



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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PROBLEMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Statement made in the United Nations General Assembly January 29, by Mr. L. B. Pearson, Chairman of the Canadian Delegation.

I would like to say a few brief words on the problem that we have been discussing and at the same time to reserve the right to speak again when perhaps we will have some resolutions, or at least one resolution before us which deals with this subject. The problem, Mr. President, with which we have been dealing is coming to a head with consequences of vital importance to us all and perhaps even for international peace. As I see it, it is a problem not only of the completion of the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, though that is first in order of priority. It is a problem not only of making arrangements for security in the unsettled areas concerned or for free navigation but of making, I hope, constructive arrangements here which will be agreed on in this Assembly, but which would take effect only after Israel had accepted the decision of the United Nations to withdraw.

If Mr. President, we take the position that the United Nations cannot even discuss these related questions at this time - these questions of arrangements along the lines that I have just indicated - then we cannot begin to consider these questions until after withdrawal plans have been completed. If we cannot consider them or take a decision on them now, or immediately after the time we have taken a decision here on withdrawal, even if that decision is not to be implemented until after withdrawal itself, then I believe certain delegations will have great difficulty in accepting that position in regard to the relationship, or if you like the non-relationship, between these two problems.

If, on the other hand, Israel does not agree to complete an immediate withdrawal, or to proposals for a reasonable solution of the related problems, proposals which would be acceptable to this Assembly, then there will be no peaceful settlement of these problems, and Israel would be in a position of having taken the responsibility of rejecting decisions of the United Nations and remaining where she is without any international support and indeed in the face of an international decision. I suggest, Mr. President, we must do our best to avoid