

If, as the Secretary-General hopes, His Excellency's Government is able to react favourably to this request, he will be glad to provide, to the extent possible, such further information concerning this matter His Excellency may require.

The Government of Egypt has given its assurance that the United Nations will have the full cooperation of that Government in the execution of its part in the Canal clearing operations.

Firm assurances of assistance had already been received from some governments, while others agreed to examine the request without delay.

Following this brief indication of the status of the principal aspects of the Middle East situation as it came before the United Nations, the deliberations of the General Assembly which began on January 17 may be examined. The document first before the Assembly has already been mentioned—the Secretary-General's Note on compliance with resolutions calling for withdrawal. During the first day of the debate a draft resolution sponsored by twenty-five Arab-Asian delegations was also tabled. The text read:

The General Assembly

Recalling its resolutions 997(ES-I) of 2 November 1956, 998(ES-I) and 999(ES-I) of 4 November 1956, 1002(ES-I) of 7 November 1956 and A/RES/410 of 24 November 1956,

Noting the report of the Secretary-General of 15 January 1957 (A/3500 and Add.1),

1. *Notes with regret and concern* the failure of Israel to comply with the terms of the above-mentioned resolutions;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for securing the complete withdrawal of Israel in pursuance of the above-mentioned resolutions; and to report on such completion to the General Assembly, within five days.

During the course of lengthy, and sometimes vigorous, speeches there was virtually no argument about whether Israel was required to withdraw its forces. The Assembly had already gone on record in favour of withdrawal. The point at issue was, given the history of the area in the past few years, whether some approach could, or should, be found to meeting Israel's apprehension that withdrawal of her forces would lead to recurrence of raids from the Gaza Strip and interference with shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba. There could hardly be conditions placed on withdrawal since, by Assembly decision, withdrawal had been called for in principle and as unrelated to its effects on the parties involved. Some delegations strongly protested that the point at issue was simple—that Israel must withdraw—and that this should not be complicated by other considerations. Other delegations, however, felt that something more was needed. The latter view was, for example, expressed by the Delegate of New Zealand who said, "...in our opinion Israel's withdrawal behind the armistice lines must be completed. But that is not all that must be done. A mere sterile return to the *status quo* is not enough. Indeed, it would be worse than inadequate; it would be unwise; it would be both unjust and dangerous".

The position of the Canadian Delegation was expressed by Mr. Pearson on January 18. He said:

The General Assembly has before it a statement of the factual situation regarding the withdrawal of Israel forces, which withdrawal is now well on the way to completion. We have also before us a draft resolution (A/3501/Rev. 1) sponsored by twenty-five delegations which reaffirms previous resolutions concerning withdrawal. This draft resolution is moderate in character and unprovocative in tone and our delegation will