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PROPOSALS FOR MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT

The following is the substantive part of the statement on the Middle East situation delivered in the United Nations General Assembly on February 26 by Mr. L. B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs:

"In our view, the arrangements which we should now agree on to follow withdrawal and which would ensure that such withdrawal would help to bring about conditions which promise greater security and stability might include the following:

"First there should be a firm pledge by the Governments of Israel and Egypt to observe scrupulously the provisions of the 1949 Armistice Agreement. But when we talk about scrupulous observance of the Armistice Agreement, we should mean, not some of its provisions, but all of them.

"What are they? First, the establishment of an armistice demarcation line, which is not a political or territorial boundary, but which cannot be changed except by agreement between the two parties.

"Also the agreement prohibits any form of aggressive action, warlike or hostile acts, if you like, belligerent acts, or resort to force by the land, sea or air forces of either side. They establish the rights of each side to security and freedom from fear of attack.

"They do not prejudice or confirm any political or territorial rights or claim or boundary, but they do establish Egypt's administrative control over the Gaza strip without giv-

ing her any rights of territorial sovereignty there.

"They provide for the deployment in certain areas on both sides of the demarcation line of defensive forces only, and they define what 'defensive' means for this purpose.

"They provide for the total exclusion of Israeli and Egyptian armed forces from the El Auja demilitarized zone.

"Second, the Secretary-General and the Commander of UNEF should make arrangements with the Governments concerned for the deployment of UNEF on the armistice demarcation line. This deployment which should be made effective with the minimum of interference with civilian life or activity would be for the sole purpose of putting the force in a position:

"(a) To assume certain duties of the Truce Supervision organization under the Armistice Agreement between the two States;

"(b) To assist in the prevention of incursions, raids and retaliatory attacks across the armistice line in either direction;

"(c) Generally to maintain peaceful conditions along both sides of the line.

"Third, Gulf of Aqaba and Straits of Tiran.

"It should be agreed and affirmed that there should be no interference with innocent passage through or any assertion of belligerent rights in the Straits of Tiran.

"Israeli troops, on their withdrawal from the Sharm el Shaikh area, should, as the Secretary-General puts it in his report of Janu-

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