

Gaza strip.

What we are suggesting now (and we assume that these things can and will be done on Israel's withdrawal without prejudging or prejudicing any legal position of Egypt under the Armistice Agreement which we admit that she has there) is first that UNEF should move into the Gaza strip immediately upon the withdrawal of Israel's armed forces; and, secondly, that the U N should take immediate steps to associate itself with the replacement of the civil administration there, although obviously this replacement would have to be done by agreement and would have to be planned to avoid any breakdown in the administrative services which now exist.

Why should there be any suspicion about the U N taking its full share of responsibility for security and stability and development in the Gaza strip. Surely no sincere or unprejudiced person is going to allege that UNEF, with its present composition and authority, is an agent, or could become an agent of colonialism or imperialism. Nor could the United Nations Relief and Works Agency or any other U N agency in the area. U N action of this kind is a reward for nobody, but it means, I hope, greater assurance for everybody that there will be security and stability there.

We think, Mr. President, that these ideas, which have been covered by previous resolutions of the Assembly or have been suggested in reports of the Secretary-General, should immediately on the withdrawal of Israeli forces, be converted into concrete arrangements, and that the Secretary-General should take steps to that end with our full support and, if later he requires it, with our endorsement. It was the view of my Delegation that the Secretary-General should be requested to do these things by a resolution of this Assembly. It is the view of others that he has the necessary authority under existing resolutions and reports. We accept that view and agree that if there is good will and a desire to make firm and constructive arrangements on all sides, no difficulty will arise. We have, however, as we see it, an obligation not so much to Israel but to ourselves as members of the U N, to see that, immediately after withdrawal, some action is taken along the lines indicated by the delegate of the United States last Friday, and by many other delegations today. If other delegations agree, as many have already agreed, that this should be done then this should give us the necessary assurance that not only has the U N succeeded in bringing about a cease-fire and a withdrawal of forces, but that it will also take constructive and effective action to avoid a resumption of hostilities.

Only in this way, I suggest, can we create the kind of atmosphere without which there can be no progress in the direction of that peace which we so much desire.

Mr. President, we have made progress in the last few days to this objective. Perhaps in a day or two we may have even greater reason for hope if the Secretary-General could