

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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Middle East

Statement by the Chairman of the Canadian Delegation, Mr. L.B. Pearson, to the Second Meeting of the Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Saturday, November 3, 1956.

The immediate purpose of our meeting tonight is to bring about as soon as possible a cease-fire and a withdrawal of forces, in the area which we are considering, from contact and from conflict with each other. Our longer-range purpose, which has already been referred to tonight and which may ultimately, in its implications, be even more important, is to find solutions for the problems which, because we have left them unsolved over the years, have finally exploded into this fighting and conflict.

In regard to this longer-range purpose, important resolutions have been submitted this evening by the United States delegation. We value this initiative, and our delegation will give the resolutions the examination which their importance deserves and will, I hope, make its own detailed comments concerning them later.

So far as the first and immediate purpose is concerned, a short time ago the Assembly passed, by a very large majority, a resolution which is now a recommendation of the United Nations General Assembly. And so we must ask ourselves how the United Nations can assist in securing compliance with the terms of that resolution from those who are most immediately concerned and whose compliance is essential if that resolution is to be carried out.

How can we get from them the support and co-operation which is required, and how can we do this quickly?

The representative of India has just read to us, on behalf of a number of delegations, a very important resolution which deals with this matter. In operative paragraphs 2 and 3 of that resolution, certain specific proposals are made with a view to setting up machinery to facilitate compliance with the resolution.

I ask myself the question whether that machinery is adequate for the complicated and difficult task which is before us. I am not in any way opposing this resolution which we have just heard read. I appreciate its importance and the spirit in which it has been put forward. But I do suggest that the Secretary-General be given another and supplementary -- not conflicting, but supplementary -- responsibility: to work out at once a plan for an international force to bring about and supervise the cease-fire visualized in the Assembly resolution which has already been passed.

For that purpose my delegation would like to submit to the Assembly a very short draft resolution which I venture to read at this time. It is as follows:

"The General Assembly, bearing in mind the urgent necessity of facilitating compliance with the Resolution (A/3256) of November 2, requests, as a matter of priority, the Secretary-General to submit to it within forty-eight hours a plan for the setting up, with the consent of the nations concerned, of an emergency international United Nations force to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities in accordance with the terms of the above resolution".

I would assume that during this short period the Secretary-General would get into touch with, and endeavour to secure co-operation in the carrying out of the earlier resolution from, the parties immediately concerned -- whose co-operation, I venture to repeat, is essential -- as well as endeavouring to secure help and co-operation from any others whom he thinks might assist him in his vitally important task.

This draft resolution which I have just read out, and which will be circulated shortly, has an added purpose of facilitating and making effective compliance with the resolution which we have already passed on the part of those whose compliance is absolutely essential.

It has also the purpose of providing for international supervision of that compliance through the United Nations, and, finally, it has as its purpose the bringing to an end of the fighting and bloodshed at once, even while the Secretary-General is examining this question and reporting back in forty-eight hours.

If this draft resolution commended itself to the General Assembly -- and I suggest that it is not in conflict with the draft resolution which has just been read to us by our Indian colleague -- and if it were accepted and accepted quickly the Secretary-General could at once begin the important task which the draft resolution gives him.

I apologize for adding to his burdens in this way, because they have already been added to in the immediately preceding draft resolution, but we know that he can carry burdens of this kind both unselfishly and efficiently.

Meanwhile, during this period of forty-eight hours we can get on with our consideration of and decision on the United States draft resolution and other draft resolutions before the General Assembly which deal with this grave and dangerous situation which confronts us, both in relation to its immediate as well as its wider and perhaps even more far-reaching aspects.