

Memo to the Media:

Stop Distorting UN Resolution 242!

After the 1967 Six Day War, when Israel survived an attempt by surrounding Arab nations to destroy it militarily, the United Nations Security Council prepared a carefully-worded resolution, introduced by Britain's Lord Caradon, to guide the parties. Since then, UN Resolution 242 has been invoked as the centerpiece for negotiating efforts, including the Oslo Accords.

But the terms of 242 have been widely misrepresented in the media as requiring Israel to return to the pre-June 5, 1967 lines – the armistice lines established after Israel's War of Independence. Such an interpretation was explicitly not the intention of the framers of 242, nor does the language of the resolution include any such requirement.



U.N. RESOLUTION 242

Adopted by the United Nations Security Council,
November 22, 1967

The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East,
Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and
the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in
the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their acceptance
of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a
commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the
establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which
should include the application of both the following principles:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories
occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for
and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and
political independence of every State in the area and their right
to live in peace within secure and recognized
boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. Affirms further the necessity

- (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international
waterways in the area;
- (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
- (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political
independence of every State in the area, through measures
including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to designate a Special Representative to
proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States
concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a
peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and
principles in this resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the
progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

Article 2 of the U.N. Charter instructs members to
**settle disputes peacefully and bans threats or
force** against the territory or political independ-
ence of other states.

Notice the omission of the article "the" to indicate
that Israel was not expected to **withdraw from all territories**. The West Bank, Gaza Strip and eastern Jerusalem
are not even mentioned. The language was carefully
crafted with the awareness that Israel's pre-1967 borders
were indefensible and invited further Arab aggression.

Lord Caradon, chief architect of the resolution, said, "**It
would have been wrong to demand that Israel return to
its positions of June 4, 1967, because those positions
were undesirable and artificial**. After all, they were just
the places where the soldiers of each side happened to
be on the day the fighting stopped in 1948. They were
just armistice lines. That's why we didn't demand that
the Israelis return to them."

George Brown, Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign
and Commonwealth Affairs in 1967, stated in 1970
"The proposal said, 'Israel will withdraw from territories
that were occupied,' and not from 'the' territories which
means that Israel will not withdraw from all the territories."

Eugene Rostow, an American drafter of 242, said
"motions to require the withdrawal of Israel from "the"
territories or "all the territories" occupied in the course
of the Six Day War were put forward many times with
great linguistic ingenuity. They were all defeated both
in the General Assembly and in the Security Council."

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Arthur Goldberg
stated that there would be "less than a complete
withdrawal" from the territories because "Israel's
prior frontiers had proved to be notably insecure."

Note the heavy
emphasis on
assuring Israel's
future protection
against acts of
belligerency and
aggression by
her neighbors.

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Set the record straight!

Call and write members of the media to
insist that coverage of UN Resolution 242
be accurate and complete.