenses beyond the first \$10,000,000 should be referred to a nine-nation committee. The Secretary-General, Mr. Hammarskjold, had proceeded with arrangements for clearing the Canal under the authority given him by the Assembly in its resolution of November 26.

On December 25, the Secretary-General addressed a request to all member states that their governments consider advancing funds to provide the immediate cash needs of the Suez Canal clearance operation.

On January 15, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly a report on the compliance with Assembly resolutions of November 2, 4, 7, and 24 calling for the withdrawal of troops. The withdrawal of Anglo-French forces had been completed, he said, on December 22. The withdrawal of Israeli troops had proceeded by phases. By January 22 the Sinai Desert would be evacuated entirely by Israeli troops with the exception of the Sharm al-Shaikh area, a strip on the western coast of the Gulf of Aqaba ensuring freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran and in the Gulf. The attitude of the Israeli Government on the evacuation of the Gaza strip had not been made known to the Secretary-General. The promised degree of withdrawal, however, would enable UNEF to take up positions on the armistice demarcation line from the southern tip of Israel to within a few miles of the Mediterranean coast, where the Gaza strip begins.

(1) See "External Affairs" for January 1957.