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Middle East conflict 1958 - July 25

Consultative Group on The United Nations Operation in
Leban

(Meeting held in Sec. Gen.'s Conference Room)

L 179: 105a

CONFIDENTIAL

CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON THE UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN LEBANON

(meeting held in the Secretary-General's Conference Room on 25 July 1958
at 3 p.m.)

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Gentlemen, I appreciate that you have accepted this added burden. I appreciate it all the more, as this is a very irregular and an extra-curricular duty. As it has been explained to you and as it has been said in the Press release, you will kindly assist us in a purely personal capacity. I would not have the right to constitute a committee of this character on any other assumption. However, the work in which we are engaged is such that I think it is most advisable for us in the Secretariat to avail ourselves of the experience you have gathered in similar tasks previously and of your judgement as to what is wise and correct from the point of view of the United Nations in a situation presenting some fairly novel aspects.

I think that the first time we meet in this way for an informal consultation the best way to approach the matter would be to tell you in broad terms where we stand and how the problems present themselves to us.

You will remember that at the end of the debate in the Security Council on Tuesday, I said that I had felt that I could continue action consistent with the resolution of 11 June 1958, and the principles and purposes of the Charter. I had then in mind, of course, the interpretation I had given of that resolution on two occasions -- first of all, on 22 July 1958, in the meeting of the Security Council when I indicated how so far we had felt obliged to interpret the resolution, and again on Monday of this week when I indicated certain possibilities of a change in the scope of the operation which seemed to me to follow from the Japanese resolution. Now the Japanese resolution, in a sense, only summed up the sense of the Council. I do not think we need here to go into the question of why this resolution was not accepted by one of the permanent members. What really was essentially the substantive factor in that resolution was, in fact, by implication accepted by that same delegation in the amendments proposed by the delegation itself. That is to say, I do feel that in developing UNOGIL, the United Nations Observation Group activities in Lebanon, I am free, and we are free, to give the first resolution the somewhat broader

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interpretation which has emerged as a kind of consensus from the later debate. I have indicated that intention, and I intend to go ahead with it.

Of course, sticking to the rules of the game so as not to change the basic character of the operation, when we have looked into the practical matter which is confronting us, it is on one point really that we find that a certain widening of the scope of the UNOGIL operation is indicated.

The first operation, staged so as to "ensure against infiltration and smuggling of arms" was necessarily and naturally at the border. However, in the statement on Monday I indicated that it might be justified -- without changing the purpose of the operation -- to extend its activities so that they were exercised also within the country. Back of this was the view which I think is realistic, that it is all right with a border operation, but a border operation can never under any circumstances be watertight. It is perfectly reasonable to have, so to say, a second line where arms smuggled into the country or people having infiltrated are under the same kind of observation as may happen at the border. It is, of course, a much more difficult thing to see exactly how such an operation within the country should be arranged. It is much more delicate to define the authority and the relations to domestic authorities, and to find out what is the substance. But none of these difficulties are difficulties of principle. They are difficulties of the elaboration of practice, and for that reason we should at least look at them.

After the Security Council debate, I approached the Group again, as we have done several times in the course of those discussions, and pointed out to them that I would like to have an elaboration in detailed form of their own tentative plans as indicated in the second interim report. They should give such an elaboration, taking into account what had been said in the Security Council by the Secretary-General on Monday and Tuesday. In reply, they presented a first stand in principle yesterday. In fact it was Wednesday night when they did so. It was said there that they would like to work on the following broad assumptions:

First of all, in their view, it should be maintained that this was not a police operation.

Secondly, they wished to maintain that the men used should remain unarmed.

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The first assumption has my full endorsement. The second, is a point to which I think we should get back; it is a much more technical problem than the first one.

On that basis and taking into account what has happened here, they felt that we were facing a three-stage development. The first phase would be the development of the operation at the border, where it was suggested that there should be a considerably increased number of basic out-stations and, so to say, sub-out-stations.

You can see the general line for this first phase in their second interim report of a week ago Thursday. Now, however, they have gone further, increased the number and obviously mapped it out on the map much more in detail. They also made suggestions for, so to speak, the standard manning of the basic out-stations and the sub-out-stations. They did so with a view to implementing what they had themselves suggested, that is to say, that the officers -- and they are, as you know, officers only down to the rank of captain -- would be supported by non-commissioned unarmed troops to a limited extent -- I guess mainly for reconnaissance duties and for support.

I need not at this stage go into the highly technical question regarding the proper number of out-stations, the proper manning with officer observers or the proper manning with non-commissioned personnel.

This gives you the general idea of what I have in mind. Historically it may interest you that the suggestion that we should have the officer observers, from colonel down to the rank of captain, supported by non-commissioned men, was in fact a proposal which I made in the very first week of UNOGIL's existence. It was then turned down by the Observation Group as unsound politically, not militarily, because the operation was in no way so developed and so accepted in the country that it felt that the introduction of non-commissioned men would not have negative effects, outweighing and cancelling the potential positive effects.

Their changed stand now is explained obviously by two facts: the feeling that they have broken through the psychological and political dams in rebel-held territory and with rebel leaders; they have established themselves; they are known as to their tasks, as to their character and as to their objectives. Secondly, that at the very moment they are technically in a position to establish out-stations, of course, the manning is an entirely different thing

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than it is when you work with flying squads, two and two in jeeps, as they had to do in the beginning when the whole operation had to be a mobile one. The development, therefore, from my point of view seems to be a perfectly logical one. In fact, it does not, as you see from what I have said, introduce any basically new interpretation of the 11 June resolution as we here, and I personally, saw it at the very beginning. It is not a new interpretation, it is an adjustment in a new and much more favourable situation as regards operational possibilities and as regards political and psychological acceptance. That, however, is the first stage.

The second stage and the third stage are very closely related. It is the question of activities within the country, which they have naturally divided into activities within government-held territory and activities in rebel-held territory. I hope that the day will not be too distant when this distinction is unnecessary and we can talk only in terms of "in the country", not in this or that part of the country.

They have so far not given their own definitions on how the activities within the country should be guided and organized. They are studying it and any time now we will have their observations both on the question of principle and on the question of organization.

I think that from your point of view the essential fact is that they have based their whole plan on the assumption that this is not a police operation, that the basic character of what we are doing should be retained. However, they have also stressed that they feel that in these circumstances the operation within the country will have its main significance in the psychological field. They seem to share a view held by us here that the physical presence of the United Nations within the country will not only now, but also in the somewhat delicate period which may follow after an election, until things have settled down, be most welcome by the population. It is not a question of being able to interfere, it is not a question of making noises. They are there for the same purpose which was established from the beginning, but their very presence would be understood as a brake on an outburst of new unrest and as a guarantee for the carrying-through in a normal, orderly and legal way of whatever may be the decisions concerning the

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future of the internal politics. If I may interpret these in freer terms, I would say that it means that without the slightest accent of interference in what may be called the internal affairs of Lebanon, the very presence of these men, with the limited tasks which follow from the resolution, at the proper points, may serve a helpful purpose in the internal politics without throwing the balance in either one of the possible directions.

I have only to add one more piece of information to this picture. Of course, I have to take early steps in order to approach the Lebanese authorities -- first of all, the Lebanese Government -- concerning the questions of principle which arise at the very moment we discuss activities within the country, not only at the border.

We have back of us some experience, in just this Group, of the type of legal problems which do arise in such a situation. You will remember that during the spring of 1957 we had quite a few discussions concerning the status within Gaza of the UNEF. All the questions in that case were happily solved, but that does not mean that in themselves they are easy questions. I would say in this case that they are basically more difficult than the UNEF case because in the UNEF case we could define an area of operation. I think we will find it extremely difficult to do so in this case.

My approach to the Lebanese Government is by letter to Dr. Malik who is again in New York. I ask him two questions, both hypothetical. The first question is whether Lebanon would accept an agreement concerning the status of United Nations personnel in Lebanon similar to the one concluded with Egypt. We have at present an agreement which gives the observers, who are all senior officers, diplomatic status. Of course, it would be ridiculous to extend diplomatic status to the much much bigger groups which would be sent in under this plan. Instead, we must have a legal settlement which establishes clear-cut lines of responsibility and rights.

I point out to Dr. Malik that the main clause in this respect is perhaps the one concerning criminal jurisdiction. We know from the Gaza experience that all the contributing countries were very sensitive on this point. The Gaza clause or the Egyptian clause is, for those who have not had to deal with it already,

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that criminal jurisdiction is reserved for the authorities of the country from which the United Nations non-commissioned man comes.

That is to say, the Egyptian courts of law have abstained from any claim to exercise criminal jurisdiction in the case of our people. For the recruitment of these groups which we would have to send in on a new basis, it is certainly highly desirable to be able to give a similar guarantee to the contributing countries as was given to the contributing countries in the case of the UNEF.

A second question put to Dr. Malik is what rights the Lebanese Government would be willing to give to patrols, or whatever you call it, within the country and what relations, if any, they would envisage with their own authorities.

I think that the second part of the question is self-explanatory. The first part is, perhaps, not at once quite clear. In fact, I have referred to three examples, all of which exist in reality in the case of Gaza. They are the right of detention, the right of search and the right of self-defence. If our men are to live under the resolution of 11 June 1958, for example in Beirut, and if they would not have the right to search or the right of detention, I must ask myself: what could they do? That is to say, the questions are asked by way of example, but they are questions based on the Gaza experience and they are questions which are decisive in an evaluation of the possible operation of our people away from the border.

In that connexion I have only said that corresponding problems are being studied in the United Nations from their United Nations aspect because, as a matter of course, there is a United Nations aspect to them in the sense that we cannot be engaged either in what is an internal operation, politically, or an internal operation in the administrative sense of the word. We cannot take over police functions or administrative functions from the government in power in the country. We must, of course, remain within the terms of the 11 June resolution, in the sense that what these people are entitled to deal with is what is pinned down as external elements in the picture. I remember using the term

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"externally directed" in the Security Council. This is not and cannot be an academic question; it must be rather a concrete question. "Externally directed" must be a question of the evidence of infiltration or the evidence of arms smuggled into the country -- that is my way of reading it.

As a matter of course we cannot have had and we have not had any reaction at all from Lebanon thus far, and for that reason I just put it on record with you as questions which I have had to put in order to speed matters up, questions which in no way prejudge what we may feel that we can and should do from the United Nations angle here.

I think this gives you as full a picture as I can give you now of how the problem presents itself to us. I have for natural reasons left out at this moment such technical details as cannot interest you. I have also left out the question of the numbers which would be involved. It would be a lot more than we have at present; but it would not be in any way dramatic. I have the feeling that so far there have not been any indications that an increase of the number -- which does not change this into a military operation but certainly gives a new kind of façade to what we have been doing -- would give rise to any concern in such other quarters as might be thought to be hostile to this whole operation.

I might ask my collaborators here if they have anything to add or if this covers the ground reasonably well.

Mr. BUNCHE: That covers it very well. You might want to say a word about the prisoners, the interrogation of prisoners.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: That is a somewhat different question.

I should like to tell you that we have a very curious problem, which shows what legal complications we may run into also in this case. It is right to mention it here because it has a direct bearing on this activity within the country.

Mr. BUNCHE: I raised it only because of what appeared in the press this morning.

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Yes, but I raise it also more particularly because it has a bearing on what these people could do. At an early stage we had a hearing with a couple of alleged Syrians on which the Observation Group reported. From that stage on, not one single prisoner, to my knowledge, has been made available to the Observation Group. Instead, there has been an exchange of letters in which one minor problem has been touched upon, a problem which has now completely disappeared because of a later and overriding consideration. The minor problem was whether or not an interrogation could take place without a representative of the Lebanese authorities being present. But that is gone. The real and remaining problem is: can it take place at all? The Lebanese Government claims that it cannot because under Lebanese criminal law it is explicitly prescribed who can be present at any interrogation and that does not leave any gap for our people. We have replied by pointing out that no such difficulties have arisen in Kashmir, in UNTSO, that is to say, in the various countries under armistice agreements, or in Gaza for the UNEF.

The difficulty is an entirely new one. We have had no reaction to our reply. Were it to be maintained by the Lebanese authorities, and as a matter of course they are sovereign in a field like this one, interpreting their own criminal code, it would mean that the Observers will not have any possibility of questioning anybody nor obviously would our people in the new phase have such a possibility if the difficulty is not one of, let us say, judgement or convenience but one of law.

I think that is all. I think that I may add one thing more, and that is that I think it would be asking very much at this stage in these informal consultations with you if you were to do anything more than put questions. But questions may be very useful to guide us in our thinking. For that reason, whether it is a question or questions or advice or observations on various points of principle involved, we on our side would be very grateful to hear what you have to say.

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Mr. LALL (India): Mr. Secretary-General, it seems to me, if I might say so, that the view expressed by UNOGIL, which is not to change in any way the character of their operation -- that is to say, to keep it valid in terms of the resolution of 11 June 1958 -- is a view which will be very widely welcomed, I think, in the United Nations. But before going into that a little more, I wonder whether you could tell us what the attitude of the Lebanese Government is now to the existing group and its personnel who are there in terms of this resolution. Is there any co-operation? I heard one report that there was not any -- by "report" I mean newspaper report, I do not mean anything official at all. Has the Lebanese Government maintained co-operation and recognition of the United Nations activity or has it not? And similarly, since the rebels do control part of the territory, has there been any development or alteration of their attitude as to the existing -- this is apart from the expansion -- I mean, if we know what that is, then of course we perhaps do get some idea of how they would respond to expansion. May I ask that question first?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: On the first point I know the newspaper story to which you refer which yesterday got very widespread publicity. It was officially denied as unfounded by Government spokesmen. However, as sometimes happens in the Lebanese press -- and, by the way, the Lebanese press is in no way particular in that respect -- there were consecutive comments to the denial, which leaves it all in a somewhat dim state. However, we have to go by the fact that there is an official denial of those rumours as unfounded, and we have not had any démarche either to the Group or to us. The obvious assumption, therefore, is that what was said in the Security Council -- which was continued acceptance, although not enthusiastic, not because there is anything wrong with what we are doing, but because it is considered insufficient -- is the official stand.

As to the rebels, there is no resistance to the UNOGIL as such. We had a setback last week which I think psychologically is very easily explained. Pending clarification of the situation, they did not know whether the UNOGIL was in all respects independent of other moves. I think that we can say on the basis of the reports we have that people have become aware of it now. We are

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re-establishing the position we held before the fifteenth. At all events, I can say that we have not seen any reaction which would indicate a change of attitude in principle to the UNOGIL on the rebel side.

Mr. IALL (India): Mr. Secretary-General, may I ask one more question, prefacing it with a comment. Since the resolution of 11 June was adopted in circumstances which have somewhat altered subsequently, may I say that, if you do not mind my putting it that way, I entirely agree with you that as an observer from the outside it seemed to me that the Security Council accepted the proposition that the UNOGIL, functioning in terms of the resolution, should continue to develop its activities.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Should continue, first of all, and in the second place --

Mr. IALL (India): Should continue and should develop its activities, yes, I agree. I got the impression, however, that that sort of feeling was expressed in the context of various draft resolutions, none of which eventually were adopted but all of which, in one form or another, spoke of the withdrawal of United States forces. In other words, the context of continuance and development of the UNOGIL was the context of withdrawal.

Now with that preface may I ask you, if I might, whether, with the development now foreshadowed, you anticipate or will work toward an impact on this second point which was contained in all these draft resolutions. Otherwise, it seems to me that there would be, if nothing else, considerable overpopulation of Lebanon from various sources and the likelihood of certain demographic awkwardness between the various elements there, extraneous elements, I mean, those under the United Nations and those under another aegis. So that is the question I have in mind.

In this context I saw a report, again a newspaper report, of a press conference held under the other aegis yesterday in Beirut which stated more or less, "Well, we are afraid we might have to ask these forces of the United States to remain here a long time, certainly long enough to guarantee the political independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon" -- in other words, to achieve objectives which, in a sense, are common with the objectives of the 11 June resolution

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and which UNOGIL is setting out to achieve in this way, which is sanctioned broadly, I mean through the resolution, in terms of the arrangements agreed to in that resolution, by the United Nations.

So those comments, I think, Mr. Secretary-General, contain the question which is in my mind.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: If you will bear with me, gentlemen, I will try to explain how I see those various questions. There is obviously always a problem for a United Nations organ like UNOGIL to work in the same area where foreign troops are to be found. However, again we have experience. We had, for example, as you will remember, patrols in Port Said while the city was patrolled also by the British and the French and while there were even Egyptian soldiers, and we never got mixed up in anything which was embarrassing to anybody or, so to say, a blot on the United Nations record. In other words, I am much less scared than others over the risks involved and the delicacies involved in an operation while foreign troops are, if not side by side, at least nearby.

However, there are two things which have struck us as essential and which are perfectly recognized also by the other party in this case, I mean the United States. We cannot establish competition; United States troops and United Nations observers cannot work for the same end. That is to say, if we have the function of working against infiltration and smuggling of arms at the border, we are those doing it and nobody else. The second thing is that if the foreign troops should get involved in armed conflict or in conflict in the area, we could not be in the same area where such a conflict is developing. It would be unthinkable to keep the distinctions clear in such a case, and it would for that reason probably reduce the usefulness of the United Nations at a somewhat later stage. I would check with Mr. Bunche on this point. I understand this to be a mutual understanding with the United States authorities in just those words.

Mr. BUNCHE: Exactly so.

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Then we come to the second point.

Mr. BUNCHE: That is the understanding of the Observation Group also.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Yes. Then we come to the second point and that is what I would call the various views regarding the time relationship between what we, Secretariatwise, may be doing and the United States withdrawal.

Mr. BUNCHE: Before you pass on to that, I might point out -- and this had a bearing on Mr. Lall's first question -- that the United States troops have not fanned out but have remained on the beach in the vicinity of Beirut.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: That is true now and it was, as you may well understand, the basis for my very strong stand for the continuation of the UNOGIL from the very beginning. The two conditions which I mentioned were fulfilled and I did not see any reason why they should not remain fulfilled, although it is not our business to decide on that. That is to say, I did not see any difficulty in principle at the beginning, and for that reason we felt in the Secretariat that we could go straight for the continuation.

Then comes the other question and that is the time relationship between withdrawal and the development of UNOGIL. There are, I think, on the whole, two schools of thought. One is that the development cannot take place short of withdrawal having come about or at least being agreed to. The other school says that continuation and development of UNOGIL is in itself a means to an end, that is to say, the creation of a situation where a withdrawal, will come about. I think that if this matter is put to a formal political decision, we would repeat again and again what happened in the Security Council; that is to say, there is no resolution which can reasonably cover the twollines, nor could either line count on unanimity among the permanent members.

It is, of course, an entirely different matter to say, ideally, the development of UNOGIL should not come about until after withdrawal, to fill the gap. However, if we do not run into complications, given the two conditions I have indicated, there is no reason why we should sit back and not continue, with an aim of using this as the springboard by which we can arrive at the withdrawal. It would not

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become full-fledged until after withdrawal, but any suspension or any slowing down of the pace of development works not in favour of withdrawal but against withdrawal. That is a purely pragmatic approach which, so to say, disregards the conflict between the two schools of thought. It does not imply in action any acceptance by us of the presence of the American troops, which would present difficulties to one party at the Security Council table, nor does it imply any condemnation of it. It just regards it as a hard fact on the political map which does not bar us from continuing with UNOGIL but, on the contrary, may be good reason for us to continue UNOGIL. It is not a third stand, it is just a pragmatic approach to what is, as a question of principle, insoluble. I think that is what I would say.

Mr. BUNCHE: In connexion with Mr. Lall's question, since he made reference to a statement appearing in the press concerning the length of the stay of the American troops, you might wish to call attention to Chamoun's T.V. interview, also in the press.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: And to the hearing of Mr. Wadsworth in the Senate Sub-Committee today. The two correspond rather well. I have not got the text here.

Mr. BUNCHE: I heard only from Mr. Cordier about the Wadsworth statement. The Chamoun T.V. interview was reported in The New York Times this morning, in which he indicated that, given Presidential elections on an agreed compromise candidate, there would be no basis for the American troops remaining. He foresaw the possibility of their exit within a month.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The Wadsworth statement in the Senate Sub-Committee was "soon", but I would like to have it verbatim; it is verbatim on the ticker. It was "soon" but conditional; I would like to give the exact text. I feel that I have said as much as I can. I am thinking aloud, really.

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Mr. LALL (India): Yes, Mr. Secretary-General, I am grateful to you for what you have said, but this is a question, as and when we meet, to which we might revert. I hope that will be in order.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Certainly. In these informal consultations we are not bypassing any United Nations organ, because under the United Nations Charter we as a group do not exist.

Mr. BUNCHE: I think it might be stressed that there is no basis for conflict or strain at the moment, because the United States forces are staying on the beach in the Beirut area where we have no operation at all and our people are operating in the interior along the frontiers, so there is no contact.

Mr. LALL (India): Since you stressed that point, I ought to say that that was one of the matters which was concerning me to some extent. But the other was the matter of principle, which is this: My understanding is that it has never been the intention in any of the draft resolutions in the Security Council that these two separate actions should continue indefinitely side by side. All the draft resolutions, whether they came from the Americans, from the USSR, or from Japan have had contained in them the idea of withdrawal.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: So did the statement of the Secretary-General, because it ended up with a statement that "I hope that this would provide for an early withdrawal".

Mr. LALL (India): I did not mention you, Mr. Secretary-General, because I knew your stand as a matter of course would be that.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: It is on the record.

Mr. LALL (India): It is on the record, yes, I agree. But one has to try to look at the impact of this development of UNOGIL on the other factor in the situation, namely, the presence of United States troops. That is the point, quite apart from the question of conflict arising physically.

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Mr. BUNCHE: Do you wish to have the Wadsworth statement at this time?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Yes, take the direct quotes.

Mr. BUNCHE: "James J. Wadsworth, Deputy United States representative to the United Nations" -- this is a United Press International despatch -- "predicted today that United States troops in Lebanon may be withdrawn 'quite soon'. He said, 'We will have done what we said we would do, we will have proved that we are people of our word. It is entirely possible that this will take place quite soon. It is dependent,' he said, 'on a situation in which no new difficulties arise before the scheduled Lebanese election and on the conduct of an orderly election. In that case,' he said, 'the healing from within would have gotten off to a good start and we may no longer be needed there. That's what we think in New York'".

Mr. LALL (India): This is a rather interesting addition.

Mr. BUNCHE: Then Wadsworth also said that he believes the strengthening of United Nations observation posts along all routes in Lebanon will serve as "a tremendous deterrent to infiltration even if they never stop anybody".

Mr. LALL (India): This is all right, thank you, Mr. Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: It has at least served to clarify the philosophy around our effort here.

Mr. ENGEN (Norway): Could I just make one comment in connexion with the letter to Dr. Malik which you mentioned about what should be in a possible agreement with the Lebanese Government. To what degree do you think it would be advisable for UNOGIL to carry unarmed personnel on the line? I am asking because, as you are perfectly aware, there is another side to the story, the question of providing personnel by the individual Governments, and it is for them to evaluate the risk under which they will let their personnel operate.

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would say that personally I regard the qualification "unarmed" as temporary. It is very much of the same type of category as the resistance of the Group to non-commissioned men at the beginning. I understand them to feel that the psychological situation is not ripe for these men being armed. Just as the Group has switched concerning the type of personnel to be used, I believe that they will easily switch on the question of unarmed or armed personnel at the very moment they feel that activities are so fully understood and accepted as not to involve a risk because of their being armed. It is still a question of building up the conviction among all that this is not a quasi-military operation or para-military operation. But I stress again that in my own view, just as I anticipated non-commissioned personnel in the beginning, I anticipate arming.

Mr. BUNCHE: I take it you are thinking in terms of personal arms only.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Personal arms, yes, for self-defence. Mind you, there would never be any right beyond the three rights I mentioned: search, detention, and self-defence.

Mr. ENGEN (Norway): I could envisage, more easily at any rate, an increase of personnel consisting only of officers who would be more or less on a voluntary basis, but for a Government to go down to conscripts, for instance, would be a different problem.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: But the non-commissioned would never be in those more delicate jobs. They would be the backstoppers for the officers at the border, so they would not be involved in those highly complicated and delicate decisions.

Mr. LALL (India): Mr. Secretary-General, I feel that I have to put one point on the record, because I am afraid that the record might come out indistinct on it. When I was talking about the presence of both these two sets of actions

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in Lebanon, I said in a way they had the same objective. Now I ought to clarify that because that could come out quite wrong on the record. All I meant was that in the Security Council there was a fair consensus of opinion expressed at this last session that if the activities of UNOGIL were developed, that would help to ensure the political independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. But I did not mean at all that the UNOGIL activity is directed specifically towards political independence and territorial integrity. On the contrary, it is directed towards the objectives of the resolution of 11 June 1958 specifically, but this comes in as a by-product when its operations are in good shape.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. Ritchie?

Mr. RITCHIE (Canada): No, Mr. Secretary-General, I have no comments to make.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Does anybody else wish to raise any point? If not, I would like to say that although you may not feel it is so very useful to have this kind of discussion, we do feel that it is very useful. Therefore, as this develops step by step, if we may just in this informal way consult you, tell you how our thinking is developing and what our philosophy and plans are as they emerge, so that we can have the advantage of your reactions and your advice, it will be very helpful. We started today because we wanted to bring you into our thinking from the very beginning. What was said in the Security Council was necessarily very limited, because the time is not ripe for any kind of publicity yet. As a matter of course, to the extent that something has crystallized, there will, as I promised, be reports to the Security Council. I hope those reports will not cause the Security Council to get together. They may just be taken note of as a reasonable development in the given situation. But that means that this type of meeting in a field where we are really innovating is, as I said, very much appreciated.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.