

abstentions. Pearson explains that he had to make a quick decision to abstain, and that he did it for tactical reasons, to put Canada into a middle position from which it could negotiate with both sides:

"I was turning over in my mind the possibility of proposing a cease-fire, to be followed by a major diplomatic conference to deal with the whole context of Middle Eastern and North African questions. As part of this approach, it would be essential to set up an adequate UN military force to separate the Egyptians from the Israelis pending a stable and peaceful settlement of outstanding Middle Eastern questions....

"I decided not to participate in the debate on the U.S. resolution. I abstained in that early morning vote, but asked for the floor to explain my abstention. I wandered on about how we did not have enough time to consider everything, that a matter such as this could not be hurried. This was not my real reason at all, but it was impossible to explain that I was abstaining on tactical grounds. I did, however, have a chance to express these thoughts:

"What is the use of passing a resolution which brings about a cease-fire and even a withdrawal? What are we withdrawing to—the same state of affairs? In six months we'll go through all this again if we do not take advantage of this crisis to pluck something out—how was it Hotspur put it: "out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety"?—if we do not take advantage of this crisis to do something about a political settlement, we will regret it. The time has now come for the UN not only to bring about a cease-fire, but to move in and police the cease-fire and make arrangements for a political settlement."

On November 3, a further resolution on implementing a cease-fire and withdrawing forces was presented by 19 Asian and African members. Pearson followed it with the Canadian draft resolution, which, in effect, created the United Nations Emergency Force. The opening words of his introduction were:

"The immediate purpose of our meeting tonight is to bring about as soon as possible a cease-fire and a withdrawal of forces.... Our longer-range purpose, which has already been referred to tonight and which may ultimately, in its implications, be even more important, is to find solutions for the problems which, because we have left them unsolved over the years, have finally exploded into this fighting and conflict...."

On November 5, French and British paratroops were dropped on Port Said after several days of bombardment, and Egypt accepted the Assembly resolution establishing a UNEF command (under General "Tommy" Burns). By the evening of November 6, all parties had accepted the cease-fire and, the next day, the Assembly debated the Secretary-General's report on the details of establishing UNEF, on which Pearson had worked closely with Dag Hammarskjöld. In the debate, Pearson spoke these supportive words:

"This is a moment for sober satisfaction, but certainly not for premature rejoicing. Yet it is hard not to rejoice at the thought that we may have been saved from the very edge of catastrophe—and saved, let us not forget, not by threats or blusters, but by the action of the UN. If we draw the necessary