

So I venture to repeat that we should without unnecessary delay get on with the business before us, the constitution and the functioning of this Force, which has been made possible by the cessation of hostilities, and with the clearance of the Canal.

The draft resolution to which I am referring, in paragraph 2,

Notes with approval the progress so far made by the Secretary-General in connexion with arrangements for clearing the Suez Canal as set forth in his report; (A/3386).

We cannot make much more progress unless we pass this draft resolution. Then there is paragraph 3, which is as follows:

Authorizes the Secretary-General to proceed with the exploration of practical arrangements and the negotiation of agreements so that the clearing operations may speedily and effectively be undertaken.

That paragraph is, of course, without prejudice to the allocation of costs and, of course, it is without prejudice to the normal procedures of the United Nations in dealing with expenditures.

So I suggest that our immediate task, now that the process of withdrawal has begun, is to back up the Secretary-General in the terrific undertaking we have imposed on him. His industry and his intelligence deserve our full support. We have faith in him, as he has faith in the good faith of those he is dealing with. We hope, therefore, that we can help him with his work, that we can get ahead with that work in this Assembly instead of having to listen to long, distorted propaganda diatribes such as the one to which we have just had to listen—speeches we have already heard three or four times, which do not improve but, indeed, deteriorate with age.

However, this is not a time for recrimination among those who are anxious to find a solution for the problems with which we are faced. It is not a time for recrimination between delegations who are anxious to get ahead with this work. It is a time for restoration; first, the restoration of the sovereign rights of Egypt over all of its territory by the withdrawal of foreign forces from that Egyptian territory. It is a time for the restoration of free passage for all through the Suez Canal. It is a time, above all, for restoration, not of the situation which because of the failure of all of us at the United Nations and elsewhere has brought about this critical situation, but for the restoration of peace, security and decent conditions of life in an area of the world which has not seen such conditions for many years.

While there was opposition to the draft resolution on UNEF and the Suez Canal only from the Soviet bloc, there were many doubts as to the wisdom of the 20-power resolution. In an attempt to bridge the gap on the latter, the Belgian representative, M. Spaak, offered an amendment to the first two paragraphs of the operative portion, designed to express recognition of the fact that some withdrawal has taken place. The amended wording read:

*Notes that according to the information received one third of the French force has been withdrawn, the United Kingdom Government has decided to withdraw one infantry battalion immediately, and Israel has withdrawn a part of its troops, and considers that France, the United Kingdom and Israel should expedite the application of the resolutions of 2 and 7 November in the spirit in which they were adopted, particularly with regard to the functions vested in the United Nations forces.*

The voting took place on November 24. First the Belgian amendment was put, and lost by 37 against, 23 (including Canada) in favour, and 18 abstentions. The main resolution on withdrawal was passed by 63 to 5, with 10 abstentions (including Canada). The six-power resolution was then adopted by 65 votes to none, with 9 abstentions. Canada, of course, voted in favour.

By the end of this debate the situation on the Middle East had been thoroughly discussed and the views of all states members of the United Nations had been made known. Furthermore, decisions in principle had been taken by the General Assembly on all the immediate aspects of the problem. There was