



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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ISRAELI INTENTION TO WITHDRAW

Statement by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in United Nations General Assembly March 4, 1957.

Our meeting last Friday, and the statement from the delegate of Israel which we have heard this afternoon, mark, I hope, the turning point in the crisis which has been facing this Assembly for many weeks. The dangers and the risks which were inherent in the continued occupation of non-Israeli territory by the armed forces of Israel should now disappear, provided the Israeli withdrawal is followed by appropriate United Nations action. It was in the full recognition of these dangers that Canada joined others in this Assembly in efforts to bring about complete withdrawal of Israel from those areas, but in circumstances that would avoid, and not provide the seeds for, future conflict. We warmly welcome Israel's decision as a right and wise one, and as showing a sense of international responsibility. We feel that certain assumptions and expectations that Israel has mentioned in connection with the completion of her withdrawal are reasonable ones, as we understand them.

As the Assembly is aware, my Delegation, like many others, has made its own assumptions in speaking about arrangements which we believe should follow immediately upon, not before but immediately upon, withdrawal. We did not, and we do not now, regard these arrangements as conditions governing or prior to the withdrawal. We felt, however, that it was important to come to some prior understanding about them so that immediately after withdrawal they might be put into force and thereby help to create conditions in the area concerned which would prevent a return to the deplorable conditions which existed before the armed intervention of October 29, and which themselves were largely responsible for that action. Every member of the Assembly, including Israel, has a right to assume that the U N will take some positive, fair and constructive action to this end. Our own view on the necessity for such action has been given in the statement I made in the Assembly on February 26 and on earlier occasions, so I can be brief this afternoon.