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Text of statement by Foreign Minister
S. Lloyd in the House of Commons
(press clipping, The New York Times)

Text of the Statement by Lloyd

LONDON, Dec. 3 (Reuters)—Following is the text of a statement in the House of Commons today by Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd:

Last Thursday I was able to give the House only an interim account of my visit to the United Nations. I promised to speak more fully today when our conversations with the French Government had been completed.

Since Thursday I have also been able to get further clarifications of the position from New York and we have been in touch with the Commonwealth Governments.

The British Government and the French Government have now taken certain decisions. We are in complete agreement about them.

These decisions follow upon the two resolutions passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on Nov. 24.

The first resolution called for the withdrawal of the Anglo-French forces forthwith.

But as I told the House, Mr. [Henry] Cabot Lodge, the representative of the United States, interpreted "forthwith" to mean a phased withdrawal. That was exactly the expression which we had used ourselves.

The Second Revolution

The second resolution was equally important. It called for the early clearance of the canal and the restoration of its use to international shipping, and entrusted the Secretary General with the task of making the necessary arrangements.

Before commenting on these two resolutions I think it right to remind the House of the broad framework within which the events on the last few months must be considered. In view of the debate next Wednesday and Thursday, I believe that this reminder may be helpful.

'World-Wide Struggle'

For the last ten years we have been living with a world-wide struggle going on between communism and the free world. The introduction of nuclear weapons has made a global war unattractive to the aggressor.

The Soviet therefore has used the methods of political subversion, from within and military pressure from without.

The existence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has halted the direct advance of Russia across Europe to the sea.

But all the time there has been an open flank in the Middle East which Russia has been making a determined effort to turn. Certain factors have developed there to her advantage.

There have been hostilities smoldering between Israel and the Arab States and the United Nations has so far not been able to solve that problem at all.

The situation has been deteriorating rather than improving. At the same time, Colonel Nasser has come to power with his plans for the aggrandizement and the subjection to his domination of the material resources of the Arab countries.

The seizure of the Suez Canal was part of that design. The Arab-Israeli tension has afforded opportunity for Soviet mischief-making.

The large supply of Soviet arms to Colonel Nasser put him very much under Soviet influence.

Measure of Security

The Baghdad Pact gave a measure of security against direct Soviet penetration from the north, but the arming of Syria and Egypt was no doubt intended to turn its flank also.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The situation was deteriorating. It was one which sooner or later was likely to lead to war.

The only doubtful question was the scope or extent of that war. A general conflagration in the Middle East would have been disastrous for many countries, not least our own.

It was against that background that on Oct. 29 major hostilities began between Israel and Egypt.

The French and British governments decided immediately to intervene. We are quite sure, that, by our timely action, we not only rapidly halted local hostilities, but forestalled the development of a general war throughout the whole Middle East and perhaps far beyond.

I am sure that the whole house would like to pay tribute to the conduct of the fighting services who performed their task so skilfully and at the same time took great care to minimize casualties and damage. As soon as the two parties agreed to a cease-fire we also gave orders to cease our military action.

Bar to New Fighting

Our second purpose was to interpose a force to prevent the resumption of fighting.

That is why we made the request to station detachments in Port Said, Ismailia and Suez for a temporary period. The Prime Minister made it clear at the time that this would only be for a temporary period.

Then on Nov. 1 he stated that we should be glad if the United Nations would take over the physical task of preserving peace.

The conception of an international force came into being and gained rapid support. We believe that the character and composition of the force will shortly make it capable of carrying out these obligations.

I gave details of the build-up last Thursday. I will not repeat them. We have to remember that the strength of the force depends not only on its actual size but on the sanction that lies behind it.

It is perhaps worth recalling that the position in Berlin has been held for ten years by a small force because be-

hind it lay the whole organized strength of the Atlantic alliance.

So far as the composition of the United Nations Emergency Force is concerned, the Secretary General has made it clear that he decides.

With regard to its functions, these are in accordance with the Assembly resolutions of the 2d, 5th and 7th of November. The Secretary General has also made it clear that it is for him and the Assembly to decide when its tasks have been discharged.

Another vitally important result of our actions has been that the Russian designs have been exposed and dislocated. It is hoped that the free world will use the breathing space that we have provided to frustrate them altogether.

But there are serious dangers ahead in the Middle East. Although Russia has suffered a reverse, she is seeking to tighten her grip upon Syria to restore her position.

I believe that the whole free world will welcome the statement by President Eisenhower warning the Soviet Union of the dangers of intervention in the area of the Baghdad Pact powers.

Violations Enjoined

We must also be watchful to see that Russia does not violate the Assembly resolution of Nov. 2 enjoining a ban on the delivery of military goods to the area of hostilities.

Two important objectives have, therefore, been achieved: The war has been stopped and an international force has been put into position to prevent its resumption.

There are, however, other important matters to which I must refer. The first and most urgent need for us and the whole world is that the canal should be reopened and the freedom of navigation restored. Under the resolution to which I have already referred, these duties have been clearly placed upon and accepted by the United Nations.

The Secretary General has entrusted executive responsibility to a team which includes men of the very highest caliber and world-wide reputation, such as Mr. [John J.] McCloy and General [Raymond A.] Wheeler.

This shows that technical considerations have been uppermost in his mind.

We have made it clear for our part that all the resources which we have been able to assemble will be made available to this team to be used as and how they may decide.

Speeding of Task Seen

I am satisfied from the discussions with the Secretary General that he will press his task with the utmost speed and that every effort will be made to proceed without delay with the clearance of obstructions below Port Said, using all available equipment found necessary by the United Nations authorities.

It is planned to proceed with the greatest possible dispatch with the survey and diving operations which are a necessary preliminary, and that the actual work of clearance will begin as soon as technically possible. In other words, I am satisfied from the discussions with the Secretary General and the assurances which I have received from him that he will press on with his task without delay and that work will begin as soon as technically possible and that its progress will not be dependent upon other considerations.

The French and British governments have come to the conclusion that the withdrawal of their forces in the Port Said area can now be carried out without delay.

They have instructed the allied Commander in Chief, Gen. [Sir Charles] Keightley, to seek agreement with the United Nations commander, Gen. [E. L. M.] Burns, on a timetable for the complete withdrawal taking account of the military and practical problems involved.

This timetable will be reported as quickly as possible to the Secretary General of the United Nations. Given good faith on all sides, it can be carried out in a short time.

In preparing this timetable, the allied Commander in Chief has been told to insure that proper regard should be had in the maintenance of public security in the area now under allied control.

The United Nations commander has been asked to make himself responsible for the safety of any French or British salvage resources left at the disposition of the United Nations salvage organization.

The Secretary General has accepted this responsibility.

In making a communication to the Secretary General to this effect, the two Governments have again drawn attention to the treatment of British and French nationals in Egypt.

Future of the Canal

Another matter of great importance is the long-term future of the canal. The Secretary General will promote as rapidly as possible negotiations on the basis of the following matters:

(a) The six requirements set out in the Security Council's resolution of Oct. 13.

(b) The conversations between the Secretary General and the foreign ministers of France, Egypt and myself in New York.

(c) The Secretary General's letter to the Egyptian foreign minister of Oct. 24, setting out a basis for the negotiation of a system to conform to the six principles and the Egyptian acceptance thereof of Nov. 2.

I believe we shall reach an agreement, providing adequate guarantees that the six requirements will be met.

Her Majesty's Government, of course, adhere to their view as expressed in the resolution voted on by the Security Council on Oct. 13 with regard to the eighteen-power proposals.

Lastly, there is the question of a long-term settlement of all the problems in the area.

I believe that our action has done a great deal to produce conditions in which progress can now be made.

Israel should withdraw from Egyptian territory. We have said this repeatedly.

Solution for Gaza

With regard to the Gaza Strip, it is our view that Israel should withdraw from that also and that the strip should be made a United Nations responsibility. I am sure that would be the best solution of a difficult problem.

A just settlement of the refugees is an essential condition of a final settlement, together with agreement about frontiers, water schemes and other matters.

All this, I know, has been said before, but at the present time we have the knowledge that there is being stationed in the area a substantial United Nations force charged with the duty of keeping the peace.

That, I am certain, will contribute to the final settlement, which is the prerequisite of stability in the area.

I claim, therefore, that we have stopped a local war. We have prevented it spreading.

The extent of Soviet penetration has been revealed. We have caused the United Nations to take action by the creation of an international force.

We have alerted the whole world to a situation of great peril. We have created conditions under which there can be hope of wider settlements.

Of course, there will be heavy costs to bear. But they would have been far greater if our action had not been taken.

It is now for the United Nations and its member states to see that this opportunity is turned to good account.