

Secretary-General symbolizes the authority of the United Nations, he will be asked, under this draft resolution, to take on even more responsibilities. The draft resolution seeks to strike a balance between the support and guidance which he must have from this Assembly in approaching his task, and the need to give him scope for consultation and effective action on his own initiative as circumstances may require. None of us should underestimate the difficulties or delicacy of the tasks which we are asking him in this draft resolution to assume, but I am sure that I reflect a unanimous opinion when I express confidence in his unique qualifications to meet successfully this new challenge.

The immediate issues with which the Secretary-General is being asked to deal are those relating to Lebanon and Jordan where there is the matter of troop withdrawal to be faced, and which is not unrelated to the political future of those two countries. Perhaps we should reconcile ourselves now to the thought that no formula can be wholly and universally satisfactory to cover the question of troop withdrawals. We have the statements of the leaders of two great and friendly Powers of their desire to remove their forces as soon as the United Nations has taken action appropriate to the circumstances prevailing in those countries. For our part, we are prepared to accept those assertions at their face value as an earnest of their desire to withdraw quickly. The United States and the United Kingdom simultaneously with their landings recognized the risks and thankless responsibilities which would flow from prolonging their presence in the area, and they then gave thought, and expressed that thought, to their withdrawal. Every consideration, including self-interest, would dictate that their action be brought to an end at an early date. In the letters which each of these nations has delivered to the President of the Assembly, we have renewed evidence to support this judgement, and I urge that all Members of this Assembly accept those letters as a renewed manifestation of their desire and intention to bring about an early termination to a situation which they recognize, and all of us recognize, could have unfortunate consequences.

Policy and Principle

But the problems of Lebanon and Jordan are more complex than the presence or otherwise of foreign forces on their soil. The search for solutions to the longer-term problems of those countries, and of the Middle East generally, raises, I am bound to observe, very difficult issues of practical policy and questions of principle which could have disturbing and far-reaching implications for the United Nations. The questions of principle relate to the extent to which the United Nations is at liberty to intervene in matters which Member States could regard as of domestic