

At the other extreme from the mammoth UNCK operation was the tiny United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), where 13 Canadian soldiers joined those from seven other nations in 1962-1963 to give temporary administration to West New Guinea (West Irian) while it passed from Dutch to Indonesian control.

The most frustrating peace-keeping work has been in the Middle East, the theatre for six U.N. forces which have managed to suspend but not resolve conflict. The creation of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in 1956 – the first true peace-keeping operation – illustrates Canada's U.N. diplomacy at its most innovative, setting the standard for our endeavours.

Following the invasion of Egypt by the combined forces of Great Britain, France, and Israel, Canada immediately introduced and skillfully persuaded the General Assembly to approve a resolution requesting the Secretary-General to submit within 48 hours "a plan for setting up, with the consent of the nations concerned, of an emergency international United Nations force to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities." Within five days of the resolution, a ceasefire had been concluded. Within twelve days, advance troops from UNEF were arriving in the canal zone; in another six weeks they were fully operational. Canada contributed signals and other specialist units, and a Canadian, Major-General E.L.M. Burns, was appointed the Chief of Staff.

For his work in initiating this effort, Lester B. Pearson, later Prime Minister of Canada, won the Nobel Peace Prize. As Pearson noted at the time, UNEF manifested "the organization of peace through international action." In its demise, however, UNEF highlighted weaknesses inherent in peace-keeping. The outbreak of the Seven-Day War in 1967, after Egypt ordered the peace-keeping force to leave its territory, showed just how dependent was the force upon the host government. Moreover, it showed how little had been done over UNEF's eleven-year life span to create a durable peace. In fact, some even stretch the argument, suggesting that the prolongation of peace-keeping forces removes the incentives to reach a lasting settlement, and reinforces the *status quo*.