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**THE CRISIS**  
  
IN  
  
**THE MIDDLE EAST**  
  
JANUARY—MARCH  
1957

**Hon. L. B. PEARSON**  
Secretary of State for External Affairs

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QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY  
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**THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**January-March, 1957**

In an earlier paper<sup>(1)</sup> an indication was given of the background of the crisis in the Middle East, followed by an account of United Nations' actions and the texts of the principal documents. The present paper continues the account from the beginning of 1957 to March 8 when the General Assembly temporarily adjourned.

When the Assembly took recess for Christmas on December 21 it could look back on some degree of progress toward the objectives on which it had agreed. A cease-fire had been achieved. The withdrawal of French and United Kingdom forces had been completed, and elements of the Israeli forces had been withdrawn behind the armistice line. A United Nations Emergency Force had been set up, and had, by the end of the year, some 4,000 personnel in Egypt. Preliminary arrangements for the financing of the Force had been agreed. A start was shortly to be made on the clearance of the Suez Canal by the United Nations salvage fleet, although no plan for financing the operation had as yet been accepted.

While the results thus far constituted no mean achievement, much remained to be done; and soon after the Assembly re-convened on January 2 it turned again to item 6 of its agenda, the situation in the Middle East. While the cease-fire had long since been in effect, other aspects of the general question were still to be resolved: the withdrawal of the remaining Israeli forces, the details of the financing and functions of UNEF, and the clearance of and the regime for the Suez Canal. Each of those problems was complicated in itself, and the solution of each was affected by the remaining two. As the Assembly proceeded, the inter-relationship became evident, as had been the case before the turn of the year. It may, however, be useful at this point to recall the main features of those problems individually.

The Secretary-General's Note of January 15, placed before the General Assembly, showed that it was the declared intention of the Government of Israel to withdraw its forces from the "Sinai Desert", with the exception of "the Sharm al-Shaikh area", by January 22. On the remaining area, and on the Gaza strip, Israel was prepared to have conversations with the Secretary-General.<sup>(2)</sup>

Sharm al-Shaikh is the strip of coast on the west side of the Straits of Tiran, the waterway through which a narrow navigable channel leads into the Gulf of Aqaba. The Gulf itself extends for about a hundred miles, past Saudi Arabian and Egyptian territory, to the ports of Aqaba in Jordan and Elath in Israel. Egyptian military installations capable of controlling the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba were established late in 1949 and early in 1950 at Ras

<sup>(1)</sup> *The Crisis in the Middle East, October-December 1956.*  
<sup>(2)</sup> For an analysis of this Note see *External Affairs Monthly Bulletin*, February 1957, pp. 42ff.

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Nasrani on the mainland and on the islands of Tiran and Sanafir. This enabled Egypt to apply an embargo on certain types of cargo bound for Elath, as certain types of cargo bound for Israeli ports were prevented from passing through the Suez Canal. When Israeli forces occupied Ras Nasrani in November 1956 the Straits were opened to all Israeli or other ships proceeding to Elath. The significance of the retention of forces in this area is, therefore, self-evident.

The other area not included in the plans for withdrawal conveyed to the Secretary-General on January 15 was the Gaza strip, which runs for some thirty miles along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. This area, which had been part of the mandated territory of Palestine, was occupied by Egyptian forces in May 1948, and to it came some 200,000 Arab refugees from other parts of Palestine. In the armistice agreement of February 24, 1949 it was provided that the strip could be occupied by Egyptian forces until the conclusion of a peace settlement. Thus, while the occupying authority assumed responsibility for civil administration in this area, which was occupied by Palestinian Arabs, during the temporary regime, the question of sovereignty was not involved. During the hostilities in 1956 Israeli forces entered the Gaza strip; but by the time of the Secretary-General's report of January 15 no indication had been given of plans for withdrawal. The Government of Israel had said only that it was prepared "at an early stage" to discuss with the Secretary-General "proposals for arrangements for the Gaza strip". The concern of Israel in the Gaza strip was the apprehension that it would again be used as a base for armed raids into Israeli territory.

It had been recognized by the Assembly that the United Nations Emergency Force was an essential element in the process of securing tranquillity in the Middle East. It had been established to "secure and supervise" the cessation of hostilities. Subsequently the Secretary-General, in a report later approved by the Assembly, said that "the functions of the UN force would be, when a cease-fire is being established, to enter Egyptian territory with the consent of the Egyptian Government, in order to help maintain quiet during and after the withdrawal of non-Egyptian troops, and to secure compliance with this and other terms established in the resolution of 2 November 1956". The cease-fire itself had been achieved; but there was still a longer process, related both to the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops within the armistice lines and to the possibility of renewed hostilities, whether on a local or wider scale. In the resolution of November 7 and in the Secretary-General's report on which that resolution was based<sup>(1)</sup>, it was made clear that UNEF could enter national territory only with the consent of the government concerned; that its duties were defined and limited by Assembly resolutions; and that it was "more than an observers' corps, but in no way a military force temporarily controlling the territory in which it is stationed".

The arrangements for the clearance of the Canal, as they stood at the beginning of the year, were described in some detail in the *Second Report of the Secretary-General on the clearing of the Suez Canal* (A/3492, January 10). After rehearsing the development of plans from November 2, the report includes three documents of interest: a summary of plans, letters constituting an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Egypt, and a Note on financing.

<sup>(1)</sup> *The Crisis in the Middle East, October-December, 1956*, pp. 14-15.

## SUMMARY OF PLAN OF WORK AND OF RESOURCES FOR ITS EXECUTION

1. The plan of operations covers tasks to be completed in three general stages, making possible the resumption of normal traffic in the Canal. Some of the work at each stage will overlap and thus assist the completion of the following stage.

(a) The first stage covers tasks which would allow transit by vessels of a 25-foot draft (about 10,000 tons). This includes the clearance of nine obstructions and two bridges. It has been estimated that this phase of the work will be completed by early March.

(b) The second stage covers the removal of other obstructions which would make possible the transit of vessels of maximum draft. During this stage, further effective obstructions would be removed from within the main channel and the task is expected to be completed by early May.

(c) The work in the final stage will centre on obstructions which, while not hampering transit traffic, would need to be removed from ports, basins and channels. This stage would also include work in restoration of docks and harbourages to their original condition.

The experience in the salvage operations during the first ten days gives every reason for optimism regarding the meeting of the above schedule.

2. Concurrently with the execution of each stage of the clearance work, the restoration of communications, lighting, and workshop facilities necessary to a safe and effective transit operation will be undertaken.

3. The work will be performed under General Wheeler's direction within the framework of the overall relations established by the agreement on the clearing operations (annex II). The Egyptian Suez Canal Authority, where appropriate, will co-operate in the execution of the established plans to the extent of resources available to it.

4. The salvage resources which will be utilized by the United Nations will consist of:

(a) A fleet, as of January, of thirty-two salvage vessels including supporting tugs with crews drawn from six [sic.] countries: Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Germany, Italy, Sweden and Yugoslavia.

(b) Eleven Anglo/French salvage craft and crews (with four Anglo/French support vessels) on a scheduled basis for the completion of certain specified work already in hand by these vessels in Port Said harbour.

5. General management of the salvage operations proper is in the hands of a consortium consisting of Messrs. L. Smit en Co.'s Internationale Sleepdienst of Rotterdam and Messrs. A/S Em. Svitzers Bjergnings Entreprise of Copenhagen. Restoration of the workshops in Port Said will be undertaken by engineers and staff of the Canal Authority with General Wheeler remaining responsible for supervision and the provision of additional specialists as required. Restoration of communication and lighting requirements will be undertaken by General Wheeler in conjunction with the General Electric Co. of USA and the International Telegraph and Telephone Corporation respectively. Plans for this work will be carried out in collaboration with the Canal Authority to assure the attainment of navigable conditions at each completed stage of the over-all plan. Dredging operations necessary to the immediate navigation needs of the cleared channel at stage 1 and stage 2 of the operation will likewise be put in hand in collaboration with the Canal Authority by General Wheeler, who is currently in consultation with appropriate contracting companies who have the necessary equipment available in the area.

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE  
GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT**  
**REGARDING THE CLEARANCE OF THE SUEZ CANAL**  
**EXCHANGE OF LETTERS**

8 January 1957.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to the request of the Government of Egypt for assistance of the United Nations in arrangements for clearing the Suez Canal.

In accordance with the authority which has been granted to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly, and on the basis of preliminary exploration and negotiation, I am in a position to advise you that the United Nations would be prepared to assist the Government of Egypt by undertaking the operation necessary for the speedy clearance of the Canal. The general plans for this assistance would be elaborated in consultation with the Government of Egypt and, when approved by the Government, implemented under the instructions of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General would be authorized by the Government of Egypt to carry out the task as a matter of priority as effectively and expeditiously as practicable with freedom for him to use the equipment available which he finds necessary for the operation.

It is envisaged that the United Nations would conduct the clearance operation through contractual arrangements with private firms which would have the primary responsibility for the work under the direction and control of the Secretary-General and his special representative. Such sub-contractual arrangements as may have to be entered into by the prime contractors in order to expedite the work would be subject to the approval of the Secretary-General.

The undertaking would be regarded as a United Nations enterprise and its personnel would be under obligation to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct solely in the interests of the United Nations. In keeping with the United Nations responsibilities, the vessels would fly the flag of the United Nations in place of their national flags. The property and persons engaged in the clearance operation (including the contractors, sub-contractors and their personnel) would, in view of their United Nations character, be covered by the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations to which Egypt is a party, in so far as it may be applicable *mutatis mutandis*. In the application of the aforesaid Convention the United Nations shall pay due regard to any representations made by the Government of Egypt in so far as it is considered that effect can be given to such representations without detriment to the interests of the United Nations.

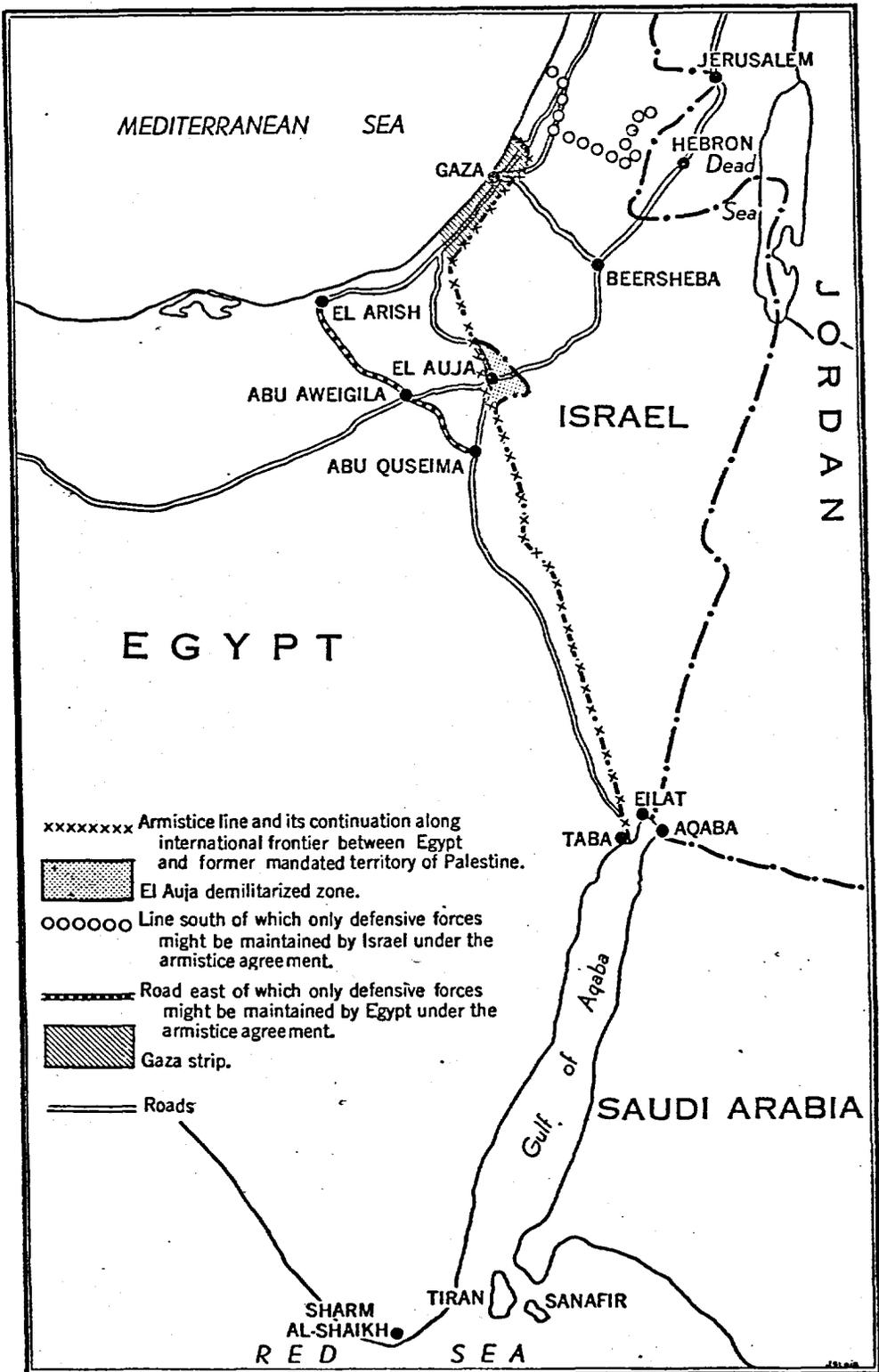
As the clearance of the Canal has to be completed with the utmost speed and effectiveness, the United Nations, in consultation with the Egyptian Government, will take all measures required in order to avoid unnecessary damage to persons and property. It is understood that the United Nations would not incur responsibility for possible damage to Egyptian ships lying in the Canal from such activities as it considers necessary to speed the clearance of the Canal. It would also be understood that the United Nations would retain the rights of a salvor in respect of vessels or property salvaged in the course of the clearance operations, other than vessels and property of the Government of Egypt.

The United Nations will, of course, keep the Government of Egypt currently and fully informed of the progress of the operations and the Government will, I am sure, render all such assistance as may be required by the United Nations for this task.

If the points set forth in this letter are acceptable to the Government of Egypt, this letter and the reply of the Government will be considered as constituting an agreement between Egypt and the United Nations, effective from the date of the reply.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) DAG HAMMARSKJOLD,  
Secretary-General.



- xxxxxxx Armistice line and its continuation along international frontier between Egypt and former mandated territory of Palestine.
-  El Auja demilitarized zone.
- oooooo Line south of which only defensive forces might be maintained by Israel under the armistice agreement.
- Road east of which only defensive forces might be maintained by Egypt under the armistice agreement.
-  Gaza strip.
- ==== Roads

His Excellency Dr. MAHMOUD FAWZI,  
 Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt,  
 Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations,  
 900 Park Avenue,  
 New York 21, N.Y.

8 January 1957.

Sir,

I have the honour to refer to your letter of 8 January 1957 in which you have been so good as to inform me that the United Nations would be prepared to assist the Government of Egypt by undertaking the operation necessary for the speedy clearance of the Suez Canal, and I have the pleasure to advise you in the name of the Government of Egypt of its full agreement on, and acceptance of, the terms of your letter. You may rest assured that the Government of Egypt will give its fullest cooperation and assistance to the operation.

The Government of Egypt agrees, furthermore, that your letter and this reply will be considered as constituting an agreement between Egypt and the United Nations.

I take this opportunity, Sir, to renew the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) MAHMOUD FAWZI,  
*Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

His Excellency Mr. DAG HAMMARSKJOLD,  
 Secretary-General,  
 New-York.

Finally, the report explains the position of financing the operation. The Secretary-General was not in a position to submit complete estimates of cost or proposals as to the means of covering those costs; but to meet immediate needs he had approached all Member Governments suggesting advances for the first phase of the operation. The Note suggesting such advances, dated December 23, 1956 read as follows:

**NOTE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO MEMBER GOVERNMENTS  
 REGARDING INTERIM ADVANCES TO THE FUND FOR THE  
 CLEARANCE OF THE SUEZ CANAL**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations presents his compliments to the Permanent Representative of..... and has the honour to call attention to resolution A/RES/411 adopted by the General Assembly on 26 November 1956 on the subject of the clearance of the Suez Canal, under which the Secretary-General is authorized to proceed with the exploration of practical arrangements and the negotiation of agreements so that the clearing operations may be speedily and effectively undertaken.

In accordance with the above resolution of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General has entered into obligations with contractors and others. For the financing of these obligations appropriate arrangements need urgently be made, if the clearance operations are to proceed without interruption or delay. The Secretary-General intends to report to the General Assembly at an early date on a final plan with respect to the total obligation for the clearance of the Canal. Pending a decision on such a plan it is essential that immediate cash needs are adequately provided for on an interim and provisional basis. The Secretary-General would therefore much appreciate any indication which the Permanent Representative is able to give him, if possible, before 1 January 1957, as to the measure of financial assistance it can make available by way of an advance would be without prejudice to the nature and extent of the Government's participation in such over-all financial settlement as may eventually be agreed upon. [sic.]

In order that he may be enabled to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to him in connexion with this vital United Nations undertaking, the Secretary-General trusts that Member Governments who are able and willing to assist in the manner and on the basis indicated, can urgently provide interim financing to the extent of not less than \$10 million.

If, as the Secretary-General hopes, His Excellency's Government is able to react favourably to this request, he will be glad to provide, to the extent possible, such further information concerning this matter His Excellency may require.

The Government of Egypt has given its assurance that the United Nations will have the full cooperation of that Government in the execution of its part in the Canal clearing operations.

Firm assurances of assistance had already been received from some governments, while others agreed to examine the request without delay.

Following this brief indication of the status of the principal aspects of the Middle East situation as it came before the United Nations, the deliberations of the General Assembly which began on January 17 may be examined. The document first before the Assembly has already been mentioned—the Secretary-General's Note on compliance with resolutions calling for withdrawal. During the first day of the debate a draft resolution sponsored by twenty-five Arab-Asian delegations was also tabled. The text read:

### *The General Assembly*

*Recalling* its resolutions 997(ES-I) of 2 November 1956, 998(ES-I) and 999(ES-I) of 4 November 1956, 1002(ES-I) of 7 November 1956 and A/RES/410 of 24 November 1956,

*Noting* the report of the Secretary-General of 15 January 1957 (A/3500 and Add.1),

1. *Notes with regret and concern* the failure of Israel to comply with the terms of the above-mentioned resolutions;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for securing the complete withdrawal of Israel in pursuance of the above-mentioned resolutions; and to report on such completion to the General Assembly, within five days.

During the course of lengthy, and sometimes vigorous, speeches there was virtually no argument about whether Israel was required to withdraw its forces. The Assembly had already gone on record in favour of withdrawal. The point at issue was, given the history of the area in the past few years, whether some approach could, or should, be found to meeting Israel's apprehension that withdrawal of her forces would lead to recurrence of raids from the Gaza Strip and interference with shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba. There could hardly be conditions placed on withdrawal since, by Assembly decision, withdrawal had been called for in principle and as unrelated to its effects on the parties involved. Some delegations strongly protested that the point at issue was simple—that Israel must withdraw—and that this should not be complicated by other considerations. Other delegations, however, felt that something more was needed. The latter view was, for example, expressed by the Delegate of New Zealand who said, "...in our opinion Israel's withdrawal behind the armistice lines must be completed. But that is not all that must be done. A mere sterile return to the *status quo* is not enough. Indeed, it would be worse than inadequate; it would be unwise; it would be both unjust and dangerous".

The position of the Canadian Delegation was expressed by Mr. Pearson on January 18. He said:

The General Assembly has before it a statement of the factual situation regarding the withdrawal of Israel forces, which withdrawal is now well on the way to completion. We have also before us a draft resolution (A/3501/Rev. 1) sponsored by twenty-five delegations which reaffirms previous resolutions concerning withdrawal. This draft resolution is moderate in character and unprovocative in tone and our delegation will

support it. It notes with regret and concern the failure of Israel to comply with the terms of the earlier resolutions adopted by the Assembly on this subject, and it requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to secure the complete withdrawal of Israel forces and to report within five days on the matter to the General Assembly. The words of the draft resolution are quite clear in this regard.

Our delegation shares the regret expressed by other Members of the Assembly that a situation has arisen in which compliance with the earlier resolutions on withdrawal has not yet been completed. But we would also regret and be concerned about a withdrawal merely to the old state of affairs. And we recall at this time that the earlier resolutions, in accordance with the terms of which Israel forces are to withdraw, dealt with matters other than territorial withdrawal, but matters which are related to this essential step. Therefore, I hope that the Secretary-General, in his efforts—which we support—to bring about compliance regarding withdrawal will in the further report which he is to make to us give consideration to ways and means of securing and stabilizing through United Nations action the situation after withdrawal has taken place and pending that political settlement which alone can establish real and lasting peace and security in the area.

Surely there must be no return, if we can avoid it, to the conditions which helped to provoke the initial military action. That has been the position of my delegation from the very beginning of the Assembly's consideration of this grave question. Speaking as the representative of Canada, in my first intervention in our discussion of this subject on the night of 1-2 November, I said:

The armed forces of Israel and of Egypt are to... return to the Armistice lines, where presumably... they will once again face each other in fear and hatred. What then... six months from now? Are we to go through all this again? Are we to return merely to the *status quo ante*? Such a return would not be to a position of security... but would be a return to terror, bloodshed, strife, incidents, charges and counter-charges, and ultimately another explosion... (A/PV. 562, page 131)

That remains our feeling on this matter, and that feeling has been reflected in statements made and in resolutions on this subject which the Assembly has already passed and which we have supported. Therefore, it seems to me that it is an essential part of our work not only to bring about a military withdrawal but also to do what we can to avoid the restoration of a situation of disturbance, unrest and incidents which might require the United Nations to intervene all over again in the future in order to stop new fighting.

The Secretary-General's report recognizes this danger. It refers to the resolution (997ES-I) of 2 November which states the obligations of the parties to withdraw, but which requires them also "to desist from raids across the armistice lines" and "to observe scrupulously the provisions of the armistice agreements". The report refers also to the resolution (999 ES-I) of 4 November, which goes beyond mere withdrawal. And, furthermore, as the Secretary-General states in his report, certain of those related aspects of withdrawal will assume added importance once a military withdrawal is effected. But even now, I suggest, we cannot ignore these related aspects in dealing with the question. Therefore, in asking the Secretary-General to report back to us it is my hope that he will report on these other matters, with suggestions to the Assembly on what can and should be done.

The Secretary-General has already indicated, in paragraph 11 of his report, that study might be given, for instance, to "the question of the extent to which the (United Nations Emergency) Force might assume responsibilities so far carried by the Truce Supervision Organization". That Truce Supervision Organization certainly has not itself, in our view, the power or authority effectively to interpose itself between the forces of the two conflicting parties. The United Nations Emergency Force, however, would now be effective for this purpose, and, following closely Israeli forces, could be deployed in the area of the demarcation line from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Aqaba, where it could function in order to prevent incidents, to keep the peace and to make secure the cessation of hostilities which has already been brought about by the United Nations. And in so doing it would facilitate the compliance of the parties concerned with other relevant United Nations recommendations which have been or which may be passed.

The Secretary-General also notes in his report that the withdrawal of Israel forces has not yet extended to those forces in the Gaza strip, where the situation, we recognize, regarding territorial sovereignty, density of population and refugees differs from that in the areas of Egypt from which withdrawal has taken place. Perhaps in his next report the Secretary-General might also indicate his views on how the United Nations might assist in stabilizing this area and in ensuring that it will not be used as a base for attacks and incidents, or as a target for retaliation. In that way also the United Nations action might help to prevent a recurrence of hostilities.

Then, in paragraph 14 of his report, the Secretary-General has raised the question of "The international significance of the Gulf of Aqaba", which he thinks "may be considered to justify the right of innocent passage through the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf in accordance with recognized rules of international law". The uncertainty of the situation here and the unrest and fears arising from it have been and remain very disturbing factors. Therefore, in our view, this situation should also be considered by the Assembly and action taken to avoid trouble in the future.

The withdrawal of Israel forces from Sharm al-Shaikh, which is a strategic and important position for controlling the Straits leading to the Gulf and navigation through them, might be followed by the posting of observers of the United Nations Emergency Force at that point to assist in securing the peace and keeping navigation open, pending the determination of the legal and other issues involved.

In short, our view is that this Assembly, in its efforts to achieve complete withdrawal of Israel military forces behind the demarcation line as a matter of priority, has also an obligation to deal urgently and immediately with these other matters. The Secretary-General points out in his report that there is such an obligation. Perhaps I might read out paragraphs 16 and 17 of his report on that point, where he says:

The Assembly, in taking this position—that is, the position with regard to priority for withdrawal—"in no way disregarded all the other aims which must be achieved in order to create more satisfactory conditions than those prevailing during the period preceding the crisis. Some of these aims were mentioned by the Assembly. Others are to be found in previous decisions of the United Nations. All of them"—and I emphasize these words from the Secretary-General's report—"call for urgent attention. The basic function of the United Nations Emergency Force, 'to help maintain quiet', gives the Force great value as a background for efforts toward resolving such pending problems, although it is not in itself a means to that end.

And then the final paragraph of the Secretary-General's report has this to say:

It is essential that, through prompt conclusion of the first phases of implementation of the General Assembly resolution, Member Governments should now be enabled to turn to the constructive tasks to which the establishment and the maintenance of the cease-fire, a full withdrawal of forces behind the armistice lines, a desisting from raids and scrupulous observance of the armistice agreements, should open the way.

The cease-fire that has been achieved and the withdrawal of forces which is being achieved will have opened the way to us for the attainment of these other indispensable objectives. Therefore I hope that the Secretary-General, in his report next week, will give the Assembly his views on how we might take advantage here of the opportunity that is being afforded us.

Our hope is that these various moves will bring about some security and relief from tension in the areas concerned. Such an improvement is required not only to prevent a further armed conflict but also in order to create conditions and the atmosphere which are so vital if an enduring, honourable and peaceful settlement is to be achieved.

The debate on the report and the draft resolution went on into January 19. The last speakers were the representatives of Israel and Egypt. Extracts from their remarks will indicate the divergent views of the parties immediately concerned. Mr. Eban explained his general position:

There is nothing complicated or eccentric about our case. What is it that we say? We say that any withdrawal of military forces from the western coast of the Gulf of Aqaba and from the Gaza strip should be accompanied by related measures to prevent

a renewal of conflict by land or by sea. It is remarkable that so moderate a doctrine should even require defence, and still more astonishing that it should encounter resistance. We have rejoiced to see this simple logic upheld in this debate by governments of renowned [sic.] maturity in international affairs and of irreproachable devotion to the cause of the United Nations. This very morning, the dangers of what has been called a "unilateral and limited approach" have been referred to in varying degrees of emphasis by the representatives of Costa Rica, France, The Netherlands, Belgium and Ireland.

Nor does a single day pass without impressive endorsement of this position in the great organs and tribunals of opinion throughout the world. As the days go by, the consensus of opinion grows in favour of a course of action in the Strait of Tiran and in Gaza which would block the path to avoidable tragedy and disaster.

Mr. Fawzi, in turn, expressed the Egyptian point of view:

When I came to this rostrum at the beginning of the present debate, I spoke only for a few moments. I intend to do likewise today. This is because the issue before the Assembly is incisively clear: it is the matter of Israel's withdrawal from territory which through aggression it occupied after its attack on Egypt on 29 October 1956.

The issue remains, as I submitted to the Assembly in my previous intervention, for the Assembly to decide whether or not aggression shall be allowed to reign, to rule, to decide any issues and to bear fruit for the aggressors. It is well known that confusing the issue is a common procedure resorted to by those who are aware of the precariousness of their position. This suffices to explain why some delegations, particularly the delegation of Israel and two or three others—luckily, not more—have tried to take us into by-ways and into side matters which have absolutely nothing to do with the present issue. Indeed, we have begun to feel that a famous procedure known as the filibuster is beginning to grow in this Assembly; I hope that it will be nipped in the bud.

The vote on the draft resolution showed 74 countries in favour, with two against (Israel and France), and two abstaining (Costa Rica and Cuba).

When the Assembly again turned to the Middle East question on January 28 it had before it as yet no draft resolutions, but did have two lengthy documents for discussion: an Israeli Aide-Mémoire on the Israel position on the Sharm al-Shaikh area and the Gaza strip (A/3511), and the Secretary-General's report on compliance with the resolution of January 19 which called for withdrawal of Israeli forces (A/3512).

The theme of the first document was to link the withdrawal of Israeli forces to Egyptian intentions toward Israel generally, and in particular to Israel's interests in the Gaza strip and the Gulf of Aqaba. The Israeli Government, it was argued, had secured no answers to questions asked on such matters, from which it was deduced that "Egypt intends to maintain her belligerent policy toward Israel on land, sea and in the air." Positive suggestions were then made. In the Sharm al-Shaikh area UNEF should take the place of Israeli forces and see that freedom of navigation was maintained. In the Gaza strip Israel would supply administrative and police units (but not military forces). UNEF would not be useful in the area as it could neither provide administration nor "prevent a recrudescence of fedayeen activities."

On withdrawal, the Secretary-General's report showed that on January 22 there remained Israeli forces in two areas: in and outside the western boundary of the Gaza strip; and on the western side of the Gulf of Aqaba and as far south as the Gulf of Suez. The second, and longer, part of the report is an examination of the limits and principles of United Nations action, and of

the Egyptian-Israel Armistice Agreement. One point which had not been made in his previous reports was that it would be advantageous to have UNEF on both sides of the armistice line.

Most of the speakers on the first day of debate were, in varying degrees, critical of Israel. Mr. Eban, however, made a lengthy statement of the Israeli point of view, and Mr. Lodge expressed briefly the United States' general concurrence with the Secretary-General's recommendations. On the next day Mr. Pearson explained the Canadian view that, while withdrawal of Israeli forces was required, the Assembly should not confine itself to that one issue. He commented, too, on the Secretary-General's report.

I should like to say a few brief words on the problem that we have been discussing and, at the same time, to reserve my right to speak again when, perhaps, we shall have some draft resolutions—or at least one draft resolution—before us which deals with this subject.

The problem with which we have been dealing is coming to a head with consequences of vital importance to us all, and perhaps even to peace. As I see it, it is a problem not only of the completion of the withdrawal of Israel forces—although that is first in order of priority—it is a problem not only of making arrangements for security in the unsettled border areas concerned or for free navigation, but of making, I hope, such arrangements here which will be agreed on in this Assembly, but which will take effect only after Israel has accepted the decision of the United Nations to withdraw.

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

If, on the other hand, Israel does not agree to complete and immediate withdrawal and to a proposal for a reasonable resolution of the related problems which would be acceptable to this Assembly, then also there will be no peaceful settlement of these problems, and Israel will be in the position of having taken the responsibility for rejecting decisions of the United Nations and remaining where it is, without any international support and, indeed, in the face of an international decision.

I suggest that we must do our best to avoid both these negative results by rejecting both these extreme positions; and I believe that we should take this—if I may call it that—middle position, not in the interests of any one State, and certainly not to reward or approve any action by any State which we have already condemned, but in the interests of peace and security. Certainly, Israel has no right to attach conditions to withdrawal of its forces. But, as delegations to the United Nations General Assembly, we have, I think, the right and, indeed, even the duty, to relate these two matters: withdrawal and proposals which may make impossible the kind of situation in the future which we have been facing during the last two or three months. And I believe that, as delegations, we have the right—at least my delegation is of this opinion—to say that our attitude towards one problem must be influenced by the attitude of the General Assembly towards the other problem. Failure to agree on a middle course of this type means possible—indeed means probable—failure to agree on any course; and that would mean deadlock and a return not only to the unhappy conditions of yesterday, but also to conditions that might be even worse and even more dangerous to international peace and security. It would mean also a demonstration of futility on the part of this Organization which might have far-reaching effect. And I know that we all agree that it is our responsibility to do what we can to avoid this disastrous result, which, surely, no one wants.

In our view the Secretary-General's report (A/3512), which we have before us and which we have been considering, shows the way out of this deadlock. The Secretary-General has given his views—sane and reasonable views—on the steps which should be taken after withdrawal, but which perhaps we can approve now. Those steps must

be taken within the limits fixed by previous resolutions and decisions of the United Nations which until we alter them—if we have the power to alter them, as Assembly decisions—remain in effect. His report emphasizes, I think rightly, that actions through the recommendations of this Assembly, as contrasted with decisions of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter, require for their implementation the consent of the parties concerned.

The main argument of the Secretary-General's report is that we must return to the Armistice Agreement—to the full implementation of the Armistice Agreement—but that this should be joined with United Nations action to secure and supervise such implementation, something that had been absent in recent years, and that if we cannot take that kind of complementary action for implementation the mere injunction on the parties concerned to observe the armistice in its entirety may not prove to be very effective. The Secretary-General says in paragraph 15 of his report:

There is universal recognition that the condition of affairs, of which this deterioration formed part, should not be permitted to return. Renewed full implementation of the clauses of the Armistice Agreement obviously presumes such an attitude on the part of the Governments concerned, and such supporting measures as would guarantee a return to the state of affairs envisaged in the Armistice Agreement, and avoidance of the state of affairs into which conditions, due to a lack of compliance with the Agreement, progressively deteriorated.

Compliance with the Armistice Agreement is, in our view, as important as compliance with recent resolutions on withdrawal, and other types of resolutions, although any effort to bring about this larger compliance should, I repeat, be subsequent to our decision on withdrawal. But that compliance, as I have said, should be with all the provisions of the Armistice Agreement—Article I as well as Articles VI, VII and VIII.

Such full implementation, supervised and secured by the United Nations, would, the Secretary-General tells us, have an important and a positive bearing on other problems in the region, and I certainly agree with that. Therefore, I venture to suggest that we might consider proceeding as follows—that we discuss and decide on a resolution reaffirming that the withdrawal of Israel forces must be complete and immediate, and regretting that this has not already taken place, and then that we should immediately discuss and decide on a recommendation which would include as its basic principle the principle that withdrawal of those forces must be followed immediately by action which would represent real progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions in the region.

And what action, in our view, is necessary to accomplish that essential result? Well, I suggest for consideration to the Assembly that certain ideas might be worthy of inclusion in any resolution which we may be discussing. I think that the two parties concerned, Egypt and Israel, should be called upon by this Assembly scrupulously to observe all the provisions of the 1949 Armistice Agreement and to refrain from all acts of hostility, including the exercise by either party of any claim to belligerent rights. I think that the Secretary-General might be instructed, after consultation with the parties concerned, to make arrangements for the deployment of the United Nations Emergency Force on both sides of the armistice demarcation line and in the Gaza strip in order that that Force, which is our own creation and which is functioning so effectively in the interest of peace and security already, might assume the supervisory duties of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and prevent incursions and raids across the demarcation line and maintain peaceful conditions along that line, and that Egypt and Israel, to assist in this essential work of the United Nations Force, should be requested to remove their military forces from or limit them in these areas of deployment which remain to be delimited.

I think that the United Nations should be associated with steps to replace the present civil administration of the Gaza strip and to ensure that that area will not in the future be used as a base or as a target for raids or retaliation. I believe that it would be wise to take appropriate steps to determine the legal position of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran, but that, pending that determination, the parties should be called upon to give assurances that they will not assert or exercise any belligerent rights in those waters or interfere with freedom of navigation in them.

Then I think that the Secretary-General, on whom we seem to be placing great burdens or responsibility these days, should be authorized to arrange for units, or a unit, of the United Nations Emergency Force, after the withdrawal of Israel forces,

to be stationed at some spot in the Gulf to assist in the establishment and maintenance of peaceful conditions in that area. In that connection may I quote—because I think they are of importance, and because I agree with them entirely—a few words from what the United States representative said yesterday on this immediate problem? Mr. Lodge said:

We believe it is essential that units of the United Nations Emergency Force be stationed at the Straits of Tiran in order to achieve there the separation of Egyptian and Israeli land and sea forces. This separation is essential until it is clear that the non-exercise of any claim to belligerent rights has established in practice the peaceful conditions which must govern navigation in waters having such an international interest. All of this, of course, would be without prejudice to any ultimate determination which may be made of any legal questions concerning the Gulf of Aqaba. (A/PV. 645, page 3-5)

That, as I say, is a quotation from Mr. Lodge's statement with which my delegation entirely agrees.

I hope that an agreed solution can be reached along these lines. The alternative, non-agreement, is so threatening to peace and security that we are bound to put forward every effort, with sincerity and determination and good will, to reach an honourable, peaceful and agreed settlement.

The next step in the Assembly would be the introduction of a draft resolution or resolutions: meanwhile the Middle East item was allowed to rest for more than two days while various proposals were informally examined. Broadly, there were two main elements in the many discussions; should there be insistence that the question of withdrawal be dealt with in isolation; and should sanctions be provided in case Israel proved recalcitrant? There were not a few delegations who would answer "yes" to both questions, and more that would be affirmative on the first. The other approach was to attempt by some means to associate with withdrawal some kind of assurances that there would be no return to the unsatisfactory conditions of the past, and thus to promote peace in the area. The Canadian Government, as the statements of its Delegation had made clear, strongly favoured the second alternative.

The debate continued on February 1, and during the course of the day two draft resolutions were circulated. Thus it was proposed that the two aspects of the question—withdrawal and measures intended to produce peaceful conditions—should be treated separately. The first draft resolution (A/3517) was worded as follows:

#### *The General Assembly*

*Recalling* its resolutions 997 (ES-1) of 2 November 1956, 998 (ES-1) and 999 (ES-1) of 4 November 1956, 1002 (ES-1) of 7 November 1956, A/RES/410 of 24 November 1956 and A/RES/453 of 19 January 1957,

1. *Deplores* the non-compliance of Israel to complete its withdrawal behind the Armistice Demarcation Line despite the repeated requests of the General Assembly;

2. *Calls upon* Israel to complete its withdrawal behind the Armistice Demarcation Line without further delay.

The second (A/3518) dealt with steps that should be taken following withdrawal.

#### *The General Assembly*

*Having received* the report of the Secretary-General of 24 January 1957 (A/3512),

*Recognizing* that withdrawal by Israel must be followed by action which would assure progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the Secretary-General's report and the measures therein to be carried out upon Israel's complete withdrawal;
2. *Calls upon* the Governments of Egypt and Israel scrupulously to observe the provisions of the 1949 Armistice Agreement;
3. *Considers* that, after full withdrawal of Israel from the Sharm al-Shaikh and Gaza areas, the scrupulous maintenance of the Armistice Agreement requires the placing of the United Nations Emergency Force on the Egyptian-Israeli Armistice Demarcation Line and the implementation of other measures as proposed in the Secretary-General's report, with due regard to the considerations set out therein with a view to assist in achieving situations conducive to the maintenance of peaceful conditions in the area;
4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the parties concerned, to take steps to carry out these measures and to report, as appropriate, to the General Assembly.

Each resolution was sponsored by seven delegations<sup>(1)</sup>, but the lead in drafting them appears to have been taken by the United States. It was Mr. Lodge who explained them when they were taken up on February 2.

The United States has participated in extensive consultations in the last few days in order to reach a just and constructive solution of the difficult problems which confront us. These consultations have revealed clearly that a very large number of Members of this Assembly are convinced of two things: first, that Israel must withdraw behind the armistice line without further delay, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly; and, second, that there must be positive action ensuring progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions in the region. The two draft resolutions now before the General Assembly reflect these sentiments. We believe that the adoption of the draft resolutions will go far towards assuring the achievement of these two objectives.

The first draft resolution (A/3517) represents the position consistently taken by the United States, and almost unanimously taken by the General Assembly, that the withdrawal of all remaining Israel forces must be completed without further delay. We appreciate the necessity of avoiding a return to the conditions that prevailed prior to the recent hostilities. But we are convinced that the measures to restore peaceful conditions in the area, as required by the Armistice Agreement and the relevant decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, should be taken upon the withdrawal of all Israel forces behind the armistice line. We do not believe that any Member is entitled to exact a price for its compliance with the elementary principle of this Organisation that:

All Members shall refrain ... from the ... use of force against the territorial integrity ... of any State, or in any other matter inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.

The United States again urges Israel to heed the call of the General Assembly and promptly complete the withdrawal of its forces.

We recognize, however, that such a withdrawal will not assure tranquillity in troubled areas where there are conflicting claims. We therefore join in proposing the second draft resolution (A/3518). This draft resolution deals with the measures set forth in the Secretary-General's report (A/3512). It is also in accordance with the position consistently taken by the United States and expressed by a majority of the General Assembly, that, upon the withdrawal of Israel forces, the United Nations Emergency Force should continue to move into the areas being evacuated by Israel forces, in order to ensure the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of 2 November [resolution 997 (ES-I)]. This was the case when previous withdrawals were effected. It worked well then; it should work well now. What we suggest today, therefore, is not new: it is a continuation of a procedure which has been highly satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup> Brazil, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Norway, United States, and Yugoslavia.

I stated on 23 January 1957 that the United States believes that:

strict observance by both Egypt and Israel of the provisions of the Armistice Agreement and the fullest respect for the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly are the keys to the restoration of peace and stability. (A/PV. 645, page 2)

To be effective, the United Nations Emergency Force must serve as a restraint against any attempt to exercise belligerent rights or to engage in hostile actions contrary to the Armistice Agreement, the decisions of the Security Council and the resolutions of the General Assembly. The United Nations Emergency Force can best fulfill its mission and exercise such a restraining influence if, as proposed in the Secretary-General's report, it is deployed on both sides of the armistice line, particularly in the sensitive Gaza and El Auja sectors. This will enable the Force to co-operate most effectively in the supervisory duties of the Truce Supervision Organization, in those areas where the Organization is authorized to function under the Armistice Agreement and the relevant resolution of the Security Council.

Again, with regard to Gaza the United States supports the Secretary-General's recommendation. The Secretary-General should, through a mission of his selection, supervise the withdrawal of the present civil administration in the Gaza strip and take steps to ensure that incursions or raids across the armistice line in the Gaza area will not take place. The second draft resolution would provide for carrying out these measures.

As I also stated on 23 January, the United States believes that:

it is essential that units of the United Nations Emergency Force be stationed at the Straits of Tiran in order to achieve there the separation of Egyptian and Israeli land and sea forces. This separation is essential until it is clear that the non-exercise of any claimed belligerent rights has established in practice the peaceful conditions which must govern navigation in waters having such an international interest. All of this, of course, would be without prejudice to any ultimate determination which may be made of any legal questions concerning the Gulf of Aqaba. (A/PV. 645 pages 3-5)

The second draft resolution reflects this position taken by the United States, as expressed in my statement on 23 January.

The adoption of the second draft resolution now before the General Assembly would place the authority of the Assembly behind the rapid implementation of the measures proposed in the Secretary-General's report. The United States strongly supports the draft resolution, which, we think, deserves the largest possible support from the General Assembly.

The United States requests that the two draft resolutions should be considered together. We request that the second draft resolution should be put to the vote immediately after the first, and understand that that will be done. The adoption of either one of the draft resolutions without the other would jeopardize the achievement of the objective set forth in the resolution of 2 November and would not promote peace and stability in the region.

A variety of comments came from other delegations. Most of the Soviet bloc had no sympathy with what they regarded as improper concessions to an aggressor, and launched into general denunciations of United States policy in the Middle East. Some of the Arab representatives also held that the second resolution implied an abandonment of the principle of unconditional withdrawal. The Egyptian representative, however, re-stated briefly the Egyptian view, which, he said, was "perfectly in line with these resolutions". The representative of Israel criticized the second resolution as imprecise and incomplete.

The Canadian Delegation had been in favour of a single resolution, instead of two; and was concerned about the wording of the second. Mr. Pearson explained the Canadian attitude:

We have before us, as Members know, two draft resolutions: one on the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces and one on arrangements for peace and security in the area to follow such withdrawal.

The Canadian Delegation would have preferred these two draft resolutions to be separate parts of a single draft resolution which could be voted upon separately. Our reason for that view is a simple one. We think that these two matters are interconnected, and what we do about the second will help or hinder our efforts to bring about effective action in regard to the first—withdrawal. This inter-relationship exists, in our view, not because it will assist Israel in achieving any objective of national policy, but because it will affect the chances of achieving our own objective of peace and security in the area. And that, I take it, is the objective of the Assembly. We do not expect the second draft resolution to result in anything that would not have been desirable if Israeli military action had not taken place.

There is in our minds no question of reward or approval. We do expect a satisfactory second draft resolution to result in the kind of United Nations action that will prevent military action in the future, and we look at this second draft resolution from that point of view, as well as from the point of view of the effect which it will have on the achievement of Israel withdrawal.

I recognize the force of the reasons that made one draft resolution impossible of acceptance by the necessary majority in this Assembly. I hope that others will realize the force of the argument that the views expressed on the second draft resolution and, even more important, on the meaning of that draft resolution, are bound to influence our feeling about the first.

Our position on these two questions has been stated already and I do not need to repeat it at length.

We agree with the view that there must be a full implementation of the Armistice Agreement of 1949, and that there must be a formal affirmation by the Governments concerned that they desist from raids and incursions across the demarcation line and take active measures to prevent these things happening. The Secretary-General, in his report, has called for these things. But they are not enough. The United Nations must take action to achieve as well as merely to proclaim these objectives; to secure and supervise arrangements to this end.

We have at hand an agency of the United Nations, our own agency, which can be used effectively for these purposes if we so desire. If we do not use it—the United Nations Emergency Force—all our work of last autumn will have been wasted, and our failure will extend far beyond this particular situation and will weaken, perhaps even destroy, the value of this Assembly for the supervision of and making secure the peace. The Security Council, in present circumstances, has become futile for these purposes. Is the Assembly to go the same way? It is for us to decide, and what we do on this occasion may make the decision.

We must, therefore, in any draft resolution which we are considering, such as the one before us, be sure that we are giving the Secretary-General clear and definite authority so that, in the subsequent discussions and consultations which are required, he can make the United Nations and the United Nations Emergency Force effective for the purpose of bringing about action, following withdrawal of Israel forces. This surely means—at least it seems to us to mean—that agreement should be reached under which UNEF can be used for keeping the peace along the demarcation line and in the Gaza strip, if necessary, and for preventing conflict—and that would be its only possible purpose in that area—in the Gulf of Aqaba or the Straits of Tiran.

We are asking our Secretary-General to take on great and additional responsibilities. I hope that this second draft resolution—which is not a very long one—is not going to be the straw that will break this camel's back. But it is certainly our duty to give him as clear and precise a mandate as we can so that he can discharge these responsibilities with a minimum of confusion, controversy or delay.

I realize that it is the intention of the authors of this draft resolution to give the Secretary-General the authority necessary to discharge these new responsibilities and to perform this task that is of such vital importance to peace and the United Nations. I know something about the difficulties of the authors of these two draft resolutions in realizing this intention in words that will command the approval of the necessary majority of this Assembly which, after all, cannot act at all without such approval. I know that the representative of the United States, in particular, has made persistent and tireless efforts, which deserve our gratitude, to overcome these difficulties.

But, while the purpose of this second draft resolution deserves and receives the unqualified support of our delegation, we have had—as I am sure other delegations have had, judging from what I have heard today—some doubts about the language of the draft resolution in one or two places being best suited to achieve this purpose. I would have preferred it to be somewhat more precise and more complete. I think that it would then have been more effective, if its meaning had been clearer, in achieving the two objectives which we all have in mind: immediate withdrawal of Israel forces and, afterwards, United Nations arrangements which, to use the language of the preamble of the second draft resolution, “would assure progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions”.

I realize, of course, that it would have been impracticable to have included in this draft resolution all the details of the actions which we wish the Secretary-General and the United Nations to take. But I had hoped that the principles which we mention might have been somewhat more specific. I realize also that the Secretary-General must be given reasonable freedom of action, room to manoeuvre, in an operation of this kind, which is as delicate as it is complicated and important. But we surely do not wish this freedom to include ambiguous injunctions which might invite differing interpretations and consequent confusion and frustration.

I am assured that my doubts on this score are unnecessary and that the wording of the second draft resolution makes possible the use, for instance, of the United Nations, especially the use of UNEF, for the pacification purposes mentioned by both the representative of the United States and myself in our interventions in this debate on 28 January, and to which he referred again at our meeting this morning. I hope that this can be done, and I have been strengthened in that hope by the statement which we heard from Mr. Lodge this morning.

That statement seems to me to strengthen the validity of the interpretation which we give to the words of the draft resolution, the aim of which we have wholeheartedly approved from the beginning, but the wording of which, in one or two places, has raised some doubts as to its exact meaning.

I assume, for instance, and I hope that my assumption is correct, that the scrupulous observance of the 1949 Armistice Agreement which is called for in paragraph 2 of the second draft resolution, requires the two Governments concerned to refrain from all acts of hostility, including the exercise by either party of any claim to belligerent rights, specifically in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran. My assumption on this point seems to me to be supported by the language of paragraphs 27 and 28 of the Secretary-General's report (A/3512), which refers to certain measures that should be carried out—and which, under paragraph 4 of this draft resolution, the Secretary-General is requested by this Assembly to carry out.

In regard to paragraph 3 of the second draft resolution, I take it that the word “other” in the phrase “the implementation of other measures” does not mean the exclusion of UNEF from these other measures by the fact that, under the preceding part of the paragraph, it is to be placed on the demarcation line. I also assume that the words “in the area” at the end of this paragraph include the Sharm al-Shaikh and Gaza areas as well as the area of the demarcation line.

These may seem small points, but many an important resolution—and this is a vitally important resolution—has been ruined by subsequent differences of interpretation and meaning of points which seemed to be small but turned out to be very large indeed, and very ambiguous.

I think it is especially necessary that there should be no doubt about the meaning of this resolution because if and when it is passed it becomes the Secretary-General's “Bible” as he undertakes the duties based on it.

Our attitude to resolution II, then, has been conditioned by the interpretation I have given above and we think this is a reasonable and acceptable interpretation. The actual authority given the Secretary-General to carry out the provisions of this resolution is to be found in paragraph 4 where he is requested to take steps to carry out the measures which are in his report, which has been before us for some time. In other words, he is to implement his report on the basis of this resolution. It seems to me desirable therefore to recall the measures which are to be carried out by him, because they will be his responsibility.

It seems to me that a careful reading of this report indicates that these measures—some of them would perhaps appear to be conclusions rather than measures—include the following:

First, full respect for, full implementation of and a reaffirmation of the Armistice Agreement of 1949 which remains in force and the first article of which assimilates the agreement to a non-aggression pact providing for mutual and full abstention from belligerent acts;

Second, the restoration of the legal position of control in the Gaza strip and the recognition that any change in this position—a position which has practical and humanitarian as well as legal aspects—can only be brought about through a settlement between the parties. The Secretary-General recognizes that the deployment of the United Nations Emergency Force in Gaza on any wider basis than its deployment along the Armistice line in the Sinai Peninsula would require the consent of Egypt under the Armistice Agreement. He also points out, however, in his report—and I quote from that report—that “the development of the situation in Gaza may require special attention and may impose added responsibilities on the United Nations” in particular in regard to refugees.

The third measure from this report is the deployment of UNEF on both sides of the demarcation line, to prevent incursions and raids across that line.

Fourth, El Auja to be demilitarized in accordance with the Armistice Agreement and Israeli and Egyptian forces not to take positions in contravention of that agreement;

Fifth, the assumption by the Emergency Force of the supervisory duties of the Truce Supervisory Organization;

Sixth, formal assurance from the parties concerned to desist from raids and to take active measures to prevent incursions;

Seventh, pending determination of the legal position of these waters, innocent passage through the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba in accordance with the recognized rules of international law, which passage is not to be interfered with by the exercise of any claim to belligerent rights;

The eighth and final measure which I have drawn from the report is that Israeli troops, on their withdrawal from the Sharm al-Shaikh area are to be followed by UNEF in the same way as in other parts of Sinai. The Force is not to be deployed there, as the Secretary-General points out, in such a way as to protect any special position on controversial questions, although, at least transitionally, it may function—or special United Nations observers may function—in support, and only in support, of mutual restraint and in maintaining quiet.

In these resolutions we are giving the United Nations Emergency Force very important functions in the pacification of the area. Perhaps it is already authorized to perform many of these functions. I agree, for instance, with the representative of Australia that in accepting the Secretary-General's second report on the establishment of the Emergency Force we have already, and with the consent of the Government of Egypt, authorized the Force to help maintain quiet after the withdrawal of non-Egyptian troops and to secure compliance with the other terms of the resolution of 2 November 1956. Whether the new functions we are suggesting require, in whole or in part, a new resolution of the Assembly is perhaps not very important now because such a resolution is before us, which is designed to remove any doubts on this score. In so far as is necessary, new arrangements will have to be worked out by agreement with Egypt and with Israel.

In this connection, the scope and the nature of Egypt's earlier consent was brought up yesterday by the representative of Australia and referred to by more than one speaker this afternoon. On that point the Secretary-General made, I think, an important clarification yesterday when he said: “To all the extent that movements of the United Nations Force are supposed to follow from the duties of the Force in relation to the cease-fire and withdrawal, the matter ... has been regarded as non-controversial as it is covered by Egypt's general consent while, on the other hand, as regards activities of the United Nations Force which would extend beyond what is covered by this consent, an additional consent has been considered necessary.” (A/PV, 649, p. 46)

The Secretary-General also said that whatever may be the legal situation under the Charter regarding consent, "in practice, the consent must obviously be qualified in such a way as to provide a reasonable basis for the operation of the United Nations Force." (*Ibid.*, p. 44-45)

I am satisfied myself that the United Nations Force, which has already operated effectively and non-controversially and has given us hope for the future role of the United Nations in the supervision of peace can, if it is given the opportunity and the authority, conduct these new peace supervision operations equally effectively. Absurd suspicions have been cast on this Force by the representative of the Soviet Union and by the representative of Bulgaria, I think it was, this afternoon; absurd suspicions were cast on this Force as an agency for the return of colonialism in a new form to this area. All I can say in this connection is that the Force is under the control not of any one Power, either here in this Assembly or on the spot, but it is under the control of the United Nations and that it is a Force consisting of important elements from those well-known "colonial Powers" India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia and Finland.

When doubts about this Force are expressed by the countries of the Middle East, I accept the honesty of their doubts although I do not believe that they are justified. I can assure them that as far as our delegation is concerned—and I am sure that it is true of practically all other delegations that have supported this Force—we have never at any time conceived of this Force as anything which could remotely be called an occupation force. It is not a national army or a collection of national contingents; it is an emergency force from the United Nations composed of units from countries—the smaller countries—of diverse backgrounds and policies, which is not in a position to enforce its will on any country, nor has it the power to do so under the Charter if it so desired. As a member of our delegation said last December in his statement in the General Assembly, the United Nations Emergency Force is not an instrument for enforcing a settlement but it can be an instrument to assist in establishing conditions in the area which would be of benefit to both the parties concerned and advantageous to peace and security.

As midnight approached the Soviet representative offered a motion that the first draft resolution should be voted on at once, but that the second—which, he said, "embraces a series of complex matters"—be postponed for three days. Only eight delegations voted for this motion, and the Assembly proceeded to the two draft resolutions. The first of these was adopted by 74 votes to 2 (Israel and France), with 2 abstentions (Luxembourg and The Netherlands). The second was adopted by 56 votes, none opposed, and 22 abstentions (the Soviet bloc, the Arab states, Israel, France and The Netherlands).

The explanation given by the French Delegation of its vote is of interest as a commentary on the debate:

My delegation voted against the first draft resolution in conformity with the stand which we have already taken and for the same reasons which are, in our opinion, still valid. We regret that we could not go along with the vote on the second resolution and we had to abstain. We feel that this resolution, while it is a praiseworthy initiative inasmuch as it may lead to the re-establishment of peace and security in the region concerned, consists of recommendations which are insufficient and too imprecise. They lend themselves to divergent interpretations, as we realized during the course of the debate.

No immediate action was taken by Israel as a result of the further exhortation to withdraw its forces. It continued to maintain that the provisions of the second resolution, (A-3518) did not provide adequate assurances that its interests in the Gaza strip and the Gulf of Aqaba would be protected. Thus the vicious circle had not been broken, some members of the Assembly holding that withdrawal must be immediate and unconditional, and others that Israel was justified in expecting reasonable "assurances" before it gave up existing means of guarding against raids and embargoes.

For the time being the Assembly did not discuss the matter, but the Secretary-General had a series of conversations with the Permanent Representative of Israel, while in Washington the United States Government sought to end the deadlock through bilateral discussions with the Israelis.

The result of the Secretary-General's explorations was described in a report to the General Assembly dated February 11 (A/3527). Portions of this are quoted below:

2. The Secretary-General on 3 February transmitted the two resolutions to the representatives of Egypt and Israel. He asked the representative of Israel to meet with him on 4 February, at which time he hoped to learn the position of the Government of Israel, particularly, as a matter of special urgency, on resolution I concerning withdrawal. On 4 February the representative of Israel, in reply to this request, presented an *aide-mémoire*, which is annexed to this report (Annex I).<sup>ω</sup>

3. In the *aide-mémoire* the Government of Israel "request the Secretary-General to ask the Government of Egypt whether Egypt agrees to a mutual and full abstention from belligerent acts, by land, air and sea, on withdrawal of Israel troops". In another point in the *aide-mémoire* clarification is sought by Israel as to whether, "immediately on the withdrawal of Israel forces from the Sharm al-Shaikh area, units of the United Nations Emergency Force will be stationed along the western shore of the Gulf of Aqaba in order to act as a restraint against hostile acts, and will remain so deployed until another effective means is agreed upon between the parties concerned for ensuring permanent freedom of navigation and the absence of belligerent acts in the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba".

4. The first of these two points in the Israel *aide-mémoire* must be understood as a request for action in implementation of resolution II, while the wording of the request leaves open the question whether it involves a willingness to comply with the demand for withdrawal in resolution I, even given a positive response by Egypt. The Secretary-General, at the meeting with the representative of Israel, asked whether, with regard to Gaza, it is understood by the Government of Israel that the withdrawal must cover elements of administration as well as military troops, forces and units. A clarification on this point appeared to be a prerequisite to further consideration of the Israel *aide-mémoire*. This point and the following one are related, as there is an unavoidable connection between Israel's willingness to comply fully with resolution I as concerns the Gaza strip and what may be done toward maintaining quiet in the Sharm al-Shaikh area. It is unrealistic to assume that the latter question could be solved while Israel remains in Gaza.

5. The second of the points in the Israel *aide-mémoire* requests a "clarification" which, in view of the position of the General Assembly, could go beyond what was stated in the last report only after negotiation with Egypt. This follows from the statements in the debate in the General Assembly, and the report on which it was based, which made it clear that the stationing of the Force at Sharm al-Shaikh, under such terms as those mentioned in the question posed by Israel, would require Egyptian consent. In the light of this implication of Israel's question, the Secretary-General considered it important, as a basis for his consideration of the *aide-mémoire*, to learn whether Israel itself, in principle, consents to a stationing of UNEF units on its territory in implementation of the functions established for the Force in the basic decisions and noted in resolution II of the General Assembly of 4 February, where it was indicated that the Force should be placed "on the Egyptian-Israeli armistice demarcation line".

6. Concerning his two questions, the Secretary-General received on 5 February a letter from the Permanent Representative of Israel. The letter is annexed to this report (Annex II).<sup>ω</sup> The answer of the Secretary-General to this communication was transmitted by his letter of 6 February (Annex III).<sup>ω</sup>

<sup>ω</sup>Not reproduced here.

7. A further meeting with the representative of Israel was held, on the invitation of the Secretary-General, on 10 February. Following the meeting, the representative of Israel sent the Secretary-General an additional letter, received on 11 February. This letter is likewise annexed to the report (Annex IV).<sup>13</sup>

8. This latest communication received from the representative of Israel does not add any new information. Thus it is still an open question whether Israel, under any circumstances, accepts full implementation of resolution I, which, as pointed out above, requires withdrawal from the Gaza strip of Israel's civil administration and police as well as of its armed forces. Further, it is still an open question whether Israel accepts the stationing of units of the United Nations Emergency Force on its side of the armistice demarcation line under resolution II, concerning which, in a similar respect, Israel has raised a question which requires clarification of the Egyptian stand. In case Israel were to receive the assurance from Egypt, which it has requested the Secretary-General to ask for as an action in implementation of resolution II, the representative of Israel in his latest communication has stated only that his Government "would formulate its position on all outstanding questions in the light of Egypt's response".

9. The fact that the Government of Israel has not found it possible to clarify elements decisive for the consideration of their requests, has complicated the efforts to achieve implementation of the resolutions of the General Assembly. If this development has "adversely effected the time-schedule for the withdrawal" of Israel forces, about which the Secretary-General had not been informed, an ultimate reason is that Israel's request for an assurance from Egypt concerning the cessation of all belligerent acts has been put forward while Israel itself, by continued occupation, maintains a state of belligerency which, in the case of Gaza, it has not indicated its intention fully to liquidate.

10. The Secretary-General shares the view of the Government of Israel that the office of the Secretary-General may serve as a means for an interchange between Member states of "proposals and ideas", but wishes to draw attention to the fact that the action which the Government of Israel has requested cannot be regarded as properly described in such terms, as it would be an action within the scope of resolution II and in implementation of this resolution which, although closely related to resolution I, has, at least, full and unconditional acceptance of the demand in resolution I as its prerequisite. . . .

21. In the situation now facing the United Nations the General Assembly, as a matter of priority, may wish to indicate how it desires the Secretary-General to proceed with further steps to carry out the relevant decisions of the General Assembly.

Paragraph 8 of the above report was of particular significance, since it cast doubt on what had been, to some delegations at least, a working hypothesis that Israel accepted the principle of withdrawal and questioned only the circumstances in which it could be implemented.

Results of the conversations in Washington were not immediately apparent; and the continued delay in withdrawal led to the tabling of a draft resolution<sup>(2)</sup>, dated February 22 (A/3557), calling in effect for sanctions against Israel.

#### *The General Assembly*

*Recalling* its resolutions 997 (ES-I) of 2 November 1956, 998 (ES-I) and 999 (ES-I) of 4 November 1956, 1002 (ES-I) of 7 November 1956, A/RES/410 of 24 November 1956, A/RES/453 of 19 January 1957 and A/RES/460 of 2 February 1957,

*Noting* the report of the Secretary-General dated 11 February 1957 (A/3527),

*Viewing with grave concern* the failure of Israel to comply with the terms of the above-mentioned resolutions,

1. *Condemns* Israel for its non-compliance with the said resolutions;

<sup>13</sup>Not reproduced here.

<sup>14</sup>The sponsors were Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and Sudan.

2. *Calls upon* all States to deny all military, economic or financial assistance and facilities to Israel in view of its continued defiance of the aforementioned resolutions;

3. *Requests* all States to provide the Secretary-General with information on their implementation of the present resolution;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report again on the implementation of the present and previous resolutions of the General Assembly.

The initial discussion on this proposal was brief. Indeed, only the representatives of Egypt and of Lebanon (the latter presented the motion) spoke on that afternoon (February 22). It was known that a number of delegations thought that talk of sanctions at this stage was unnecessary and unhelpful; it was also generally hoped that diplomatic discussions might now lead to Israeli agreement to withdraw. There was, therefore, a pause before the Assembly again discussed the Middle East.

At the same afternoon meeting there had also been a brief discussion of the "Report of the Secretary-General on arrangements concerning the status of the United Nations Emergency Force in Egypt" (A/3526). The report included an exchange of letters dated February 8 between the Secretary-General on behalf of the United Nations and the Minister of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Government of Egypt. Together the letters constituted an agreement. A few points from the Secretary-General's letter may be mentioned. Members of UNEF were to be exempt from passport and visa regulations. They were to be "subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of their respective national states in respect of any criminal offences which may be committed by them in Egypt". The arrangements pertaining to civil jurisdiction were necessarily more complex. The paragraph (12) on the subject reads:

12(a) Members of the Force shall not be subject to the civil jurisdiction of Egyptian courts or to other legal process in any matter relating to their official duties. In a case arising from a matter relating to the official duties of a member of the Force and which involves a member of the Force and an Egyptian citizen, and in other disputes as agreed, the procedure provided in paragraph 33(b)<sup>ω</sup> shall apply to their settlement.

(b) In those cases where civil jurisdiction is exercised by Egyptian courts with respect to members of the Force, the Egyptian courts and authorities shall grant members of the Force sufficient opportunity to safeguard their rights. If the Commander certifies that a member of the Force is unable because of official duties or authorized absence to protect his interests in a civil proceeding in which he is a participant, the Egyptian Court or authority shall at his request suspend the proceeding until the elimination of the disability, but for not more than ninety days. Property of a member of the Force which is certified by the Commander to be needed by him for the fulfilment of his official duties shall be free from seizure for the satisfaction of a judgment, decision or order, together with other property not subject thereto under Egyptian law. The personal liberty of a member of the Force shall not be restricted by an Egyptian court or authority in a civil proceeding, whether to enforce a judgment, decision or order, to compel an oath of disclosure, or for any other reason.

(c) In the cases provided for in sub-paragraph (b) above, the claimant may elect to have his claim dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 33(b) of these arrangements. Where a claim adjudicated or an award made in favour of the claimant by an Egyptian court or the Claims Commission under paragraph 33(b) of these arrangements has not been satisfied, the Egyptian authorities may, without prejudice to the claimant's rights, seek the good offices of the Secretary-General to obtain satisfaction.

<sup>ω</sup> This provides for a Claims Commission.

Subsequent paragraphs described the duties and rights of military police, and the conditions under which a member of the Force might be taken into custody by Egyptian authorities.

A draft resolution (A/3542) simply noting the report with approval was sponsored by ten states.<sup>(1)</sup> No question was raised about it except by the Soviet representative who announced his intention of abstaining on the ground that the establishment of UNEF by the General Assembly "was taken in violation and in circumvention of the Provisions of the United Nations Charter". The draft resolution was then adopted by 67 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

At the same time the Secretary-General had circulated to members of the Assembly for their information, copies of the "Regulations for the United Nations Emergency Force". As was said in the covering note, the regulations "affirm the international character of the Force as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly". The document defines the authority of the Commander; administrative, executive and financial arrangements; and the rights and duties of members of the Force.

Matters remaining to be cleared up in the administrative field were the completion of financial arrangements, and agreements between the United Nations and the national governments contributing forces to UNEF. It will be recalled that in 1956 provision had been made for meeting the first \$10 million of the United Nations expenditure on UNEF by a general assessment of all members of the United Nations. It had now become necessary, however, to provide for the further costs to be borne by the United Nations in addition to those met by contributing states in the form of pay and certain other expenses of the units they provided. This matter had been studied by a special sub-committee and the draft resolution which it prepared was recommended by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly. At the meeting of the Assembly on March 6 the draft resolution contained in A/3560 Add. 1 was adopted by 52 votes to 8 (the Soviet *bloc* remained opposed), and 3 abstentions. The resolution read:

#### *The General Assembly*

*Recalling* its resolutions A/RES/412 of 26 November 1956 authorizing the establishment of a United Nations Emergency Force Special Account in an initial amount of \$10 million and A/RES/448 of 21 December 1956 apportioning this initial \$10 million among the Member States in accordance with the scale of assessments adopted for contributions to the annual budget of the Organization for 1957,

*Noting* that the expenses of UNEF already approved for 1957 represent a sizeable increase in assessments placed on Member States, causing a grave unanticipated financial burden for many Governments,

*Acknowledging* that certain Governments have borne certain of the expenses of UNEF without charge, such as pay, equipment, supplies and services,

*Noting, nevertheless* that the Secretary-General estimates that the expenses of UNEF for 1957 will exceed the \$10 million previously assessed,

*Noting* the request of the Secretary-General for authority to enter into commitments for UNEF up to a total of \$16,500,000,

1. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General to incur expenses for the United Nations Emergency Force up to a total of \$16,500,000, in respect of the period to 31 December 1957,

2. *Invites* Member States to make voluntary contributions to meet the sum of \$6,500,000 so as to ease the financial burden for 1957 on the membership as a whole,

<sup>(1)</sup> Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Finland, India, Indonesia, Norway, Sweden, Yugoslavia.

3. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, pending receipt of contributions to the UNEF Special Account:

(a) To advance from the Working Capital Fund such sums as the Special Account may require to meet any expenses chargeable to it;

(b) Where necessary, to arrange for loans to the Special Account from appropriate sources, including other funds under the control of the Secretary-General, provided that the repayment of any such advances or loans to the Special Account shall constitute a first charge against contributions as they are received; and further provided that such loans shall not affect current operational programmes;

4. *Decides* that the General Assembly, at its twelfth session, shall consider the basis for financing any costs of UNEF in excess of the \$10 million not covered by voluntary contributions.

Consideration of the proposed agreement between national governments and the United Nations had not been completed during the period under review.

The Assembly returned on February 26 to a discussion of Israeli withdrawal, having before it the Secretary-General's report and the six-power draft resolution calling for sanctions. Some delegations expressed support of the latter; but the Canadian Delegation still saw hope "of bringing about withdrawal by spelling out the detailed arrangements which would follow it". Mr. Pearson expressed the Canadian view as follows:

We are now reaching, if indeed we have not already reached, the point of no return in our effort to deal with the problems arising out of a military intervention in the Suez area begun last October. So where do we go from here? Not, I venture to hope, in a direction which would tend merely to harden existing antipathy or, in the words of the Secretary-General, which would introduce merely "new elements of conflict".

The Canadian Delegation, like other delegations here, has tried to take an objective and impartial position in dealing with the problems which came to a head when Israel's military action in the Sinai peninsula began last October. We are not influenced by a desire to support either of the contestants at the expense of the other in our efforts to find a means of bringing to an end a conflict which has been growing in intensity over a period of some years. We are concerned with finding the best policy to pursue in order to resolve a series of difficult problems by means which will bring peace and security to the people of both countries, and we have no other interest than this.

The problems with which we are dealing go deeper than the immediate issue of withdrawal of military forces. They have their roots in the past and are terribly difficult for both parties to the dispute. They are also fraught with danger to the peace of the world as well as to the peoples immediately concerned.

This Assembly has a duty to avert that danger and to insist that there shall be no return to violence which will be destructive in itself and leave the area open to forces of subversion from outside. We realize that the issues before us will never be truly solved if we are content to let our minds become submerged in tales of past tragedies. These, it is true, have given just cause for grief and bitterness on both sides, but we can scarcely hope for success if we allow ourselves to be persuaded that the record of violence in the past justifies the policy of violence today. We cannot, of course, ignore the past, for it is impossible to deal effectively with this problem unless we have thoroughly studied its origin from every point of view and with respect to the needs of all the people who are concerned with it. But if we allow our minds to be dominated by the unhappy precedents of violence and reprisal which have made up so much of the recent past in this area, then it is very hard indeed to see how we can devise any solution which will in the long run be satisfactory.

As I see it, the problem is basically one of fear, fear which breeds distrust and animosity and conflict. There has been fear on the one side of extermination by neighbours whose hostility to the creation and continued existence of the State of

Israel has been strong and unremitting. It is difficult for people to act with the moderation and restraint through which wisdom expresses itself if they believe that they themselves live in the shadow of destruction and are uncertain about their very survival as a nation.

The fear from which the people of Israel suffer, the fear which explains the violence of reprisals which they have taken against their neighbours, will be on the way to elimination when the Arab States are willing to recognize Israel as a sovereign State and its right to national existence within accepted boundaries and under conditions of life tolerable to its people. There were some signs, a year or so ago, that we might at least be approaching a time when the Arab States would be willing to grant Israel this recognition. Unfortunately, the events of last autumn have reversed that trend. It must now be one of our major aims here to help set again in motion the forces which will lead to the early recognition of Israel in normal terms by its neighbours, and thus to the removal of fear.

On the other side, however, there is also fear which has led to extreme views, to extreme policies and to violence. Among the Arab States there is that deep and understandable apprehension that the displacement of population and the political tension already associated with the new State, most of whose citizens have come from abroad, a new State established in the midst of the Arab people, may be followed by still further dislocations owing to the pressure of immigration into Israel, backed as that State is by strong international pressures and international resources. There is a fear that Israel will yield to expansionist ambitions, which is the counterpart of Israel's own fear of Arab intentions. That has bred in the Arab world animosity and violence towards Israel. When that fear is dissipated we may count on moderation in the attitude of Israel's neighbours towards that State. As I see it, we cannot but agree that if Israel has a right to live and prosper, free from the fear of strangulation by its neighbours, the Arab States also have a right to feel confident that Israel will not attempt to expand its territory at their expense, the right to be assured that if Israel, however, should at any time develop such ambitions, it will receive no encouragement but meet only opposition on both the official and the non-official level from the outside world, an opposition which would result in the isolation of the State itself from any international assistance or support.

It is in this shadow of the past and present, the shadow of fear on both sides, that we have to consider the problem which is immediately before us. In my view, that problem is one of securing a fair and agreed basis for the withdrawal of Israel from those places which it still occupies beyond the Armistice Demarcation Line; a basis which can be used to increase security and create conditions conducive to peace. If we do not secure such a basis, we may fail completely to bring about this withdrawal—with consequences which will be tragic for us all, and perhaps especially for Israel. As I have said before in this Assembly, it is not a question in our minds of rewarding or punishing or of laying down conditions or refusing conditions; it is a question of associating the withdrawal of Israel with arrangements which should remove the necessity, or at least minimize the possibility, of facing this same problem a year or two from now.

From the very beginning of the present crisis, the Canadian Delegation has tried to keep in the forefront of its thinking on this question the importance of finding a solution not merely for the problem posed by military intervention, but for that posed by the conditions which brought about that intervention.

It was in that spirit that we advocated the establishment of the United Nations Emergency Force. We felt that by its action in bringing about an end of fighting, this Assembly was accepting responsibility for pursuing two related aims; the immediate aim of supervising and securing the cease-fire, and the longer-range objective of helping to create conditions in which it might be possible eventually to settle fundamental problems. We have insisted, even in the earliest days of this crisis, on our view that a return to stability would not flow merely from words or acts of condemnation; and that punishment was not in itself a substitute for progress towards peace.

Now, more than three months later, we are confronted with the need to strike a balance between the immediate and primary objective of securing the completion of Israel's withdrawal and that of achieving this in such a way that withdrawal will be accompanied by helpful and fruitful results. I repeat that, as far as our delegation is

concerned, we refuse to consider these as unrelated objectives, even though priority in time must be given to the first, which is withdrawal. We still refuse to believe that these objectives cannot be achieved without adopting proposals for forms of pressure which would be an admission by the Assembly of complete and final failure to solve this problem constructively. Our delegation does not believe that we should yet admit any such failure.

We think that there is still a way of bringing about withdrawal by spelling out the detailed arrangements which would follow it, and which would strengthen security and prepare the way for pacification. In its resolution 461 of 2 February, the Assembly indicated in general terms the necessity for such arrangements. In our view, we should now, before deciding on other measures, follow up that indication with something more concrete and specific.

We think that both parties should be willing to accept any recommendations to this end which are satisfactory to the great majority of the Members of this Assembly. If Israel refuses to withdraw its forces immediately—not on the implementation—on the adoption of such recommendations by this Assembly, it would be taking on a very heavy responsibility indeed, and would forfeit our support and might provoke consideration of other measures by the Assembly.

The arrangements to follow withdrawal, which we should now agree on, are in essence, though not of course in detail, envisaged in the Secretary-General's reports of 24 January and 11 February, the former of which has already been endorsed by this Assembly. If we could carry these arrangements into effect, it would ensure that such withdrawal would help to bring about conditions which promise greater security and stability, and these arrangements might, I suggest, 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 the provisions, but all of them.

And 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 Armistice Agreement prohibits any form of aggressive action, war-like or hostile acts or, if you like, belligerent acts or resort to force by the land, sea or air forces of either side. They establish the right of each side to security and freedom from fear of attack.

They do not prejudice or confirm any political or territorial right or claim or boundary, but they do establish, the Armistice Agreement's provisions, Egypt's administrative control over the Gaza strip without giving it 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.

Finally, they provide for the total exclusion of Israel and Egyptian armed forces from the El Auja demilitarized zone. That, then, is what we should mean when we talk about scrupulous observance of the Armistice.

The second stage in this programme would be arrangements for the United Nations Emergency Force. In this regard, we think that the Secretary-General and the Commander of that Force should make arrangements with the Governments concerned for the deployment of the UNEF on the Armistice Demarcation Line. This deployment, which should be made effective with the minimum of interference with civilian life and 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 and raids and retaliatory attacks across the Armistice Line in either direction;
- (c) generally to maintain peaceful conditions along both sides of the line.

Thirdly, there is the question of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran. In our view it should be agreed and affirmed by us 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 al-Shaikh area, should, as the Secretary-General puts it in his report of 24 January, "be followed by UNEF in the same way as in other parts of Sinai", in order to assist in maintaining quiet in that area and in preventing conflict. Surely this would be in accordance with the purposes already laid down by this Assembly for that Force.

Fourthly, there is the problem of the Gaza strip. This is perhaps the most complicated and difficult of the arrangements to be decided, as it has political, social, economic, and humanitarian aspects. We are dealing here with 300,000 people, not merely with territory. I should like, therefore, to go into this particular aspect of the problem in somewhat more detail.

The Gaza strip was a part, as you know, of the mandated territory of Palestine. It is not Egyptian territory. Its indigenous population of 60,000 to 70,000 is Palestinian Arab, and is now greatly augmented by some 267,000 refugees, practically all of whom are Palestinian Arabs. It was occupied by Egypt immediately after the termination of the British Mandate in May 1948. And that occupation pending final settlement of the area was acknowledged in the Egyptian-Israeli Armistice Agreement of 1949.

Egypt has not annexed this strip and claims to have no intention of doing so. The territory had never been occupied by Israel prior to 29 October 1956, and since then Israel has also disavowed any intention of annexing the strip, though measures and plans for economic development of the area, taken or projected, may indicate an intention to open the territory to Israeli settlement. Should this happen, and in view of recent developments it may well not happen, but should this happen—Israeli settlement—it would probably mean that most of the indigenous Arab inhabitants of the strip would be forced into dependence or destitution as the territory cannot support now even the small normal Arab population.

Surely there would be little logic to an arrangement whereby Israel would assume responsibility for the administration of a territory not belonging to it, and where it remained in opposition to a decision of the United Nations Assembly and against the wishes of the Arab inhabitants, for most of whom, as refugees, Israel in these new circumstances might also have to accept responsibility or some great measure of responsibility.

In the discharge of its responsibilities for refugees, the United Nations has not recently enjoyed satisfactory relations with the administration of this territory. That situation would be even more difficult, perhaps impossible, if Israel remained in control in the conditions I have just mentioned. The effect of a controversy of this kind would be disastrous for the Arab refugees in Gaza and serious for the Arab refugee problem as a whole. Nor could the United Nations, in my view, take on any new role for maintaining security in and against the Gaza strip if Israel insisted on remaining there in spite of the Armistice Agreement and of repeated United Nations Assembly resolutions that she should withdraw.

Yet the key issue in this area from the Israeli standpoint is security, we are told, against any resumption of incursions or raids into Israel from Gaza territory.

From the United Nations standpoint, a key issue also is how to provide security on both sides after Israel withdraws, on the basis of the Assembly's resolution of 2 November 1956, of later resolutions, as well as of the reports of the Secretary-General.

Continued occupation of the Gaza strip by Israel armed forces or by Israel police and civilian administration after the withdrawal of her troops, and in the face of bitter Egyptian hostility, cannot, in my view, give the security sought, for the following reasons:

First, the prolongation of Israeli occupation of non-Israeli territory in the face of our decisions to the contrary, and in violation of the Armistice Agreement will only incite new provocations, perhaps of greater magnitude than any hitherto. The emotions aroused would be almost certain to increase the likelihood of a resumption of incursions and raids from outside the strip, even though the protection afforded against them might well be increased inside the strip.

Secondly, Israeli occupation of Gaza would only shift a little to the southwest the line between Israel and Egypt across which the raids might come. Since there will always be a line or frontier between Egypt and Israel, the only sure way to stop the raids across the Egyptian-Israeli line, wherever it may be, is by political action based

on the sincere will of the Governments of Egypt and Israel, with United Nations assistance and supervision, to end such raids and incursions and to abide by the terms of the Armistice Agreement. Assurance of this intention, given by the Government of Egypt, has been repeated by the Secretary-General in his last two reports. It seems obvious to me that continuing Israeli occupation of non-Israeli territory beyond the armistice line will nullify that assurance. It seems also equally obvious to me at least, that such assurances without any intervention by the United Nations to facilitate and ensure their actual fulfilment are not likely to satisfy the Government of Israel. The problem is, therefore, two-fold, and requires for its solution Egyptian, Israeli and indeed United Nations action.

What then should be the nature of this action in respect of this Gaza territory? First, I suggest, in priority and essential to all other steps, Israel should withdraw from the Gaza strip in accordance with previous decisions of the General Assembly, and implicit in a return to the scrupulous observance of the Armistice Agreement. At the same time, this Assembly should now provide for effective United Nations action to ensure that the area would not be used as a base for raids and incursions in the future against Israel after its withdrawal.

I have just spoken about the deployment of UNEF along the demarcation line. In the Gaza strip, this deployment would serve not only as an effective interposition of UNEF between the armed forces of Egypt and Israel, but as a screen against incursions, raids and retaliatory attacks across the line from either side. Furthermore, in a transitional period, UNEF and other appropriate agencies of the United Nations would be given functions within the Gaza strip which would contribute towards safeguarding life and property, would guarantee good civilian administration, would assure the maximum assistance to the Palestine refugees there, and would protect and foster the economic development of the Gaza strip and its people. In this regard, we have all heard, I am sure with great interest, the expression of confidence by the Secretary-General on the attitude of the Government of Egypt toward the necessary arrangements in Gaza after the withdrawal of Israel. Statements of this kind by the Secretary-General are obviously not to be taken lightly. The military aspect of this withdrawal is relatively uncomplicated. Immediately the Israeli forces leave, the UNEF should enter. As the Armistice Agreement limits in any event Egyptian forces to "defensive" elements only, and as UNEF will already be deployed along the armistice line, and as the strip is so very narrow itself, the Government of Egypt should not in our view envisage the return of her own armed forces to this area after the Israeli troops have withdrawn.

So far as the civil administration of the territory is concerned, the position is more difficult and complicated.

Legally, under the Armistice Agreement, the civil administration is to be Egyptian and not Israeli. But there are important practical considerations, I think, which qualify this legal position and which cannot be ignored in the replacement of the present administration.

It is perfectly clear that we should not simply command the Israeli civil administration to depart in a night. Anyone who believes that this is possible should study carefully the special report of the Director of UNRWA on the Agency's operations in the Gaza strip and ponder upon the situation which exists there. We have here an extremely explosive situation which could very easily get out of control. In this tiny area are crowded 267,000 refugees and a much smaller native population. They are bitter and frustrated, administered by strangers; rebellious, riven by frictions, and in a mood, I have no doubt, to erupt in violence and bloodshed if firm control were removed.

There has already been more than enough murder in the Gaza strip, and the United Nations cannot be indirectly responsible for more. We owe protection to the refugees and we certainly owe protection to the servants of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency who have been carrying on so heroically in the face of such great obstacles, difficulties and dangers in that strip.

Therefore, provision must surely be made for a peaceful transition from the administration of Israel to something no less strong and effective and at the same time more generally acceptable. Such a transition can be effected only by negotiation, and such negotiation, which should be both speedy and thorough, can only be conducted by direct agents of the United Nations. There is no sense in pretending that, under present circumstances, it could be undertaken between Egyptians and Israelis alone. The good offices of a third party must be interposed, and this, in our view, can only be the United Nations.

This is all the more desirable because after Israel's withdrawal, the United Nations should, in our view and by agreement with Egypt, accept responsibility to the maximum possible extent for establishing and maintaining civil administration in the territory; in fostering economic development and social welfare, in maintaining law and order. UNRWA is already there, with an experienced and efficient administrative nucleus. The United Nations could also provide other help through the United Nations Technical Assistance machinery, the resources of its secretariat, and expert consultants recruited for specific purposes. In this way there would be built up in Gaza, in co-operation, I hope, with Egypt and with Israel, a United Nations civil administration.

To co-ordinate and make effective arrangements to this end the Secretary-General might decide to appoint a United Nations Commissioner for Gaza. Working with the Commander of UNEF and the Director of UNRWA, and after consultation with Egyptian and Israeli representatives as well as with refugee and other local Arab leaders, he could arrange to bring about with all possible speed the replacement of the present Israeli civil administration of the area.

In this way, and perhaps in this way only, we should be able to effect the withdrawal of Israel, with order and speed, and in such a manner as to protect the interests of the inhabitants, and of both Egypt and Israel as well.

After the replacement had been completed, this United Nations Commissioner should, in my view, remain in Gaza where he would have chief responsibility for all United Nations activities there, including those of UNEF inside the strip. He would be concerned with the supervision of the Armistice Agreement, including maintenance of the cease-fire observers' functions and checking and reporting on alleged incidents of violation. In discharging these responsibilities he would work through UNEF rather than the Truce Supervisory Organization, though this would be without prejudice, of course, to the role of that organization in the other three Armistice Agreements.

In view of the status of the Gaza strip, however, as an area not belonging to the sovereign territory of any neighbouring State, any arrangement for the administration of the territory such as that which I have ventured to outline above must be considered as an interim measure pending final agreement as to the proper disposition of the territory. On that, final agreement remains the responsibility of the United Nations, and it should be discharged after these interim arrangements have been completed.

I venture to submit these proposals to the Assembly because I believe they will provide a basis not only for the essential and prior withdrawal of Israel forces, but for a better and more peaceful state of affairs than that which has existed previously. They may not constitute a perfect programme, and I realize that they will not fully meet the wishes of the two parties to this conflict. This programme is, admittedly, a compromise as any resolution based on it would be a compromise, but it is meant to be a constructive compromise which may lead to further steps that will make for lasting peace. In that spirit it is submitted to the Assembly.

The Canadian suggestions immediately came under strong criticism from the representatives of the U.S.S.R., Syria, and Iraq. While the debate continued sporadically, consisting for the most part of speeches by delegations which supported the six-power resolution, diplomatic discussions were going on in Washington between representatives of the United States, France, and Israel. Following these discussions the Government of Israel decided to withdraw its military and civil personnel from the Gaza strip and its troops from the Sharm al-Shaikh area.

The Israel Foreign Minister, Mrs. Meir, announced to the Assembly on March 1 her government's intention to withdraw, explaining at the same time the "assumptions" on which this action was being taken. She said:

The Government of Israel is now in a position to announce its plans for full and prompt withdrawal from the Sharm al-Shaikh area and the Gaza strip, in compliance with resolution I of 2 February 1957.

We have repeatedly stated that Israel has no interest in the strip of land overlooking the western coast of the Gulf of Aqaba. Our sole purpose has been to ensure that, on the withdrawal of Israel forces, continued freedom of navigation will exist

for Israel and international shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran. Such freedom of navigation is a vital national interest for Israel, but it is also of importance and legitimate concern to the maritime Powers and to many States whose economies depend upon trade and navigation between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

There has recently been an increasingly wide recognition that the Gulf of Aqaba comprehends international waters in which the right of free and innocent passage exists.

On 11 February 1957, the Secretary of State of the United States of America handed to the Ambassador of Israel in Washington a memorandum dealing, among other things, with the subject of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran.

This statement discusses the rights of nations in the Gulf of Aqaba and declares the readiness of the United States to exercise those rights on its own behalf and to join with others in securing general recognition of those rights.

My Government has subsequently learnt with gratification that other leading maritime Powers are prepared to subscribe to the doctrine set out in the United States memorandum of 11 February and have a similar intention to exercise their rights of free and innocent passage in the Gulf and the Straits.

The General Assembly's resolution (II) of 2 February 1957 contemplates that units of the United Nations Emergency Force will move into the Straits of Tiran area on Israel's withdrawal. It is generally recognized that the function of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Straits of Tiran area includes the prevention of belligerent acts.

In this connexion, my Government recalls the statements by the representative of the United States in the General Assembly on 28 January and 2 February 1957, with reference to the function of the United Nations Emergency Force units which are to move into the Straits of Tiran area on Israel's withdrawal. The statement of 28 January, repeated on 2 February, said:

It is essential that units of the United Nations Emergency Force be stationed at the Straits of Tiran in order to achieve there the separation of Egyptian and Israeli land and sea forces. This separation is essential until it is clear that the non-existence of any claimed belligerent rights has established in practice the peaceful conditions which must govern navigation in waters having such an international interest. (*A/PV. 645, pages 3-5*).

My Government has been concerned with the situation which would arise if the United Nations Emergency Force, having taken up its position in the Straits of Tiran area for the purpose of assuring non-belligerency, were to be withdrawn, in conditions which might give rise to interference with free and innocent navigation and, therefore, to the renewal of hostilities. Such a premature cessation of the precautionary measures taken by the United Nations for the prevention of belligerent acts would prejudice important international interests and threaten peace and security. My Government has noted the assurance embodied in the Secretary-General's report of 26 February 1957, that any proposal for the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force from the Gulf of Aqaba area would first come to the Advisory Committee, which represents the General Assembly in the implementation of its resolution of 2 November 1956. This procedure will give the General Assembly an opportunity to ensure that no precipitate changes are made which would have the effect of increasing the possibility of belligerent acts. We have reason to believe that in such a discussion many Members of the United Nations would be guided by the view expressed by Ambassador Lodge on 2 February in favour of maintaining the United Nations Emergency Force in the Straits of Tiran until peaceful conditions were in practice assured.

In the light of these doctrines, policies and arrangements by the United Nations and the maritime Powers, my Government is confident that free and innocent passage for international and Israel shipping will continue to be fully maintained after Israel's withdrawal.

It remains for me now to formulate the policy of Israel both as a littoral State and as a country which intends to exercise its full rights of free passage in the Gulf of Aqaba and through the Straits of Tiran.

The Government of Israel believes that the Gulf of Aqaba comprehends international waters and that no nation has the right to prevent free and innocent passage in the Gulf and through the Straits giving access thereto, in accordance with the generally accepted definition of those terms in the law of the sea.

In its capacity as a littoral State, Israel will gladly offer port facilities to the ships of all nations and all flags exercising free passage in the Gulf of Aqaba. We have received with gratification the assurances of leading maritime Powers that they foresee a normal and regular flow of traffic of all cargoes in the Gulf of Aqaba.

Israel will do nothing to impede free and innocent passage by ships of Arab countries bound to Arab ports or to any other destination.

Israel is resolved on behalf of vessels of Israel registry to exercise the right of free and innocent passage and is prepared to join with others to secure universal respect of this right.

Israel will protect ships of its own flag exercising the right of free and innocent passage on the high seas and in international waters.

Interference, by armed force, with ships of Israel flag exercising free and innocent passage in the Gulf of Aqaba and through the Straits of Tiran, will be regarded by Israel as an attack entitling it to exercise its inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter and to take all such measures as are necessary to ensure the free and innocent passage of its ships in the Gulf and in the Straits.

We make this announcement in accordance with the accepted principles of international law under which all States have an inherent right to use their forces to protect their ships and their rights against interference by armed force. My Government naturally hopes that this contingency will not occur.

In a public address on 20 February, President Eisenhower stated:

We should not assume that if Israel withdraws, Egypt will prevent Israeli shipping from using the Suez Canal or the Gulf of Aqaba.

This declaration has weighed heavily with my Government in determining its action today.

Israel is now prepared to withdraw its forces from the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran in the confidence that there will be continued freedom of navigation for international and Israeli shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba and through the Straits of Tiran.

We propose that a meeting be held immediately between the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Army and the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force in order to arrange for the United Nations to take over its responsibilities in the Sharm al-Shaikh area.

The Government of Israel announces that it is making a complete withdrawal from the Gaza strip in accordance with General Assembly resolution (I) of 2 February 1957 (A/RES/460). It makes this announcement on the following assumptions:

(a) That on its withdrawal the United Nations Forces will be deployed in Gaza and that the takeover of Gaza from the military and civilian control of Israel will be exclusively by the United Nations Emergency Force.

(b) It is further Israel's expectation that the United Nations will be the agency to be utilized for carrying out the functions enumerated by the Secretary-General, namely:

safeguarding life and property in the area by providing efficient and effective police protection; as will guarantee good civilian administration; as will assure maximum assistance to the United Nations refugee programme; and as will protect and foster the economic development of the territory and its people. (A/PV. 659, page 17)

(c) It is further Israel's expectation that the aforementioned responsibility of the United Nations in the administration of Gaza will be maintained for a transitory period from the takeover until there is a peace settlement, to be sought as rapidly as possible, or a definitive agreement on the future of the Gaza strip.

It is the position of Israel that if conditions are created in the Gaza strip which indicate a return to the conditions of deterioration which existed previously, Israel would reserve its freedom to act to defend its rights.

Accordingly, we propose that a meeting be held immediately between the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defence Army and the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force in order to arrange for the United Nations to take over its responsibilities in the Gaza area.

For many weeks, amidst great difficulty, my Government has sought to ensure that on the withdrawal from the Sharm al-Shaikh and the Gaza area, circumstances would prevail which would prevent the likelihood of belligerent acts.

We record with gratitude the sympathetic efforts of many Governments and delegations to help bring about a situation which would end the insecurity prevailing for Israel and her neighbours these many years. In addition to the considerations to which I have referred, we place our trust in the vigilant resolve of the international community that Israel, equally with all Member States, enjoy its basic rights of freedom from fear of attack; freedom to sail the high seas and international waterways in peace; freedom to pursue its national destiny in tranquillity without the constant peril which has surrounded it in recent years.

In this reliance we are embarking upon the course which I have announced today.

May I now add these few words to the States in the Middle East area and, more specifically, to the neighbours of Israel:

We all come from an area which is a very ancient one. The hills and the valleys of the region have been witnesses to many wars and many conflicts. But that is not the only thing which characterizes that part of the world from which we come. It is also a part of the world which is of an ancient culture. It is that part of the world which has given to humanity three great religions. It is also that part of the world which has given a code of ethics to all humanity. In our countries, in the entire region, all our peoples are anxious for and in need of a higher standard of living, of great programmes of development and progress.

Can we, from now on—all of us—turn a new leaf and, instead of fighting with each other, can we all, united, fight poverty and disease and illiteracy? Is it possible for us to put all our efforts and all our energy into one single purpose, the betterment and progress and development of all our lands and all our peoples?

I can here pledge the Government and the people of Israel to do their part in this united effort. There is no limit to what we are prepared to contribute so that all of us, together, can live to see a day of happiness for our peoples and see again from that region a great contribution to peace and happiness for all humanity.

Mr. Lodge, speaking for the United States, welcomed the decision. He noted Mrs. Meir's "declarations", but these, he said, did not make withdrawal "conditional". Rather they were "restatements of what has already been said by the Secretary-General in his reports, or hopes and expectations which seem to us not unreasonable in the light of the prior actions of this Assembly". Other delegations expressed similar sentiments.

On the following Monday, March 4, Mrs. Meir informed the Assembly that . . . the Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defence Forces, General Moshe Dayan, met with the United Nations Commander, General Burns, to discuss measures necessary to carry out the withdrawal from both areas in accordance with the statement made by me on Friday last.

I am now happy to state that they have come to full agreement as to the technical details of the withdrawal and take-over.

A number of delegations welcomed the further Israeli statement, and—while stressing that withdrawal must be unconditional—pointed to the necessity of solving problems which would arise out of that withdrawal. The United Kingdom representative expressed this general thought in a few words: "... the

relationship between Israel's withdrawal and the creation of conditions which would stabilize the situation in that most sensitive part of the world, and promote the prospects of a permanent settlement there, is not a simple one". He and other speakers after him went on to examine the problems of navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba and the situation that would obtain in the Gaza strip. Mr. Pearson explained the Canadian views on these matters:

Our meeting last Friday and the statement from the representative of Israel which we have heard this afternoon, mark, I hope, the turning point in the crisis which has been facing this Assembly for many weeks. The dangers and the risks, which were inherent in the continued occupation of non-Israeli territory by the armed forces of Israel, should now disappear, provided the Israeli withdrawal is followed by appropriate United Nations action. It was with the full recognition of these dangers that Canada joined others in this Assembly in efforts to bring about complete withdrawal of Israel from those areas, but in circumstances that would avoid and not provide the seeds for future conflict.

We warmly welcome Israel's decision as a right and a wise one, and as showing a sense of international responsibility. We feel that certain assumptions and expectations that Israel has mentioned in connection with the completion of her withdrawal are reasonable ones, as we understand them.

As the Assembly is aware, my delegation has, as have many other delegations, made its own assumptions in speaking about arrangements which we believe should follow immediately upon—not before, but immediately upon—withdrawal. We did not, and we do not now, regard these arrangements as conditions governing or prior to the withdrawal. We felt, however, that it was important to come to some prior understanding about them, so that immediately after withdrawal they might be put into force and thereby help to create conditions in the area which would prevent a return to the deplorable conditions which existed before the armed intervention of 29 October and which themselves were largely responsible for that action.

Every Member of the Assembly, including Israel, has a right to assume that the United Nations will take some positive, fair and constructive action to this end. Our own view on the necessity for such action has been given in the statement which I made in the Assembly on 26 February and on earlier occasions, so I can be brief this afternoon.

Concerning the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran, I suggested then that there should be no interference with innocent passage through those waters, nor the assertion of any claim to belligerent rights there. I was not suggesting, and I am not now suggesting, that legal rights in those waters should be determined by this Assembly in any particular way, or that this determination, which would have to be made by a legal body, should be prejudiced by us. I do not conceive it to be the function of this Assembly to decide legal questions. What I do suggest, however, is that in order to maintain a situation of peace and quiet, in order to minimize the chance of a new outbreak of fighting, the Assembly should recommend, and the parties should agree, as a political and not a legal act, that there should be no interference with the innocent passage of ships through the waters concerned. That would be one way of bringing about an improved situation in that area.

Does any Member of this Assembly believe that interference with such innocent passage will not provoke conflict, and thereby threaten the peace of the area? Is it not then our duty to do what we can to avoid such a result? If we feel that way, then, in my view, we do not discharge that duty merely by coming to certain conclusions regarding the international legal aspects of the question which remain to be determined.

So far as the use of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Gulf of Aqaba area is concerned, I believe it is common ground in this Assembly that UNEF should, immediately after the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces, move into the area to secure and supervise the cease-fire and the withdrawal. This does not mean, in our view, that UNEF would occupy Sharm al-Shaikh indefinitely, nor even until there had been some formal agreement or decision about navigation in the Gulf and in the Straits. But it does mean, as we see it, that upon the withdrawal of Israeli forces there would be such arrangements for the deployment of UNEF at that point and for the time being

as may be necessary to maintain a cease-fire situation. We also agree that before any withdrawal of UNEF from this position, the question should be referred to the Advisory Committee on UNEF, which, after all, is an agency of this Assembly.

What I am talking about is, again, the maintenance of peaceful conditions—not the solution of controversial questions, legal or political. There are similar considerations which govern our own attitude towards the situation in the Gaza strip.

We agree that arrangements for the withdrawal of Israel should be made between the Commander of UNEF and the Chief of Staff of the Israel armed forces, and, for that purpose, we welcome the announcement that a meeting between these officers has already been held. We also agree with the Secretary-General and with other delegations that, in view of the special problems and complexities of the Gaza area and in view of the long-standing major responsibilities of the United Nations there for the assistance of Arab refugees, special and helpful arrangements could be made, involving the United Nations and some of its subsidiary bodies, to facilitate an effective replacement of the present administration in the 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, a legal position which we admit Egypt has—is, first, that UNEF should move into the Gaza strip immediately upon the withdrawal of Israel's armed forces and, secondly, that the United Nations 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 United Nations taking its full share of responsibility for security, stability and development in the Gaza strip? Surely no sincere or unprejudiced person is going to allege that the United Nations Emergency Force, with its present composition and authority, is an agent or could become an agent of colonialism or imperialism—nor could this allegation be made about UNRWA or any other United Nations Agency in the area. United Nations 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 that these ideas, which have been covered by previous General Assembly resolutions or have been suggested in reports of the Secretary-General, should immediately on the withdrawal of Israel forces be converted into concrete arrangements and that the Secretary-General should take steps to that end, with our full support—and, if he later requires it, with our endorsement. It was the view of my own delegation—and I know that other delegations have shared this view—that the Secretary-General should be requested to do these things by a resolution of this Assembly. It is the view of others that the Secretary-General has the necessary authority under existing resolutions and reports. We accept that view and agree that, if there is goodwill and a desire to make firm and constructive arrangements on all sides, no difficulty should arise. We have, however, as we see it, an obligation—not so much to Israel, but to ourselves as Members of the United Nations—to see that, immediately after withdrawal, some action is taken on the lines indicated last Friday by the United States representative and today by many other representatives. If other delegations agree, as many have already agreed, that this should be done, then that should give us the necessary assurance not only that the United Nations has succeeded in bringing about a cease fire and a withdrawal of forces, but that the United Nations 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.

We have made progress in the last few days towards that objective. Perhaps in a day or two we may have even greater reason for hope, if the Secretary-General could report to us on the completion of the withdrawal of Israel forces and on related matters. We have, then, made progress—encouraging progress—in the solution of this problem. But much remains to be done, and goodwill and understanding will have to be shown by all of us before we can be confident that a final result will be achieved which will bring peace and security to this troubled part of the world.

On March 8 the Assembly adjourned provisionally. Before doing so it received the report of the Secretary-General concerning the resolutions of February 2 (A/3568). In this the immediate situation<sup>(1)</sup> was explained.

1. The General Assembly, on 2 February 1957, adopted a resolution (A/RES/460) in which, after recalling its previous resolutions on the same subject, the Assembly called upon Israel to complete its withdrawal behind the Armistice Demarcation Line without further delay.

2. The Foreign Minister of Israel, on 1 March, announced in the General Assembly the decision of the Government of Israel to act in compliance with the request in this resolution. The same day the Secretary-General instructed the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force, as a matter of the utmost urgency, to arrange for a meeting with the Israel Commander-in-Chief, in order to agree with him on arrangements for the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Israel in accordance with the decision of the General Assembly.

3. On 4 March, the Foreign Minister of Israel confirmed to the General Assembly the Government of Israel's declaration of 1 March. The same day the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force met at Lydda with the Israel Commander-in-Chief. Technical arrangements were agreed upon for the withdrawal of Israel and the entry of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Gaza strip during the hours of curfew on the night of 6/7 March. Arrangements were made for a similar take-over of the Sharm al-Shaik area on 8 March.

4. On 6 March, General Burns reported that the United Nations Emergency Force troops are now in position in all camps and centres of population in Gaza strip". At that stage the operation had been carried out according to plan and without incidents. At 0400 GMT 7 March all Israelis had withdrawn from the Gaza strip with the exception of an Israel troop unit at Rafah camp. By agreement, that last Israel element was to be withdrawn by 1600 GMT 8 March. Full withdrawal from the Sharm al-Shaik area would be effected by the same time.

5. On 7 March, the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force notified the population of Gaza that "the United Nations Emergency Force, acting in fulfilment of its functions as determined by the General Assembly of the United Nations with the consent of the Government of Egypt, is being deployed in this area for the purpose of maintaining quiet during and after the withdrawal of the Israel defence forces. Until further arrangements are made, the United Nations Emergency Force has assumed responsibility for civil affairs in the Gaza strip . . . UNRWA will continue to carry out its responsibility and will continue to provide food and other services as in the past. UNEF and UNRWA will do their best to relieve pressing needs which may arise from the present situation."

6. The Secretary-General, thus, is now in a position to report full compliance with General Assembly resolution I of 2 February 1957 (A/RES/460).

## II

7. On 2 February, the General Assembly adopted a second resolution (A/RES/461) "recognizing that withdrawal by Israel must be followed by action which would assure progress towards the creation of peaceful conditions" in the area. Under the terms of this resolution, the completion of withdrawal puts its operative paragraphs into full effect.

8. In the resolution on action to follow a withdrawal, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the parties concerned, to carry out measures referred to in the resolution and to report as appropriate to the General Assembly. The Secretary-General will now devote his attention to this task. The stand of the General Assembly in the resolution is to be interpreted in the light of the report of the Secretary-General of 24 January (A/3512), which the Assembly noted "with appreciation".

<sup>1</sup> During the Session the Secretary-General gave later information. All Israeli troops had left the Gaza Strip, Sharm al-Shaik, and Tiran Island. Some Israeli vehicles, together with mechanics and dock personnel, awaited evacuation by sea. UNEF troops entered Sharm al-Shaik on March 8.

9. Specifically, the General Assembly called upon the Governments of Egypt and Israel scrupulously to observe the provisions of the General Armistice Agreement between Egypt and Israel of 24 February 1949 and stated that it considered that, after full withdrawal of Israel from the Sharm al-Shaik and Gaza areas, the scrupulous maintenance of the Armistice Agreement "requires a placing of the United Nations Emergency Force on the Egypt-Israel Armistice Demarcation Line".

10. The Assembly further stated that it considered that the maintenance of the Armistice Agreement requires the implementation of "other measures as proposed in the Secretary-General's report", with due regard to the considerations set out therein, with a view to assist in achieving situations conducive to the maintenance of peaceful conditions in the area. This statement, as it was formulated, read together with the request to the Secretary-General to consult with the parties, indicates that the General Assembly wished to leave the choice of these "other measures" to be decided in the light of further study and consultations.

### III

11. Arrangements made by the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force provided for an initial take-over in Gaza by the Force. This was in accordance with the statement of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on 22 February, that "the take-over of Gaza from the military and civilian control of Israel . . . in the first instance would be exclusively by UNEF". Instructions from the Secretary-General to the Commander of the United Nations Emergency Force reflected the position thus reported to the General Assembly. The notification by the Commander quoted in section I above indicates the basis for this initial take-over as well as its extent. The same statement indicates the importance of the role that UNRWA can play in the initial take-over.

12. In accordance with decisions of the General Assembly, UNRWA has important functions in relation to the refugees in Gaza, which constitute the major part of the population of the area. Because of these normal functions and of the additional contributions which that agency can make in aiding the non-refugee population, UNRWA is of essential assistance to the United Nations Emergency Force in its present operation. Therefore, and on the assumption that this course is in accordance with the General Assembly's wishes, the Director of UNRWA has agreed with the Secretary-General in this phase of the development to extend its immediate assistance beyond its normal functions. This would be done in fields which are related to those functions and in which a sharing of responsibilities devolving on the United Nations Emergency Force at the initial take-over seems indicated. The Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation for this assistance, of which he feels he can avail himself within the terms established for the United Nations Emergency Force as they have to be applied in the present phase of its activities. To the extent that UNRWA in this context is incurring additional costs, the reason for which is within the sphere of the responsibilities of the United Nations Emergency Force, a question of compensation will arise for later consideration.

13. The United Nations may also incur other additional costs than those caused by the assistance rendered by UNRWA. The Emergency Force may be in need of expert advice that can properly be provided by the Secretariat. If members of the Secretariat are taken over by the United Nations Emergency Force on a secondment basis, the cost obviously will be finally provided for as UNEF expenditures under the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. In other cases costs should be carried by the Secretariat in the normal way.

14. The Secretary-General finally wishes to inform the General Assembly that arrangements will be made through which, without any change of the legal structure or status of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, functions of UNTSO in the Gaza area will be placed under the operational control of the Force. A close co-operation between UNTSO and UNEF will be maintained.

In the course of a short discussion of the report, the Canadian representative said:

At our last meeting on this subject, Mr. Pearson, Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, expressed the hope that we had reached the turning point in the crisis which

has been facing this Assembly for so many weeks. Today I am glad to be able to welcome the Secretary-General's report (A/3568) which, in its first part, records the full compliance by Israel with General Assembly resolution I of 2 February 1957. Mr. Pearson has already expressed in this Assembly our satisfaction with Israel's decision to follow this wise and responsible course.

Part II of the Secretary-General's report points out that, with the withdrawal of Israel from Sharm al-Shaik and the Gaza strip, the second resolution adopted by the Assembly on 2 February becomes operative. In view of statements which the Canadian Delegation has made earlier in the course of the Assembly debate on this subject, I need hardly re-emphasize the support with which the Canadian Delegation welcomes this part of the report. We have consistently urged that withdrawal should immediately be followed by the implementation of measures proposed in the Secretary-General's reports and particularly in his report of 24 January (A/3512). We believe that those constructive measures will help to achieve the conditions of peace and security which are so necessary if we are not to return to the very unsatisfactory situation which existed in the area prior to the fighting last November.

We believe that the essential elements of the arrangements for securing and supervising the cease-fire and withdrawal will be the interposition of the UNEF between the armed forces of the opposing sides. The Canadian position in this regard is too well known to require detailed repetition. I need only refer to remarks made by my Foreign Minister in previous debates about the deployment of UNEF on the Armistice line. We still believe that after the withdrawal of Israel there is a need for a scrupulous observance of the Armistice Agreement of 1949 and for the deployment of the UNEF to assist in the achievement of that end. We have in mind in particular that the Force should assist in preventing incursions, raids and retaliatory attacks from either direction across the demarcation line.

Part III of the Secretary-General's report speaks about arrangements for the initial take-over in Gaza by UNEF and about the assistance which the Force and UNRWA will extend in the civilian administration of the Gaza strip. We recognize that these functions will be complex and difficult. They will add greatly to the responsibilities of the Secretary-General, the Commander of UNEF and the Director of UNRWA. We urge that all Governments concerned should co-operate fully with the various United Nations agencies in order to ensure that the arrangements for take-over proceed smoothly. Arrangements like this were envisaged in the programme which Mr. Pearson suggested to the Assembly on 26 February and we hope they will have the fullest support of the Assembly.

I should not like to close these brief remarks without some reference to the future. We all know that in the efforts to bring about the complete withdrawal of Israel the resources of the Assembly have been severely taxed. We can rightly sigh with relief today because this difficult phase is past, at least as far as the Assembly is concerned. In our relief at this time, however, we should not forget our continuing responsibility for ensuring that events in the areas concerned may move forward. Conditions must not be allowed to slide back into the unhealthy situation which led to the explosion and fighting last autumn. We earnestly hope that today marks the beginning of constructive development and we believe the Secretary-General's reports, and in particular this latest one, lay the groundwork for progress. Progress will not be easy, however, and it should not be assumed. That is why we have a continuing responsibility to see that progress is made.

As the Canadian Delegation has frequently suggested during this crisis, real progress can only be made when parties to the dispute have made up their minds to settle their differences. We are not suggesting that this can be an easy or a sudden development. We recognize the deep apprehension among the Arab States, derived primarily from the displacement of Arab peoples when Israel was established. We are conscious, too, of the anxiety and frustration in Israel, which sees itself as being surrounded by hostile neighbours. We have suggested before in this Assembly that the time may have come, however, for the Arab States to accept the fact of Israel's existence and to give fresh consideration to what their relations should be with the new State. In return for this recognition, however, the Arab nations are entitled to assurances that Israel has no expansionist ambitions. This is not likely to result in the use of force or the threat of force as a means of achieving national aims.

Although these observations may be regarded as an oversimplification of what we all recognize as a very complex question, I suggest that they are not altogether inappropriate at this time, when the Assembly is taking note of compliance with resolutions on withdrawal and of constructive measures which we all hope will bring about a new and improved atmosphere in that sorely troubled area.

The Assembly concluded this phase of the discussion of Item 66 with a warm expression of thanks by Mr. Fawzi to the President of the Assembly, the Secretary-General, and the Secretariat for their "tireless and selfless efforts" during the past months, and to the Members of the United Nations for their understanding and support.

Thus the "turning-point" which had been sought had apparently been reached: the cease-fire had now been followed by the complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Egypt and of Israeli forces from the Gaza strip. But a turning-point is not the end of a journey, and a difficult road still lay ahead. Indeed, he would have been a hardy man who admitted no possibility of a return to hostilities.

The risks inherent in the situation were recognized by the Assembly in its action of adopting a resolution providing for the re-convening of the Assembly, if necessary, to consider either of two critical areas, of which the Middle East was one.

It was suggested early in this paper that those elements—withdrawal, the UNEF, and the Suez Canal—were interrelated. Through the various discussions of "understandings" and "assumptions" the last two kept appearing as the major factors. The Emergency Force had in March a total strength of about 6,000. Of this total Canada had already supplied about 800 army and 300 RCAF personnel, and was in the process of meeting a United Nations request for a reconnaissance unit of 105 officers and men.<sup>(1)</sup> The Force, which had gained experience and prestige, was proving its capacity for the role assigned to it by the General Assembly. The question that remained was exactly how that role was to be developed. A unit had moved into Sharm al-Shaikh as the Israeli forces withdrew. How long would it stay there, and what bearing would its presence have on freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran? A second question arose for UNEF in the Gaza strip. From the Israeli point of view the best arrangement would be for UNEF to be made responsible both for administration and for security; especially it must be in a position to prevent raids into Israel. It had been argued both by the Secretary-General and some delegations—including the Canadian Delegation—that it should be stationed on both sides of the demarcation line; that, however, had never been accepted by the Government of Israel. Following the Israeli withdrawal, the United Nations Commander announced that the Force was assuming responsibility for civil affairs in Gaza, acting on instruction from the Secretary-General that the take-over of civilian and military control would be "exclusively by the United Nations Emergency Force in the first instance". However, it was announced in Cairo on March 11 that an administrative Governor, General Hassan Abdel Latif had been appointed for the Gaza strip, and on March 14 the Governor arrived in Gaza. Thus the achievement of a satisfactory correlation between the Egyptian administration and UNEF became necessary.

<sup>(1)</sup> Reports of delays in this unit and additional ordnance personnel reaching Egypt gave rise to the apprehension that the Egyptian Government had made objections. Such, however, was apparently not the case, and by March 20 the units were in Egypt.

Meanwhile the clearance of the Suez Canal had been proceeding somewhat faster than General Wheeler had anticipated. Before mid-March the waterway was cleared for small vessels, and it was expected that the last physical obstacles to resumption of full normal traffic would be removed by the middle of April. No general financing programme for the clearance operation had been arranged. Loans had been made by a number of countries, including \$1 million from Canada; and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development had agreed to act as fiscal agent for the United Nations, receiving, holding, and disbursing sums lent by Governments. The loans, however, were agreed to be only interim financing, to be repaid when a general financial programme had been evolved.

Thus the salvage operation was going well, and funds were available for immediate cash requirements; but the outstanding questions of the previous autumn were still unanswered. One of them was whether Israeli shipping would be permitted to use the Canal when it was open for traffic. The other was really a series of questions arising out of nationalization, and the proposals that had followed it. The most significant point immediately at issue was to what authority tolls should be paid. Written suggestions covering this and other aspects of provisional operating arrangements under which Canal traffic might be resumed were sent in February by four of the leading user states—France, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States—through the Secretary-General to the Government of Egypt. The central feature of these proposals was that either the International Bank or the United Nations should receive Canal tolls, half of which should be paid over immediately to Egypt for operating expenses of the Canal and the remainder be held pending determination of its disbursement under a definitive Suez settlement. No answer had been reported by the time that the General Assembly adjourned.

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