

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

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### THE MIDDLE EAST

Statement delivered by Mr. L.B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, in the plenary session of the United Nations General Assembly Friday, November 23.

I do not propose to follow the representative of the USSR, who has preceded me, into the tangled underbrush of propaganda, exaggeration and fabrication into which he has just led the General Assembly. These speeches ceased to impress the great majority of the members of the Assembly many years ago, though they no doubt have some value to those who make them. They constitute a kind of verbal aggression against the truth against which, I am afraid, we shall never be able to bring about a cease-fire. But they have nothing to do with finding a solution to the serious problems which are facing us. Quite the contrary.

There are two draft resolutions before the Assembly, one of which my delegation has the honour to sponsor, along with the delegations of Colombia, India, Norway, the United States and Yugoslavia (A/3386). Before saying a few words about that draft resolution I should like to comment on the draft resolution contained in document A/3385, which deals with compliance with previous resolutions which have been passed by the Assembly on the question of withdrawal of forces from Egypt.

It seems to me that this draft resolution, at the present time - and I emphasize "at the present time"--is unnecessary because steps are being taken to bring about the withdrawal in question. Indeed, that withdrawal has begun; we believe that it will soon be completed, and we expect that to be done. We believe also that one way of expediting that process which has begun would be to do our work here quickly and satisfactorily in setting up a United Nations force, with functions which are agreed on, under the authority of the United Nations and of the United Nations only--a matter which is dealt with in the second draft resolution, which I hope will receive, and very quickly receive the endorsement of the General Assembly.

The withdrawal, as we see it, has begun. Now resolutions reiterating to previous resolutions are, I think, useful and often necessary when the original resolution of the Assembly has been treated with contempt and has been defied, as is the case with the United Nations resolution on Hungary.

But when a resolution deals with a matter on which action has begun in compliance with a former resolution, and when that compliance is under United Nations supervision, then I do not think, myself, that reference to the former resolution is positively helpful in achieving the objective which we have in mind. Indeed, it often merely takes up the time of the Assembly which, as in this case, could be surely used for the task of bringing about a settlement, the creation of an atmosphere within which progress could be made to such a settlement, and expediting the solution of practical problems, such as the clearing of the Suez Canal and the maintenance there of freedom and security for navigation for all countries.

It seems to me that the draft resolution which we have the honour to sponsor with other delegations (A/3386) is designed for this purpose. It "notes with approval the contents of the aide-memoire on the basis for the presence and functioning of the United Nations Emergency Force in Egypt, as annexed to the report of the Secretary-General"--and I hope that we can give that approval to the aide-memoire. It is important, however, in giving that approval, to know what we are approving.

What are the functions of this United Nations Emergency Force? Those functions and the task--and it is a very difficult task indeed which confronts the Force--have been laid down by resolutions of the General Assembly and they are found also in the Secretary-General's second and final report, which has been approved by the Assembly. The basic resolution for these purposes is that which we adopted on November 4-5 (A/RES/394) which states that the function of this Force is "to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities in accordance with all"--and I emphasize the word "all"--"the terms of the resolution of the General Assembly of November 2" (A/RES/390). In that latter resolution, as representatives will remember, provision is made for a cease-fire, for a prompt withdrawal of forces, and also--and this is not the time to forget this provision--"that all member states refrain from introducing military goods in the area of hostilities and in general refrain from any acts which would delay or prevent the implementation of the present resolution". And in Para. 4 of that resolution we have this provision, namely, that upon a cease-fire, steps are to be taken to reopen the Suez Canal and restore secure freedom of navigation.

Later, by Resolution A/RES/395 of November 7, the Assembly approved certain principles for the organization and functioning of the United Nations Emergency Force and those principles were stated in certain paragraph of the Secretary-General's report (A/3302) which was attached to the resolution.

There is very strong, enthusiastic support in my country for this force--but only as a United Nations force, under United Nations control, and as an effective and organized force which can do the job that has been given to it and which, if it can do that job, may be the beginning of something bigger and more permanent in the history of our organization: something which we have talked about at United Nations meetings for many years,

the organization of the peace through international action. Therefore, it is important that this force should be so constituted and so organized that it will be able to do the work that it has been given to do and thereby set a precedent for the future.

It is also important that the principles on which the Force is to operate are sound. What are these principles? They have been laid down for us in the Secretary-General's report. The Force must be fully independent, in regard to its functions and its composition, of the political situation of any single member. The United Nations alone controls it and is responsible for it.

I agree, of course, that the Force--I am not talking about individual elements in the Force, but of the Force as such--in the circumstances and on the basis of which it was set up, could not operate in the territory of a country without the consent of that country. That is why we are happy that Egypt has given that consent in principle and I am sure that we all agree that, in giving that consent to the constructive and helpful move, no infringement of sovereignty is involved. It is rather an example of using national sovereignty to bring about peace and security and a political settlement through United Nations action.

The control, then, of this Force is in the hands of the United Nations and must remain there. Otherwise it would not be a United Nations force but it would be merely a collection of national forces, each under the control of its own Government and serving in another country with the consent of and under conditions laid down by that country. That, I am sure, would be unacceptable to most of the Governments in this Assembly.

Having said that, however, I do agree that the Secretary-General should certainly consult with the Government of the country in which the Force is serving, on all matters of any importance that affect it; also, as we understand it, the force is to remain in the area until its task is completed, and that would surely be for the determination of the United Nations itself. It operates, according to the principles as we understand them, where it is necessary to operate in order to accomplish its task, certainly between the opposing powers to prevent conflict from recurring. As the Secretary-General has said in this report; its functions can be assumed to cover an area extending roughly from the Suez Canal to the armistice demarcation lines, and in that area to facilitate and aid the establishment and securing of peaceful conditions as an indispensable prerequisite to a just and agreed political settlement.

Surely we must not for one moment lose sight of that objective. It seems to me that it is high time that we began the process of achieving it through United Nations action, because at best the achievement is going to be a long and difficult undertaking.

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

The draft resolution to which I am referring, in paragraph 2, "notes with approval the progress so far made by the Secretary-General in connection with arrangements for clearing the Suez Canal as set forth in his report; (A/3386). We cannot make much more progress unless we pass this draft resolution. Then there is paragraph 3, which is as follows:

"Authorizes the Secretary-General to proceed with the exploration of practical arrangements and the negotiation of agreements so that the clearing operations may speedily and effectively be undertaken". That paragraph is, of course, without prejudice to the allocation of costs and, of course, it is without prejudice to the normal procedures of the United Nations in dealing with expenditures.

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

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

Text of statement issued by the Chairman of the Canadian Delegation to the 11th United Nations General Assembly, Mr. L. B. Pearson, on Saturday, November 24 in New York, on an Asian-African resolution calling on France, Israel and the United Kingdom immediately to withdraw their forces from Egypt.

The Canadian Delegation abstained on this resolution for the following reasons:

- (1) Although we support the principle of complete withdrawal of forces from Egyptian territory and have expressed that

support by our vote on previous resolutions nevertheless we do not think that this resolution will assist in achieving this objective at this time. In the words of the United States delegate, "We do not think it necessary".

- (2) We feel that this resolution tends unfairly - and in a way which will be generously exploited - to assimilate the position of the United Kingdom, France and Israel in regard to compliance with resolutions of this Assembly on withdrawal with that of Soviet Russia in regard to our resolutions of withdrawal of troops from Hungary.
- (3) We are impressed by the fact that - in contrast with Hungary - withdrawal has already begun and that therefore it should be possible at once to begin under United Nations auspices the essential practical work of clearing the canal,

We hope and expect that withdrawal will be completed by the time United Nations force is in a position to function effectively in Egypt for the purposes for which it was set up.

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