

Then on January 31, 1956, the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) brought up in this house the question of an international police force, and it was a very pertinent question.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Just for the Israeli-Arab situation.

Mr. Pearson: Yes, he was limiting the value of this force at this time to a particular situation on the Israeli-Egyptian border. In response to this intervention--I had just come back a few months previously from the discussions in Egypt--I said this in the house as reported at page 777 of Hansard of February 1, 1956:

As I said the other day, I have had talks with the leaders of the Arab governments and the Israel government, and I had talks with General Burns when I was out there and at the United Nations. I think there is a great deal to be said for trying to bring that kind of police force into existence in this disturbed area at this time as a provisional measure to keep the armies apart while peace can be secured. If that proposal were made--and I know the Secretary-General has been considering it, and from press reports to which my hon. friend has referred I understand that it has been discussed in Washington in the last few days--and if it became a matter for United Nations consideration, I am sure this country as well as other countries would want to do what they could to carry it into effect.

And following that--

Mr. Rowe: In view of that fact, as our representative, did the minister not bring it before the United Nations for consideration?

Mr. Pearson: That is just what I was coming to, Mr. Speaker, I have been looking up the record in the last day or two in order to see what we had been able to do in this matter. We did follow it up. We followed it up with the governments most particularly concerned, namely the Israel government, the British government, the French government and the United States government and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and again with General Burns, the truce commissioner.

Mr. Diefenbaker: What date was that?

Mr. Pearson: This began in February and went on for the next two or three months. These were ordinary diplomatic discussions to see whether it could be useful initiative on our part at that time to put forward a proposal for a United Nations force, not a truce commission, to patrol the boundary between Israel and her Arab neighbours in order to try to prevent the incidents which were building up and which had a great deal to do with the ultimate explosion last October. We were discouraged by the response given to this proposal. We received