

*Supply—National Defence*

the power of rejection. In that case would it have to go to the assembly or could it be handled by the secretary general. I do not want to ask questions which are not capable of being answered, but I would like the minister to tell us how definite the arrangements are at the present time. I think it is important for the house to know just what troops our forces may be serving with and who has the say as to what will be the constitution of the force.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Chairman, as the hon. member has pointed out there is, of course, a very important limitation placed on this force by the exclusion of the permanent members of the security council. That is indeed a limitation; but even with that exclusion there is a great deal of the world left from which to draw from the governments of the members of the United Nations who wish to make additional contributions. There is no other limitation in the offer of contributions to the United Nations for this purpose. Twenty-three governments have made offers up to the present time, and I think eight of these have been taken up. The offers are made to the secretary general and he has not refused any. He has accepted certain offers and he will draw on the others as he requires and as he thinks it is desirable to do so. He has, however, been given one general instruction by the assembly in this resolution, that his force should be to the maximum extent possible a balanced force.

**Mr. Harkness:** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Harkness:** Could I ask a supplementary question. I am not quite clear from the answer the minister gave exactly what Canada's contribution is going to be in the next week or two. The minister said that the 6,000 men who are envisaged as constituting this force within the next week or within a comparatively short period of time—I do not know exactly what length of time he mentioned—would include the 2,400 Canadians who have been committed to this task by the Canadian government. I take that to mean the Queen's Own are included in this 6,000 who will be committed within a week or two weeks or whatever length of time it was the minister mentioned.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Chairman, I cannot say exactly whether in the secretary general's calculations for an increase of say 1,500 or 2,000 in the next few weeks he has in mind the whole of the Queen's Own. I have been informed that he has in mind a further drawing on Canadian troops to make up the force to the figure he has in mind now for immediate use; and whether that will include

[Mr. Michener.]

the use of all the Queen's Own I cannot say. I do know, however, and my hon. friend the Minister of National Defence will bear me out in this, that within the last 48 hours we have had another request from the secretary general passed on to him by the commanding officer for additional signal troops from Canada, and we are not quite sure whether we can fit that in within the Queen's Own and within the maximum of 2,500. That is what we are looking into at the moment.

**Mr. Harkness:** The situation is essentially this, that as far as the Queen's Own are concerned you are still not in a position to know whether or not they are going to be employed?

**Mr. Pearson:** They are standing by, Mr. Chairman, at the call of the secretary general and the commanding officer.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Thank you for recognizing me, Mr. Chairman. I began to think if I was too good natured I might not get on all afternoon.

We have voted along with the rest of the house for this emergency force, Mr. Chairman, and speaking for myself I am reminded of the feelings I had when I attended the United Nations some three years ago. When I came back I had two reactions. First of all, I felt I had never seen such frustration in my life. In the second place, I felt that if the United Nations did not exist already it should be invented immediately so as to keep people together, in the hope that while they are talking they will not be taking up arms against each other.

I hope no one will think I am at all facetious in dealing with this terribly serious situation. I would use an argument which I often used away back in the days of the league of nations. The same argument can be used today. When I hear people say that the United Nations is doing nothing at all, that it has never done anything, that it should be got rid of, my mind goes back to a famous cartoon during the first world war and which perhaps is not wholly inapplicable to the case today. This cartoon showed two men sitting in a deep shell hole. It was not a very comfortable shell hole because there was a lot of water in it. Shells were bursting all around and evidently the men were having quite a controversy. Then at last one of them said, "If you knows of a better 'ole, go to it".

As I say, I do not want anyone to think that I am being facetious about a dreadfully serious matter. I do feel and have always felt that we should do our best to keep the United Nations together. We should try never to become cynical about it. We should always hope, even when that hope seems hardest to