

Supply—External Affairs

I can understand how some countries might have had reservations about the Canadian resolution because of the discretion given to the secretary general and the president of the security council. I think the secretary general would have been the one who would have carried the load of work in considering such questions as finance, whether troops were to be used to inspect the cease fire and what the geographical positions would be of the Arab and Israeli armies after a cease fire. These are broad terms and the discretion is quite wide to give to two people.

● (9:20 p.m.)

Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Chairman, many people were not very satisfied with the way U Thant used his discretion when this matter first came up and Egypt demanded the withdrawal of UNEF. A great many people feel that U Thant should have gone to Cairo and first discussed the matter with President Nasser before he disbanded UNEF. By disbanding UNEF the secretary general threw away the one bargaining lever that he had; and once UNEF was broken up it was like Humpty Dumpty,—pretty hard to put together again.

These are matters of judgment and discretion, of course, but there was not complete unanimity, to say the least, of approval of U Thant's behaviour. I think that the United States resolution to which the minister referred, which embodies the original Canadian resolution as well as some other matters, is a very decided improvement. Many countries are a little dubious about giving the secretary general, even with the assistance of the current president of the security council, complete carte blanche on questions as important and wide as these.

If I may deal with another aspect for a moment, Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that if we are to keep permanent peace in the Middle East and prevent another outbreak of hostilities and violence we really have two choices. Obviously, there is the choice to which the minister alluded and which is implied in the United States resolution, the choice of the four major powers—the United States, the Soviet union, Britain and France—guaranteeing the borders of Israel; and I think that this would be the most practical and easiest way of maintaining peace if it could be arranged. Second, that we have a large enough United Nations peace keeping force which is sufficiently well armed to be able to keep the peace. That is the alternative.

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

Interestingly enough, Mr. Chairman, this suggestion was first made a good many years ago prior to the 1956 war. On January 31, 1956 this suggestion was made by the then member for Prince Albert, the present Leader of the Opposition. I have the relevant passage in front of me but I will not quote it. The right hon. gentleman pointed out that in order to keep the peace a large enough United Nations force to enforce the peace and to keep it should be provided. If we are to have a UN force there and want to be sure that there can be no other outbreak of war, and if we cannot get a four power guarantee, then we would need a pretty well armed, large force in that area.

It is not often that I criticize the government on matters of external affairs. Usually there is pretty general agreement between the party that I represent and the government party on such matters. However, I must say that in this particular instance I do have some criticism of the government and its handling of the matter.

Despite what the Minister of National Defence says to the effect that the unification of the Canadian armed services does not have the principal purpose of just serving the United Nations, General Allard stated quite differently. On the very day the unification bill was passed by this house he said in St. Catharines—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Why does my hon. friend not read what General Allard said in the committee?

Mr. Nesbitt: The minister suggests that I read what he said in the committee, and as I have it right in front of me I will do so.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Why not read that?

Mr. Nesbitt: I will read both, Mr. Chairman. The newspapers cannot always be wrong. It seems that someone is always being misquoted when reports in the press do not agree with the impression that the minister would like to give. The newspaper clipping I have from the Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* carries the headline "Mobile world peace force major goal, says Allard", and the report is datelined St. Catharines. This statement was made, as I recall it, the day the bill was passed.

The minister did ask me to read what General Allard had said, though I have put it on the record on several occasions.