

But, while the purpose of this second draft resolution deserves and receives the unqualified support of our delegation, we have had—as I am sure other delegations have had, judging from what I have heard today—some doubts about the language of the draft resolution in one or two places being best suited to achieve this purpose. I would have preferred it to be somewhat more precise and more complete. I think that it would then have been more effective, if its meaning had been clearer, in achieving the two objectives which we all have in mind: immediate withdrawal of Israel forces and, afterwards, United Nations arrangements which, to use the language of the preamble of the second draft resolution, “would assure progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions”.

I realize, of course, that it would have been impracticable to have included in this draft resolution all the details of the actions which we wish the Secretary-General and the United Nations to take. But I had hoped that the principles which we mention might have been somewhat more specific. I realize also that the Secretary-General must be given reasonable freedom of action, room to manoeuvre, in an operation of this kind, which is as delicate as it is complicated and important. But we surely do not wish this freedom to include ambiguous injunctions which might invite differing interpretations and consequent confusion and frustration.

I am assured that my doubts on this score are unnecessary and that the wording of the second draft resolution makes possible the use, for instance, of the United Nations, especially the use of UNEF, for the pacification purposes mentioned by both the representative of the United States and myself in our interventions in this debate on 28 January, and to which he referred again at our meeting this morning. I hope that this can be done, and I have been strengthened in that hope by the statement which we heard from Mr. Lodge this morning.

That statement seems to me to strengthen the validity of the interpretation which we give to the words of the draft resolution, the aim of which we have wholeheartedly approved from the beginning, but the wording of which, in one or two places, has raised some doubts as to its exact meaning.

I assume, for instance, and I hope that my assumption is correct, that the scrupulous observance of the 1949 Armistice Agreement which is called for in paragraph 2 of the second draft resolution, requires the two Governments concerned to refrain from all acts of hostility, including the exercise by either party of any claim to belligerent rights, specifically in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran. My assumption on this point seems to me to be supported by the language of paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Secretary-General's report (A/3512), which refers to certain measures that should be carried out—and which, under paragraph 4 of this draft resolution, the Secretary-General is requested by this Assembly to carry out.

In regard to paragraph 3 of the second draft resolution, I take it that the word “other” in the phrase “the implementation of other measures” does not mean the exclusion of UNEF from these other measures by the fact that, under the preceding part of the paragraph, it is to be placed on the demarcation line. I also assume that the words “in the area” at the end of this paragraph include the Sharm al-Shaikh and Gaza areas as well as the area of the demarcation line.

These may seem small points, but many an important resolution—and this is a vitally important resolution—has been ruined by subsequent differences of interpretation and meaning of points which seemed to be small but turned out to be very large indeed, and very ambiguous.

I think it is especially necessary that there should be no doubt about the meaning of this resolution because if and when it is passed it becomes the Secretary-General's “Bible” as he undertakes the duties based on it.

Our attitude to resolution II, then, has been conditioned by the interpretation I have given above and we think this is a reasonable and acceptable interpretation. The actual authority given the Secretary-General to carry out the provisions of this resolution is to be found in paragraph 4 where he is requested to take steps to carry out the measures which are in his report, which has been before us for some time. In other words, he is to implement his report on the basis of this resolution. It seems to me desirable therefore to recall the measures which are to be carried out by him, because they will be his responsibility.