Middle East conflict - Lebanon. Third Emergency Special Session: Middle Eas...

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Third Emergency Special Session 1958 - Aug. 20

(verbatim record)

- Sir Claude Corea (Ceylon)
- Rahim (Yemen)
- Alemayehou (Ethiopia)
- Couve de Murville (France)
- Abdoh (Iran)

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UNITED NATIONS

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ENGLISH

Third Emergency Special Session

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 20 August 1958, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand)

Questions considered by the Security Council at its 838th meeting on 7 August 1958 (continued)

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58-19692

QUESTIONS CONSIDERED BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL AT ITS 838TH MEETING ON 7 AUGUST 1958 (continued)

(a) DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE USSR (A/3870 and Corr.1)

(b) COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/3876 and A/3877)

(c) DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY CANADA, COLOMBIA, DENMARK, LIBERIA, NORWAY, PANAMA AND PARAGUAY (A/3878)

Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon): Ever since the United Nations came into existence, the people of the world, faced with grave problems, have turned towards it in hope and in the belief that it is the surest and the only way to find suitable solutions. Today, in a grave crisis, we seek in this emergency special session such a solution. My delegation believes that this is the appropriate and perhaps the only forum where fruitful discussion leading to the settlement of a crisis, which undoubtedly could disturb the peace of the world, can be undertaken. We therefore hope and believe that the Member States assembled here will succeed. If we are to succeed we must view the situation realistically and courageously, and take whatever action we may deem necessary to secure a peaceful settlement. In order to achieve this end, we should be prepared to look at the problems of the situation objectively, and discarding self-interest as far as one could do so, attempt to find the right solution. This will be greatly facilitated if our approach is guided by those religious precepts which we hold dear, such for instance as the principle of good neighbourliness and by spiritual as opposed to purely mundane considerations. Spiritual and moral values should always be kept in the forefront and should play an important part in practical politics, so that precept and practice may be in accord. The situation before us is certainly grave and dangerous and the corresponding responsibility on us is therefore heavy. It is all the more so, as the Security Council has not been successful in finding a solution. We therefore cannot fail. We must not fail. My delegation is optimistic that with a right and sincere approach we shall find a solution acceptable to us all. We on our part shall endeavour in our humble way to contribute to a settlement which we hope will bring stability, economic prosperity and peace to the peoples of the Middle East and to the rest of the world.

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

We are aware and quite conscious of the fact that we are a small country. But there is one thing we would like to assure this Assembly and that is that we like to look at a problem objectively, to find out what is right and what is wrong, and adopt the course which we sincerely believe to be the right course, irrespective of whether our decision is pleasing to all countries or not. We wish, therefore, to be clearly understood that if we take a view on the present situation, it is a view which is animated by the desire to find the right course. This is sometimes, as my colleague of Burma observed the other day, inconvenient and sometimes difficult. But whatever the difficulties might be, and whatever the risk of being misunderstood might be, we would like to assure this Assembly that the decision which we take is a decision inspired by our desire to do what is the right thing.

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

With these ideas in mind we should like to offer a few brief comments on the important issue raised by the intervention of the armed forces of the United States in Lebanon and the intervention of the armed forces of the United Kingdom in Jordan. This is what we have met here in an emergency special session to consider. It is undoubtedly the most immediate matter we have to consider and solve. We have noted the statements made both by the United States and the United Kingdom explaining the reasons for their action and giving an undertaking that their forces would be withdrawn on the fulfilment of two conditions. We do not doubt the sincerity of the motives which impelled these two Governments to take the course of action they adopted. We have given our most earnest and careful consideration to the matter in its entirety and feel that we cannot agree with the action taken in all the circumstances of the case. It is quite clear to us that the action cannot be justified under Article 51 of the Charter, and it is a moot question whether it can even be justified under the United Nations resolutions of 1949 and 1950. It is important also to remember that at the time of the intervention the Security Council was seized of the question of Lebanon. In fact, the Security Council had taken action on complaints of subversive activities and massive intervention in Lebanon and it had sent to Lebanon a United Nations Observation Group. Some reports from the Observation Group were already before the Security Council. These reports contained no evidence of massive intervention. It is a question whether in these circumstances when the Security Council was actually seized of the problem there was any justification for military interference, even under the United Nations resolution of 1950. Moreover, it would appear that the intervention did not take place so much because of the subversive activities allegedly directed against Lebanon as because of the sudden events that took place in Iraq and the fear of repercussions as a result of that event in Jordan and Lebanon. In any case, the whole position as to the right of armed intervention is obscure and it is most desirable that the United Nations should have a study made of the considerations involved in armed interference outside the terms of Article 51. We and,I know,a large number of other countries too are disturbed by the intervention that has taken place. There is also a fear that, if the intervention in this case is justified, unpopular Governments in other places

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

might seek the assistance of friendly countries to intervene with armed force to support and maintain themselves in power against the wish of a majority of their people and thus deny to the people the elementary right of freedom, namely, of self-determination. This is a matter, therefore, of great importance and is one that should be carefully considered by the United Nations. I do not suggest that it should or could be undertaken at this session, which is an emergency one convened for a special purpose, but I do wish to raise the question here so that attention may be paid to it at the earliest possible date after this session is concluded. Moreover, we need not really go into the question at this stage because the intervention is now complete and can be regarded as a fait accompli. The troops are there in Lebanon and Jordan and the real question before us is the question of how best to get the troops out of the two countries. We have noted with great satisfaction the action of the United States in withdrawing some units of their forces in the Lebanon. We have no doubt that this withdrawal, even without reference to the conditions they had indicated earlier, is an indication of the sincerity of the Government of the United States of America. We hope that this action will be followed by further action until there is a complete withdrawal of troops and that likewise the United Kingdom will consider the complete withdrawal of their forces also at an early date. We do recognize that the withdrawal of the forces in Jordan could leave an immediate vacuum and create some degree of political instability. It is our view, however, that all the United Nations can do is to prevent aggression against any country from outside. The United Nations should not interfere in any way with the internal affairs of any country. Therefore we do accept the position that if the troops are to be withdrawn it will become necessary for the United Nations to take some kind of action to ensure as far as is possible that no outside interference will take place. For this reason it will be necessary immediately for this Assembly to call upon all Member States to take note of the fact that they have already committed themselves to the principle of mutual respect for the sovereignty of and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. It is our view that this principle should be reaffirmed. When that is done that would be, we think, a sufficient guarantee, as we hope that those countries who subscribe to

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

that principle will refrain at all times from action which will be contrary to their affirmation. Furthermore, it is necessary, as has been emphasized both by the Secretary-General and by those who have spoken before me, that suitable United Nations action, which does not extend to the sending of an armed force -- and I repeat the words "armed force" -- should be taken. It is the view of my delegation that if these two steps are taken at the present time they will meet the needs of the present situation, and it should be possible for the United States and the United Kingdom, satisfied that the purpose they themselves had in view had been achieved, to complete the withdrawal of their troops.

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

There are at present before us two draft resolutions. The difference between them appears to be a difference in approach. The draft resolution submitted by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recommends the withdrawal of armed forces and action by the United Nations, with both of which recommendations there would appear to be a very large measure of agreement. The more recent draft resolution submitted by Norway and some other Member States does not contain any language which refers to a request for the withdrawal of troops, an omission which makes it difficult for several countries to accept it. It no doubt refers to declarations made in letters submitted by the United States Secretary of State and the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary to you, Mr. President, but in these declarations the proposal to withdraw is made subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions. It would have been simpler and perhaps more satisfactory if there could have been something in the draft resolution which would tie up the question of withdrawal of troops with the other clauses of the draft resolution. In the light of the declarations in the letters I have referred to, it is somewhat difficult to understand why the draft resolution itself should not contain a clause relating to withdrawal on the fulfilment of the arrangements which the Secretary-General is to be asked to undertake. It appears, therefore, that there is only a very narrow gulf between those who feel that the Assembly, which has been convened in special session to deal with this matter, should make a positive recommendation in favour of withdrawal, and those who do not wish to make such a specific reference. Though the gulf is narrow, the difference is an important one.

There is a clause in the declarations to which I would like to refer at this point: "whenever as a result of the further action of the United Nations or otherwise their presence is no longer required". This appears to us to be somewhat vague, but if a meaning is to be given to this clause it could only be that the party to decide when the withdrawal is to take place is the party making the declaration. It would have been more satisfactory if the clause was more precisely related to the action taken by the United Nations.

However, the gulf being so narrow, goodwill and a little ingenuity should enable us to devise a formula which will meet both points of view, a formula which will be acceptable to both groups, allaying on the one hand the fears of many with regard to the intervention and maintenance of these troops, and on the

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

other hand recommending that the withdrawal be related to United Nations action and not carried out under compulsion by the Assembly. Towards this end, several delegations, including my own delegation, have been earnestly trying to formulate a draft resolution which might prove more acceptable to a larger number of Member States than the present Norwegian draft resolution. We have succeeded in producing a draft, which is now under further study. A set of amendments to the Norwegian draft resolution having the same aim is also under consideration. It may also be that countries more immediately concerned, such as the main Arab countries themselves, might take a hand in attempting to find a formula which would be generally acceptable.

The presence of these troops in these two countries is now a potential danger to peace. It is true that tension has somewhat eased for the time being, but the continued presence of these troops may be like a keg of gunpowder placed in an inflammable area where the smallest spark could touch off a big explosion. God grant it may not happen, but we would be prudent if we took early action to withdraw the troops.

I should like now to pass on to the consideration of another aspect, which is perhaps not of such urgency but is nevertheless of great importance. I refer to what I might call the long-term aspect of the situation in the Middle East as a whole. This aspect is very closely related to what has happened in Lebanon and Jordan. In fact, the situation in Lebanon and Jordan could not be effectively and fully dealt with by the immediate action we have just been discussing, unless some attempt is made to get to grips with this long-term problem. What I mean is that it is essential that an immediate start should be made to consider the various factors which would lead to political and economic stability in the whole region of the Middle East.

Undoubtedly there is a revolution going on in the minds of people there -- a revolution of expectancy it might be, but there has been going on a real Arab reawakening -- and as a result there has grown up a very potent force, which is usually referred to as Arab nationalism. It is unwise to ignore or fail to recognize what is a natural growth of human society, and what in the twentieth century is a known phenomenon in all parts of the world. It is not a new manifestation. Throughout history this phenomenon has existed in varying degrees of fervour. It was well known in Europe and it arose on the American continent.

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

It has returned to Asia and the Middle East and is now growing fast in Africa. It is a sentiment which has animated mankind from the dawn of history and is powerful and dynamic. Nationalism claims for a country the right to freedom and independence and the right to shape its destiny according to the genius of its people and to use the resources available to it for the betterment of its people. The Arab peoples too draw their inspiration from the sentiment: "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" -- words so dear to the hearts of the people of this great country, the United States. The emergence of this force in the Middle East could therefore be no surprise, but it has undoubtedly created difficulties. It has led to conflicts. People animated by this feeling are, naturally, not satisfied to let things remain as they were before and so in hope and expectancy they push forward and often come into conflict with people or countries having different ideas or other interests. This is one of the causes of the ferment one sees in the Middle East. Every possible step has to be taken to prevent such conflicts. For this purpose a recognition that the resources of the country belong to the people and that any exploitation of those resources must be done by the people themselves or by their consent is absolutely essential.

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There is another problem of recent growth in the Middle East which is important and should be taken care of. I refer to the extension of the struggle between the two great Power groups into this region. This results in unrest and in conflicts between countries in that area. It should, therefore, be considered whether action could not be taken by the great Powers themselves to disengage themselves from such activities. Another serious problem affecting this area is the failure to deal with the Palestinian question, which has caused so much bitterness in the area and in which is also involved the problem of the Arab refugees. It is the view of my delegation that these two important and closely related matters which affect the well-being of the peoples in this region should be considered. That these two matters are highly complicated and that they raise emotional issues I am very well aware.

One other matter of great importance which affects the Middle East is the great need for economic development. This was admirably dealt with in President Eisenhower's address before this Assembly. Similar sentiments were expressed by both the Foreign Minister of the USSR and the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom. Here is an instance of agreement between the three great Powers on one of the vital issues affecting this area. We welcome it, and we express the sincere hope that this spirit of co-operation will be carried into other equally vital spheres of activity affecting the lives and well-being of the peoples of the Middle East.

It is our hope that something definite and practicable will be worked out in that direction. It is for these reasons that my delegation proposes that these matters should be given serious consideration. It is our view that if any satisfactory solution is to flow from such a consideration, it must be undertaken at the highest level. It must be considered by the great Powers and by the Arabs and other countries concerned. Unless the Heads of Government of these Powers can meet in a spirit of goodwill and with a desire to bring about stability in this area and the advancement of its peoples, nothing can be done. But it is our hope that the great Powers will see how important it is to create stability and development in this area without making it merely an arena for competition.

We, therefore, propose that the Secretary-General should be instructed by this Assembly to take such steps as may be necessary to arrange a meeting of the Heads of Government of the great Powers and the Heads of Government of the Arab countries and other countries concerned. We only suggest at this stage that the Secretary-

(Sir Claude Corea, Ceylon)

General should take the necessary steps to arrange such a meeting. The approval of the Arab countries is, of course, a primary consideration. Our proposal is submitted in good faith in the hope that something tangible will be done in regard to the many problems, some of them of the utmost importance which have not yet been satisfactorily dealt with or solved, perhaps owing to the complications involved. We cannot continue to remain indifferent any longer, and we hope that the Secretary-General, with his deep knowledge and experience of the problems of the area and with his characteristic energy and ability, will succeed in arranging such a meeting.

I have concluded, but I would like to refer before I close to one point. The representative of the United States of America, Mr. Lodge, stated last week that we are about to turn over a leaf in human history. Let us not hesitate. Let us certainly turn it over but positively and constructively. We must act with courage and imagination. The time has come to cut ourselves away from our swaddling bands and to take bold steps into the future. Delay or procrastination, reluctance or doubt, will be fatal. Let us, therefore, stretch out and seize the opportunity of solving once and for all the entire problem of this region.

Mr. RAHIM (Yemen): In any discussion concerning the grave events taking place in the Arab world today, it is essential that we first explore the currents which are behind these events. This is particularly necessary if we are to embark on prescribing the right remedy for the situation emerging in the area.

I shall, therefore, concentrate my few remarks on the nature of these currents and shall try to analyse some of the remedies proposed by the Secretary-General and other speakers on this rostrum.

Before doing so, I would like to stress the fact that the Arab countries have their own regional organization, the Arab League, whose charter contains ample provisions about non-interference in the national affairs of member States. In case of disputes among members, the charter also provides for solution by means of arbitration, conciliation, and mediation. Thus, the Arab League has appropriate machinery for solving any problems which may arise. If given the opportunity, it could prove to be a potent factor in preserving the peace and stability of the area.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

In the present crisis, unfortunately, the Arab League was denied the opportunity to prove its effectiveness as a regional organization, in the hope entertained by some that the Security Council might be more effective in dealing successfully with this crisis -- a hope which proved to be an illusion.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

When we consider the explosive problems which beset the Arab world, no approach or remedy can be recommended without having an exact idea about the forces of nationalism at work in the area.

Ever since the seventh century the people living in the lands between the Atlantic Ocean and the Arabian Gulf have considered themselves part of the Arab nation. Even during the days of the Ottoman Empire, they retained their Arab consciousness and a large measure of their political unity.

This is not the time nor the place to turn back the pages of history as far as the twelfth century to trace the original beginnings of Arab nationalism with its subsequent record of noble sacrifices and heroic leaders. Suffice it to say that our nationalism stems from the hearts of the people and springs from the wells of their past and recent sorrows, coupled with their future hopes. Nobody can stamp out this movement or extinguish its sacred light. Nay, no might or force, however big and powerful, can suppress it. It is a strong and torrential current which, instead of being opposed, should be channelled into the best direction and use. Those who would deal with it must ride with this tide or be overwhelmed by it.

After the First World War, when the Arabs were denied their promised unity and their lands were arbitrarily separated by artificial boundaries, Arab nationalism waged a vigorous and successful struggle to achieve independence in various parts of the Arab world. On 22 March 1945, these efforts culminated in the foundation of the Arab League by the seven States which had then won their independence.

Since the end of the Second World War, the Arabs have continued to fight -- and are still fighting -- for the independence of areas such as Algeria, Aden and the southern provinces of the Arabian Peninsula, all of which are still under foreign domination. Simultaneously, the Arab national movement has seen the beginning of new consolidations, such as the union of Syria and Egypt into the United Arab Republic and the later federation of Yemen with the United Arab Republic in the United Arab States. These important events provide a concrete step in the direction of the long-cherished goal of Arab unity.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

To understand the current manifestation of Arab nationalism, it is important to consider the movement's three basic principles, principles which it shares with all genuine national movements. These can be described as: first, the desire for unity, based on mutual social, historic, and economic ties; secondly, the urge for social reform and betterment of the lot of the average man and woman; thirdly, the need for non-alignment in foreign policy to spare time and energy for national growth.

Our nationalist movement is distinctly positive, constructive and peaceful. Above all, it is neither pro-Communist nor anti-Western.

A voice was heard last Friday from this rostrum -- unfortunately, a Middle Eastern voice -- describing Arab nationalism as negative. It is lamentable and distressing to find that a Middle Easterner is unable to read the clear handwriting on the wall. I hope that the representative of Iran, and other members of this Assembly, will find in what I am going to say and quote from disinterested observers convincing proof that Arab nationalism is positive, constructive, and peaceful.

For there are hopeful indications that these basic characteristics of Arab nationalism, which I have described, are now achieving wider recognition and acceptance.

I need not repeat the complimentary and eloquent statements on Arab nationalism made by Prime Minister Nehru and General Franco -- statements which we heard on Monday from their representatives here.

Also, in a recent press conference, the President of the United States declared that:

> "If the Arabs, as a whole, want to express their nationalism in the form of a federation of a larger state, we have no objections to that."

One week later, in his address to this Assembly, President Eisenhower stated his country's position as follows:

> "The peoples of the Arab nations of the Near East clearly possess the right of determining and expressing their own destiny." (A/PV.733, page 11)

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

After a recent diplomatic visit to the Arab world, Mr. Murphy, the special envoy of the President of the United States, made the following observation on Arab nationalism:

> "The situation is dynamic and there is a very definite movement of the people in that area. It is a fact and not just a theory. There are vast movements among the Arabs to improve their lot. The centre core of opinion is that they want to consolidate a State in which the Arab people can achieve a position of equality."

The unity movements now taking place in the Arab world are, indeed, peaceful and voluntary. No force is used to achieve them. Take the first two unity movements which occurred earlier this year -- the union of Syria and Egypt in the United Arab Republic. This merger took place peacefully and voluntarily. Most significantly, unification was accomplished by a universal free plebiscite held in the two merging countries.

The federation between my country and the United Arab Republic also took place peacefully and voluntarily. No infiltration or radio barrage was directed against my country urging it to federate with the United Arab Republic. The Crown Prince of Yemen, accompanied by a large delegation from the country, flew to Cairo and signed the declaration of federation in accordance with the will of the Yemeni people.

In the future other countries of the Arab world will unite in this same spirit of free choice, and union or federation between brother Arab countries, republics or monarchies, will take place peacefully and voluntarily as it did before.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

However, when brute force is used against such movements, we are confronted with the present sad spectacle of foreign troops occupying Arab lands. The same and even more violent spectacle will take place in other countries if the surging tide of nationalism is interfered with.

Another important feature of the recent unity movement I have described is the complete equality between partners. No advantage is enjoyed by a strong party over a weaker. Take the example of the federation of my country with the United Arab Republic. More than eight months have elapsed since the creation of the federation; no coercion was employed and no advantage has been taken of Yemeni resources. Only brotherly co-operation and assistance is taking place.

The United Arab Republic, although the biggest and most populous among the Arab States, considers itself as one of them with no hegemony or superiority. The Arab unity movement is, and will remain, a unity movement among equals and brothers.

As far as other nations are concerned, a most pertinent characteristic of the Arab nationalist movement is its deep respect for international commitments. Two recent examples will illustrate this sentiment.

Last July the United Arab Republic signed a compensation agreement with the shareholders of the former Suez Canal Company, to the complete satisfaction of all concerned. Mindful of its international commitments and the importance of its great waterway, the United Arab Republic has honoured and will continue to honour its commitments to the world community. Not only is the traffic in this important international waterway passing smoothly, but it is increasing day by day. And the Egyptian Canal Authority, despite the short period of its operations, has already introduced many improvements and contracted for deepening and widening the canal at a cost exceeding $335 million, to be paid out of Canal revenues.

A second example of nationalist responsibility in the Arab world is provided by the new Government of Iraq. When this new and vigorous republic was established, rumours were spread that the oil flow from Iraq to Europe would stop. Nothing of the sort has happened. Iraqi oil is flowing and will flow for the benefit of Iraq and the whole world, just as traffic is flowing through the Suez Canal for the benefit of the United Arab Republic and the whole world. It is significant that Iraqi leaders lost no time in reassuring the whole world that they would stand by

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

their international commitments and that their oil would continue to flow. In fact, these same leaders have expressed the hope that the flow of oil can be increased, thus adding to their national revenue.

After describing the nature and characteristics of this great movement of nationalism in the Arab world -- a movement which is behind all the events that we witness today -- my delegation would like to examine some of the remedies and solutions proposed in this Assembly. But before examining these measures, I wish to emphasize at the outset that no remedy or solution whatsoever can be effective unless the armed intervention in this area comes to an end and troops occupying Arab lands are withdrawn.

Although divided by artificial political boundaries, the Arab people consider themselves as belonging to one country. Hence, the occupation by foreign troops of a part of their homeland naturally constitutes a grave danger to the remaining parts and is bound to cause deep repercussions. This explains why the presence of foreign troops in Arab lands -- whether in Algeria, Southern Yemen, Lebanon, or Jordan -- is deeply felt and resented by the Arab people from the Atlantic to the Arabian Gulf.

Foreign troops have recently been landed on the pretext of preserving the integrity and sovereignty of certain Arab countries. On the contrary, we firmly believe that the stationing of these troops is actually impairing the sovereignty of these countries and constitutes a real threat to both their integrity and the peace of the area.

After all, what mission do these foreign troops have in Arab lands? We cannot imagine any other mission for them except the thankless task of subduing by brute force any expression of national and patriotic sentiment and quelling by military might any tendencies towards the fulfilment of Arab nationalism and liberation.

We in the Arab world know better than many other countries the dangers -- and the humiliation -- of occupation by foreign troops. We experienced it until very recently, and we still have its disagreeable taste.

Under a pretext similar to that advanced four weeks ago for landing foreign troops on Arab soil, British troops landed in Egypt in 1882 to defend -- they said -- the throne of the Khedive and the integrity of Egypt. However, in spite of

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

formal assurances of the immediate withdrawal of these troops, Egypt suffered their presence for more than seventy years. More recently, and fortunately for a short period, Egypt experienced the occupation of a part of her territory by foreign troops in 1956.

Other Arab countries have had to go through the same ordeal. The Sudan, as well as Egypt, has experienced foreign occupation. Iraq was under external domination. Libya had the same sad fate until a United Nations resolution of 1949 granted it independence. And at present there are still Arab lands under foreign domination: Algeria is being bled white for its liberation, and Buraimi and the Southern Arabian provinces are groaning under oppressive foreign domination.

No wonder we of the Arab world abhor and condemn foreign occupation; it is because we still taste its bitter fruits.

Today, after more than five weeks of having foreign troops stationed in Arab lands, it is appropriate to ask ourselves, "Did those troops improve the prospects of peace and security in the area? Did the explosives, shootings, and unrest cease? Are the sufferings of the people abated?" Unfortunately, the candid and sincere answer must be in the negative. Shootings and explosions are still going on, and the suffering of the people is mounting.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

In fact, the presence of these foreign troops is a source of great danger; and the future will prove that they constitute a major factor of insecurity and unrest. Rumors are rife -- I hope they are untrue -- that these troops are destined to become a bridgehead for new and large-scale aggression, reminiscent of the attack in 1956 which called forth the first special session of this Assembly. We refuse to believe these rumors, but the sooner all foreign troops are withdrawn, the better for all concerned and for the cause of world peace.

Accordingly, we firmly believe that any remedy to the serious problem confronting us today will be useless and will be doomed to failure unless foreign troops occupying Arab lands are withdrawn. This is the sine qua non for stability in the area. If this step is taken, the road will then be clear for peace, security, progress and other constructive national and international programmes.

Now, my delegation would like to comment briefly on some of the solutions proposed in this Assembly.

It has been proposed, in reference to this troubled area, that the Assembly take action looking toward the creation of a stand-by United Nations peace force. Although such a force may be useful in certain cases, we must ask ourselves: what would be the purpose, in the case we are dealing with, of such a force? If, as is obvious, it is unpermissible for a foreign country to send its forces into the area to suppress a genuine tide of nationalism and prevent the Arab people from exercising their inherent right of self-determination and liberation, it is even more unpermissible to thrust such a thankless task upon the United Nations, for the United Nations was set up primarily to prevent war. It was not set up to stop liberation movements in the world. If, under the pretext of indirect aggression, the United Nations should undertake such a thankless task, it could well become a body for the perpetuation of tyranny. Such action would debase the United Nations; it would send it to its doom.

However, if, to facilitate and supervise the withdrawal of foreign troops stationed in Arab lands, the United Nations Observer Group should be strengthened and extended as a temporary measure -- and I underline the word "temporary" -- my delegation would be wholeheartedly for it. But it should be clearly understood

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

that this enlarged United Nations Group is to be withdrawn immediately at the request of the host country, and this proviso should be included in any resolution passed by the Assembly concerning the United Nations Observer Group.

I should now like to turn to various comments about the economic welfare of the Arab lands. The President of the United States has expressed high and noble sentiments toward the Arab people as to their economic development. We are indeed obliged for his general interest and his expression of hope for the future emergence of modern Arab States that would bring this century contributions surpassing those of our predecessors in science, medicine, astronomy and mathematics. I can assure him that the Arab world has awakened and, through its great surge of constructive nationalism, is well on the way to a modern Arab renaissance. However, we still have a long way to go, and we need and welcome a helping hand from friendly nations. I should simply like to emphasize the fact that we are on our way to this goal by our own means and possibilities.

It has been suggested in this Assembly that an Arab development institution, on a regional basis, should be established to accelerate progress in such fields as industry, agriculture, water supply and education. It is understood that in such an institution the Arab countries will take a leading role, assisted by the United Nations and other countries willing to take part in such an organization.

But before advancing any opinion on such an institution, I would like to stress briefly two points.

First, the Arab countries after attaining their independence -- some of them in as short a time as two years ago -- have made giant strides in the fields of industry, health, education, agriculture and the use of water resources. This progress was accomplished mainly by the Arabs, with their own technicians and their own funds, assisted by some foreign funds and technical assistance, for which we are grateful. I should not like to take the time of the Assembly by dwelling on the progressive and constructive side of Arab nationalism, noting voluminous statistics, but I shall simply give a very few examples from various fields indicative of this progress.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

In the past ten years, for example, we find that the Egyptian region of the United Arab Republic has more than doubled its number of schools, students and teachers. During the same period, the Syrian region has almost doubled its highway network and increased its railroads seven-fold, while Lebanon's industrial-development investments have doubled. Yemen has added hundreds of miles to its roadways in the past five years, constructed a new harbor and completed plans for the irrigation of two million acres of additional land.

Iraq's allocations for economic development have multiplied ten times since 1951, and Saudi Arabia's educational budget has jumped eleven-fold since this same year. In the Sudan, economic development allocations have increased three-fold since 1956, and Jordan's phosphate production has multiplied six times since 1953. Similar and more spectacular progress was made by Morocco and Tunisia. These are but a few examples from many I could have chosen.

The second and important point I would like to stress is the Economic Council of the Arab League. The Economic Council of the Arab League, as far back as 1953, was studying plans for an economic institution similar to the one proposed in this Assembly. And on 3 June 1957, the Council of the Arab League approved the recommendation of its Economic Council to establish an Arab Financial Organization for Economic Development. Its aims, as its name indicates, are to encourage the development of public, as well as private projects, in the various Arab States, either by extending loans, participating directly in these projects, or preparing necessary blueprints.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

The initial capacity of this financial organization is modest as a beginning -- $56 million. But it is noteworthy that the Arab League, in planning this organization, has drawn amply upon the help and experience of the International Bank. The Arab League would certainly welcome all possible co-operation in this and other programmes from the United Nations, and my delegation believes that the United Nations is well advised to co-operate in this direction.

By the same token any future economic assistance, particularly if it comes from the United Nations, or through it, will be welcomed by the Arab countries, because we feel that financial or technical assistance from the United Nations is given whole-heartedly and without strings attached.

It is true that we need technical assistance, economic aid and economic institutions. But first and foremost we believe that man does not live by bread alone. We believe in our unity, in our freedom from foreign domination, and in our dignity. Our problems, although basically economic and social, are much more political in nature. This we must take into consideration if we hope for stability and peace in the area.

In the light of these remarks, I should like to give the views of my delegation on the draft resolution submitted by Norway and other sponsoring countries.

We earnestly believe that this draft resolution fails completely to meet the emergency we are facing, and offers no clear-cut solution to the crisis. On the contrary, by delaying firm decision on the matter, it enhances the prospect of further unrest and complications.

And in particular, this draft resolution fails to call for the immediate withdrawal of troops, which, in the view of my delegation, is an essential prerequisite to any acceptable solution. In its preamble it refers faintly to this matter by referring to two letters addressed to you, Mr. President, by the United Kingdom and the United States, in which they offer to withdraw their troops conditionally and not immediately. This postponed and conditional withdrawal of troops makes this draft resolution totally unacceptable.

(Mr. Rahim, Yemen)

Three important points should always be kept in mind, for they constitute the essential prerequisites for any real and lasting solution to our problems. First, before any other steps are considered, there must be an immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Arab lands. Secondly, the world, East and West, should recognize and understand the nature of the great tide of nationalism that is surging through the Arab world. Both camps should learn to live with this movement and accept it as an accomplished fact to be reckoned with. Thirdly, last but not least, the Arab world wants to be kept away from pacts and doctrines which sow the seeds of discord and make inroads in its unity and tranquillity, and which, beyond doubt, form one of the major causes of strife at the present time.

In other words, we believe that the world should keep the Middle East out of the cold war and disengage it from East-West rivalries and antagonisms, and so allow the Arab world and the Arab people to solve their own problems among themselves and to pursue an independent course towards their dignity, prosperity and unity.

Mr. ALEMAYEHOU (Ethiopia): The General Assembly has been called, once again, in an emergency session to find a peaceful solution for another crisis in the Middle East, or at least, to prevent such a crisis from degenerating into a general world-wide conflagration.

This is not the first time that events in the Middle East have almost led the world into a general conflict. The chain of crises that disrupted the peace and tranquillity of the area, and which threatened to disrupt the peace and tranquillity of the world in recent years, is still too fresh in the minds of all present here, to require enumeration.

It is perhaps difficult to lay the responsibility upon one State or group of States for this recurring crisis in the Middle East. But, whoever is responsible, whoever is to blame, the fact remains that there have been in recent years, and there is today, more tension, more unrest, and perhaps more fighting in the Middle East than in any other part of the world. And that is not all.

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

The most disturbing thing is that this tension, this unrest, and these small local wars threaten to transform the Middle East area into a battlefield of a destructive world war.

We all recall the repeated warnings that the crisis in the Middle East could lead to a third World War. It is all very well to be calm, not to be disturbed, as long as these warnings remain mere warnings. But who could say for sure that these warnings could not, one day, be followed by action? Suppose these warnings were to be followed by action, what would happen primarily to the Middle East and then to the world at large? The answer is, of course, very clear.

In the view of my delegation, it would be folly, indeed a great mistake, to conclude that warnings would not be followed by action, simply because such was the case once. Such a conclusion, I submit, is very dangerous gambling. I do not believe, that any one nation or group of nations have the right to gamble with the very existence of man and his intellectual, moral and material heritage, achieved through millennia and millennia. On the contrary, every nation, be it great or small, is duty-bound, I believe, to do its utmost to contribute to the preservation of mankind and its civilization and to the prevention of their destruction. Such a destructive war may not necessarily result from action alone. It may result from omission as well.

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

In the present case, unless something is done to ease the tense situation in the Middle East, war can result from omission as it does from action.

It is therefore the duty of every State represented here, and primarily of the States directly involved, to take measures designed to control any activities which might create or increase tension in the Middle East. It is their primary responsibility not to do anything to create and increase tension and unrest in their region, as it is their responsibility to do everything to free their region from such tension and unrest, so that the Middle East is not exposed to the danger of nuclear war.

My country, Ethiopia, situated as it is on the crossroads of Africa, the Middle East and Asia, is affected by events happening in these regions. It is natural, therefore, that we are now deeply concerned about the existing situation in the Middle East.

Ethiopia, apart from being a neighbour, has a traditional and close friendship with each of the Middle Eastern countries. The people and the Government of Ethiopia respect the natural rights of the Arab peoples to determine their own way of life and sympathize with their legitimate aspirations. Their decision to form the kind of government which cannot be contested, be it separate or otherwise, is their exclusive right. But we believe that such decision, to serve the interests of all concerned and not to disrupt the peace and tranquillity of the region, which affects us all, must be made by all parties concerned freely and without intimidation, threat or aggression of any kind.

For our part, we do not want external interference in our internal affairs, whether in the form of fomenting civil strife, vilification of lawfully instituted Governments or military intervention. The people of every country, being the sole judge of what is best for themselves, must be left free to determine their own way of life. And as we do not want to admit any external interference in our internal affairs, it is natural that we do not like it to happen to others.

If a people want to lead a separate, independent life, no amount of physical force will be able to stop their march towards their ultimate goal. The record of history is full of these facts, and we have seen even in recent years many peoples, armed not so much with guns but with unanimous national will and determination, breaking through formidable physical barriers to reach their ultimate goal: independence.

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

By the same token, if the people of one country wish to join with the people of another country, no external propaganda or foreign incitement to civil strife is needed. What is needed is simply general national will.

But whenever and wherever there is external interference by the promotion of certain ways of life, be such interference in the form of subversion or military intervention, then one has to conclude that those ways of life are being imposed upon the people or peoples concerned against their will. In this connexion, the plan proposed in the address of the President of the United States at the opening of the general debate at this session, that the Assembly should consider means for monitoring radio broadcasts directed across national frontiers in the Middle East and for examining complaints from States there, seems to my delegation deserving of the Assembly's serious consideration.

I come now to the central question before the emergency special session of the General Assembly; that is, the complaints of Lebanon and Jordan to the United Nations and the presence of United States and United Kingdom troops in Lebanon and Jordan respectively. In the view of my delegation, this question has its juridical and political aspects, and these two aspects must, therefore, be considered separately.

In clarifying the position of my country on this fundamental question, I should say that the Ethiopian Government deplores the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon and Jordan to such an extent that the Governments of these two countries found it necessary to appeal to the United Nations and to request military assistance from friendly Governments.

As to the legality of such appeals and requests for assistance, the view of my delegation, which I would like to be recorded, is this: Every Government of a sovereign State has the inherent and inalienable right to make such an appeal and to request and receive military or other assistance whenever it feels that its territorial integrity or political independence is threatened.

It is also the inherent and inalienable right of any sovereign Government to give or to refuse military assistance when requested by another Government. Consequently, the presence of United States and United Kingdom troops in Lebanon and Jordan, in so far as such presence is at the specific requests of the lawfully constituted Governments of those two countries, to safeguard the integrity and independence of Lebanon and Jordan seems to my delegation to be in order.

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

My country is a small, under-developed country with no adequate military strength to protect its territorial integrity and independence in case of aggression by a powerful enemy, nor does it belong to any military grouping or bloc. The only protection my country hopes for, if and when it feels threatened by outside aggression, is from the United Nations or from friendly countries. I believe, therefore, that small countries like mine should not be denied this opportunity.

On the other hand -- and this is also an important point which I want to place on record -- Ethiopia strongly opposes any introduction or maintenance of troops by one country within the territory of another country under the pretext of protection of national interest, protection of lives of citizens or any other excuses. This is a recognized means of exerting pressure by stronger Powers against smaller ones for extortion advantages. Therefore, it must never be permitted.

The introduction and maintenance of foreign troops in a given territory must be permitted either when requested by the territorial Government in defence of its integrity and independence or only and exclusively under the terms and conditions freely agreed to by the Government of the territorial State concerned. In fact, that is what the situation is in many of the Western and Eastern European countries, in the Near and Middle East and in Asia and Africa where foreign troops are stationed today in agreement with the respective Governments concerned.

It is true that in an ideal world situation the stationing of foreign troops in the various countries of the world would not have been necessary. But we are not living in an ideal world. We are living in a troubled and uneasy world, and these troubled and uneasy world conditions have made it necessary for the Governments of many countries to conclude agreements for stationing foreign troops in the respective countries as we know them today. It is an unsatisfactory and deplorable situation, but its legality has never been contested.

With regard to the appeal of the Lebanese and Jordan Governments to the United Nations for adequate measures to assist them in their difficulties, opinions have been voiced that the taking of measures by the United Nations such as the sending of a United Nations peace force or similar measures would be an intervention on the part of the United Nations in the internal affairs of Lebanon and Jordan and that, therefore, such measures should not be taken. My delegation cannot share this opinion.

(Mr. Alemayehou
Ethiopia)

Furthermore, the Lebanese and the Jordanian Governments, whose constitutional authority has never been contested, who are represented here in the United Nations, and who alone conduct the international affairs of their respective countries on behalf of the peoples of Lebanon and Jordan, have appealed to the United Nations for adequate measures to safeguard their integrity and independence. It is the Lebanese and the Jordanian peoples, through their lawfully constituted Governments, who have appealed to the United Nations for assistance. These peoples have no authorized media to request assistance from the United Nations except through their respective Governments. Can the United Nations reject such appeals? No; in the view of my delegation, the United Nations should not and cannot refuse assistance to its Members when such Members request it.

As to the type and extent of the measures to be taken by the United Nations, it is again the Governments of Lebanon and Jordan alone who must determine what measure or measures would adequately meet their need.

It must be clear, however, that any measure taken by the United Nations, be it the sending of a United Nations peace force or the sending of observation groups to Lebanon and Jordan, must have to limit its activities exclusively to the prevention of foreign interference, thus making it possible for the Lebanese and Jordanian peoples to decide their own fate free from any outside interference or pressure.

Having thus made clear the juridical position of my country, I should like now, with your permission, to consider the political aspect of the question.

As I said a while ago, the political situation in the Middle East is so tense, so inflamed, that any move which would increase tension in the area, even to a slight degree, may result in dangerous consequences. It is, therefore, in the light of such political conditions that the presence of the United States and United Kingdom troops in Lebanon and Jordan, however legally correct, must have to be considered.

We all know the violent reaction of many Governments in and outside the Middle East to the landing of United States and United Kingdom troops in Lebanon and Jordan, which reaction added to the already inflamed situation.

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

I would, therefore, venture to appeal, on behalf of a small peace-loving country, to all the parties concerned to agree on a formula which would, on the one hand, allay the fear of the Lebanese and Jordanian Governments and provide, on the other hand, for the withdrawal of the foreign troops stationed in Lebanon and Jordan.

I am making this appeal because I believe that a formula reconciling the opposing viewpoints is not difficult to find in view of the fact that the difference between those views has been considerably narrowed down from what it was when this question was discussed by the Security Council.

We have heard the President of the United States declare at the opening of this special session that the United States will withdraw its forces from Lebanon when the United Nations has taken measures, and we have also noted the latest declaration of the United States to that effect. A similar declaration has been made by the United Kingdom delegation in regard to Jordan.

Thirdly, the Soviet draft resolution submitted to this special session is an improvement over the one submitted to the Security Council by that delegation. Finally, the plan outlined in the statement of the Secretary-General at the opening of this session seems to have important elements which could be taken into account in working out a compromise formula acceptable to all concerned.

All this gives sufficient reason to my delegation to be optimistic. I am confident that the remaining small differences can very easily be bridged if the statesmen of the world assembled here exert determined efforts to reach agreement in the interest of the preservation of world peace.

My delegation will co-operate with other delegations on any plan designed to calm the tense situation in the Middle East and to safeguard the right of the Lebanese and Jordanian peoples to determine their own destiny without any external interference.

Before concluding my statement, I should like to say a word on the plan for economic development proposed in the statements of the President of the United States and the Secretary-General. This plan is certainly constructive

(Mr. Alemayehou, Ethiopia)

and deserving of the consideration of the parties primarily concerned; and if any resolution embodying an economic development plan such as this is to be adopted by this Assembly, such plan must, in the view of my delegation, be in the form of an offer by the United Nations which will benefit the interested countries when they are ready to avail themselves of such an offer.

Mr. COUVE de MURVILLE (France) (interpretation from French): In speaking at this stage of the debate, when the Assembly has already heard the detailed and sometimes contradictory account of the facts that led to this emergency special session, the French delegation does not intend to make the dossier of reciprocal charges longer, nor does it want to add new factors to a controversy that in itself is fruitless. It intends rather, with the objectivity necessary in such a debate, to try to learn a lesson from the recent events of which the Middle East has just been the scene, and thus to show France's concern for seeing constructive solutions found for the problems that are raised today in this part of the world.

The French Government in no way underestimates the seriousness and the complexity of these problems and it has shown, in the letters recently exchanged on this subject between certain Heads of Government, its wish to see them dealt with and resolved in a positive and effective manner. It is with this in mind that I propose today, after briefly reviewing the recent events, to show in what direction it would be advisable, in our opinion, to aim, if we are to reach a lasting stability and tranquillity.

The appeal by Lebanon to the Security Council on 22 May 1958 revealed to the international community the scope of the crisis that this State was undergoing, a State which was traditionally peaceful and prosperous and the national existence and political stability of which had been proved in such a remarkable manner during the last fifteen years. Its institutions and its examples of tolerance and wisdom ensured a harmonious balance among its inhabitants, whatever their religion or their opinion. Its economy prospered, and the tendency towards conciliation, a characteristic of the Lebanese people, seemed bound to shelter it permanently from shocks that were too violent.

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

Difficulties have arisen during the last few months between the Government and the opposition concerning discussions relating to the re-election of the Chief of State. Such disagreements, although frequent in the political life of a modern democratic State, have unfortunately degenerated into open rebellion. It is difficult, however, to believe that the very existence of the country would have been jeopardized had the conflict not in one way or another been transferred from the national to the international level.

It is true that the conclusions of the observers sent to Lebanon, in accordance with the resolution adopted on 11 June by the Security Council, have not confirmed all the complaints made by the Lebanese Government. It must be recalled, however, that the "Group of United Nations Observers in Lebanon" was given only a limited mission and it was even more limited in its means of action, as the observers' report confirms. These conclusions do not, therefore, absolve us from asking certain questions. On the contrary, they require us to do so to the extent that the maintenance of peace actually presupposes that an essential distinction should be made between the legitimate manifestations of an internal opposition -- which is a precondition of democracy -- and the transformation of this opposition into an attempt directed against the State as a result of the support it receives from abroad.

Meanwhile, the coup d'etat in Baghdad exploded. The very suddenness of the attempt and the tragic episodes that resulted from it have increased throughout the region the atmosphere of crisis already created by the events in Lebanon. It appeared that a chain reaction was set off that might gradually spread throughout the whole of the Middle East and perhaps finally endanger the peace of the world.

These are the circumstances under which Lebanon and then Jordan appealed to the United States and the United Kingdom. The French Government has already made known its opinion on the measures then taken by its allies. Its opinion has not changed. Since it was in response to an actual request from the Governments of Lebanon and Jordan that United States and British troops entered these two countries, it is impossible to talk seriously of aggression. The mission of these troops was not to impose any solutions but temporarily to safeguard the existence of two States which felt themselves threatened from abroad and thus to permit, in an atmosphere of renewed calm and security, the

formulation of solutions which would satisfy the aspirations and the desires of their peoples.

This does not mean that these forces should not be withdrawn as soon as possible. The United States and British Governments are the first to desire this as indeed we desire it ourselves. They have continued to request from the very first day that the United Nations should adopt effective measures to supplement those which they had to take urgently at the request of the countries concerned. It is indeed within the framework of the United Nations that lasting solutions of this nature must now be sought.

Our Organization is already assuming considerable responsibilities in the Middle East. The Secretary-General defined them opportunely in his most objective statement made on the opening day of the present extraordinary session. The truce commission, the emergency force, the agency for Palestine refugees, and, more recently, the group of United Nations Observers in Lebanon constitute tangible evidence of the interest of our Organization in this region of the world.

It is only fair now to pay tribute to the efforts made which have contributed to an improvement in the situation, an improvement which is certainly relative but which, nevertheless, serves to demonstrate the exaggerated nature of the views which some Governments still seem to have on the situation today.

In Lebanon, a presidential election in accordance with constitutional legislation resulted in the succession of Mr. Chamoun by General Chehab. The evident patriotism and moderation which the representatives of the Lebanese people have shown on this occasion is a good omen for the future. Indeed, there are still some obstacles, but the common determination to overcome them was clearly asserted. The Lebanese people have shown that they intend to remain masters of their destiny and that they are capable of this.

In Iraq, the new Government was commendably mindful to proclaim its respect for its international agreements and for the Charter of the United Nations.

In Jordan, it proved possible to maintain the integrity of the country. The mere presence of friendly forces who responded to the Government's appeal

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

has prevented the situation from deteriorating and thus avoided consequences which would have been tragic for the maintenance of peace, which would have resulted from an attack upon the integrity and perhaps on the very existence of Jordan.

A certain equilibrium was thus established. We must not, however, overlook the fact that it is fragile and threatened, that it depends upon measures, the temporary nature of which has been recognized by all, and that the causes for anxiety have not disappeared.

This period of calm, however precarious it may be, is still a fact. It provides a respite which we must know how to use profitably in order to stabilize the situation.

If we now apply ourselves to a consideration of this problem together, it is because the security and the peace of the world are indivisible. All of us, without exception, have a vital interest in a stabilization which does not in any way mean that any one of us intends to usurp to ourselves the right of inspection and control over the affairs of the countries concerned. It will be up to these countries themselves, in the last analysis, to choose their course and to build a future based on their interests, their means, and their aspirations. What we must try to do here is to enable the Governments and the peoples concerned to take the necessary decisions themselves in an orderly manner and without outside interference.

The immediate task of this special Assembly is primarily to consider the urgent problems of Lebanon and Jordan. In this respect, interesting suggestions have been made during the debate, and I have found indications of these in all the statements as well as in the various draft resolutions which have been tabled.

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

I shall first consider the case of Lebanon. The guarantees which the Charter confers upon all the Members of the United Nations and, unless I am mistaken, I would even add, the guarantees which this State derives from belonging to the Arab League, should normally be adequate to safeguard its independence and its territorial integrity. But the situation is not a normal one, and that is why it seems necessary to consider special measures. Among these special measures is included the strengthening of the group of United Nations Observers, a measure which my Government would be happy to see implemented following upon the adoption of the draft resolution by this Assembly.

It might be desirable to go still further. Several ideas have been put forward, and the Secretary-General has referred to them in his statement of 8 August 1958. These are ideas which would tend to give international ratification to the special personality of this country. This is a question on which neither the United Nations nor any single country has the right to make proposals. Lebanon itself must take the initiatives it considers appropriate in this case. Lebanon can, in any event, be assured that the suggestions it would wish to present would meet with the active and impartial support of France, a country which is linked to Lebanon by a long tradition of friendship based on many affinities and ties of all kinds.

In Jordan the United Nations has been active for some time in supervising the truce. I have noted with interest that several delegations, although holding different points of view, have agreed on the necessity for strengthening the presence of the United Nations in Jordan. This is the case both in the draft resolution of the Soviet delegation and in the seven-Power draft resolution. My delegation will be happy to subscribe to all suggestions which might be formulated to achieve this end. Jordan itself, of course, must be in agreement on the nature and the scope of the assistance which would be granted to it, but I am sure that it will realize that it is in its interest not to refuse the assistance of our Organization.

As these are our general views on the action which must be undertaken forthwith by our Organization, my delegation cannot but look with favour upon the draft resolution submitted by the Norwegian delegation and a certain number of other delegations. It seems to the French delegation that the principal point of this

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

draft resolution is the mission entrusted to the Secretary-General, with respect to which he would be called upon to make a report before 30 September. Given the tense situation in which we find ourselves, and things being as they are, it does not appear to me that our General Assembly is in a position to define precisely the measures which would permit the United States and the United Kingdom, in accordance with their request, to withdraw their forces from Lebanon and Jordan without the risk of serious disturbances. Therefore, the best thing would be to place our confidence in our Secretary-General, whose experience in the field has been so clearly proven. He will go to the area himself, he will examine the situation with the various Governments and he will make the arrangements which he is empowered to decide upon and will propose to the General Assembly those which would require action on its part.

The adoption of such a draft resolution would enable us to face our present responsibilities. It should not make us forget the problems of a more general nature involving the Middle East, problems which are our chief concern.

The first group of problems is of an economic nature. In this respect, the French Government has noted with interest the constructive proposals presented both by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by the President of the United States of America, and also by a certain number of other speakers. A special emergency session of the General Assembly, called in connexion with a specific, well-defined, political crisis, is probably not the best atmosphere in which to discuss these ideas effectively. We are pleased, however, that ideas of this kind have been expressed and that assistance has been offered. As has been emphasized earlier, it is,furthermore, up to the countries of the Middle East themselves to develop their resources and to seek, in co-operation with other States and with respect for the rights of all, the best methods of promoting their economy. There is much in this field, moreover, that depends upon the re-establishment and smooth functioning of normal trade relations which in future must make it possible for the countries concerned to develop their resources and thereby to obtain a substantial portion of the capital they need for their development and equipment. My Government will always be prepared to join in the common effort which could be carried out along these lines and without any ulterior motives.

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

Economic questions are not, however, any more decisive a factor in the Middle East than in any other part of the world. Here, as elsewhere and as has always been true, it is the political situation which takes precedence -- and this has been abundantly proven during recent years.

The Middle East is political in all the fibres of its being, not only by virtue of the very temperament of the peoples of that area, but also because of its geographic position, the character of its resources and by reason of the long tradition which has placed it for thousands of years in the middle of nearly all the great international conflicts.

At the present time, two essential facts contribute towards making this region one of the focal points which challenge the responsibilities of the international community. The first lies outside the Middle East proper: it is the phenomenon of the cold war. The second is the upsurge of national movements.

It is because the French Government was fully alive to the possible consequences of the first of these phenomena that it recently accepted the proposal submitted to it for the convening of a meeting of the Governments of certain Powers at the highest level.

(Mr. Couve de Murville, France)

Here we would have hoped to find, owing in particular to agreements relating to the respect of the territorial status quo and the non-interference in the domestic affairs of all the Middle Eastern countries, the means for ending acts or actions which might provoke serious crises and which, in any event, would prevent a stabilization of the situation and the normal development of the countries concerned. Of course, any conclusions reached by such a conference would have then been submitted to the United Nations. Moreover, there could not have been any question of settling the problems of the Middle East without the concurrence of the Middle Eastern nations. Quite the contrary, it was a question of enabling them to take, by themselves and in complete freedom, the decisions which concern them. In this respect, the French Government, like other Governments, does not intend to oppose the legitimate national aspirations of these peoples, nor to try to maintain, should the case arise, an outmoded state of affairs. What my Government asks is simply that changes, if they are to take place, should be the result not of outside pressures, whatever their source, but of the will, freely expressed and clearly manifested, of the populations whose destiny is at stake. We are firmly convinced that it is on this condition and this condition alone that the countries of the Middle East will be able to find the basis for a real stability in accordance with their historic traditions.

Despite appearances to the contrary, the present conditions offer perhaps greater possibilities than have ever existed before for bringing about such a plan. The simple goodwill of all of us, expressed by confirming and respecting essential principles, the principles which underlie the United Nations, would doubtless make it possible progressively to transform these potential possibilities into concrete realities.

The PRESIDENT: The representative of Iran desires to make an explanation of a portion of his previous speech, and with the consent of the Assembly, I propose to call upon him now.

Mr. ABDOH (Iran) (interpretation from French): Mr. President, I wish to thank you for having given me this opportunity to endeavour quite briefly to clear up a misunderstanding which has arisen in the minds of my colleagues, in particular my colleague from Yemen. In his statement this morning, the representative of Yemen, for whom I have the highest respect and admiration, referring to the statement which I made before this Assembly last week, attributed to me a thought which was neither in my mind nor in the text of my speech. While regretting this erroneous interpretation of my thoughts, I am nevertheless grateful to him for having given me this opportunity to clarify an idea which unfortunately has already been the subject of similar misinterpretations, in particular in a certain part of the international press.

It would be superfluous to say to what extent a reading of the record of the general debate would have been in itself convincing and would have shown clearly that the Iranian delegation has been and remains a sincere and determined partisan of Arab nationalism in everything that it has already done by way of constructive and positive achievements. My delegation is proud of having been a proponent of the cause of Arab nationalism. In Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, as well as Egypt and elsewhere -- wherever it has manifested itself -- we have always done everything possible to support the cause of the Arab countries in their struggle against military intervention, in particular that which followed the nationalization of the Suez Canal.

We have been in favour of the movement towards emanicipation which is associated with the cause of Arab nationalism. In the speech which I had the honour of making last week, this idea gave rise unfortunately to a misunderstanding. I made it clear, however, that my country supports wholeheartedly the struggle of the peoples of the Middle East for their full emanicipation, and it was in this spirit that I took the liberty of making a brief analysis of what I called the negative ingredients which involved the risk inevitably of diverting the peoples engaged in this struggle from their proper course. Any manifestations of life and progress, no matter what they may be, always consist by their very nature of positive and negative elements.

(Mr. Abdoh, Iran)

Nationalism is no exception as regards this rule of the positive and negative combination of all phenomena. To recognize this should be interpreted in no way as an expression of suspicion in respect of the movement which is concerned. Quite the contrary, this is nothing but a guarantee of success. This is what we desire from the bottom of our hearts. We wish that the promoters of the nationalist movement among our Arab brothers, in their own interest, in the very interest of the struggle which they pursue, should be ever watchful as regards the danger which is involved in the presence of certain of these negative ingredients which are to the detriment of the positive ingredients of nationalism. This is one of the essential conditions, in our view, for the success and the progress of the movement.

May I take the liberty before concluding, therefore, to ask the representative of Yemen again to read my speech, which expresses my thought better than has been attributed to me in certain international circles. This would make it unnecessary for me expressly to correct an idea which, indeed, was never in my mind. I think I have elaborated on this point sufficiently.

The PRESIDENT: I understand that the representative of Yemen desires to speak in reply. I think it might facilitate our proceedings if the representative would be kind enough to see me after we have adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.