

At that time the Secretary-General of the United Nations gave us the chance to participate in this force, and gave it to those who were willing and anxious, as we have been willing and anxious since 1945, to have a United Nations force ready to deal with recalcitrants in the fulfilment of their obligations under the charter. The suggestion was made that each nation should supply something like a battalion or other self-contained unit.

We consider that every battalion in the Canadian forces would feel it an honour to be called upon to perform this duty, but there was one battalion which was next in line in the rotation of service in connection with the Canadian contingent to the NATO forces in Europe, and that was the Queen's Own. It seemed to us that all the other battalions would recognize that that battalion, having been groomed and being on the point of being called upon to replace another battalion in Europe, would naturally be the one which we would consider and which we would think of first to take on this new duty in pursuit of the objectives of the United Nations. That battalion happened to be the Queen's Own Rifles. It was suggested, I am told, although we were not present at the negotiations, that Colonel Nasser said that that would be regarded by the Egyptians as being a battalion of the Queen of England.

An Hon. Member: What is wrong with that?

Mr. Green: What about the Queen of Canada?

Mr. St. Laurent (Quebec East): In my view nothing is wrong with it except it is the Queen of Canada's Own Rifles. No Colonel Nasser nor anything that is said here, unless it amounts to a successful vote of no confidence in this government, nor anything published in the papers which are trying to belittle the actions of Canada in this instance, is going to persuade us that we have no right to have that glorious battalion continue to be called the Queen's Own Rifles.

Now, we felt that the sending of a battalion over into the Sinai desert was not just the right thing to do for men who had the training and who were anxious to perform the service for which we were sending them there. We did not think we should dump 900 or 1,000 men into a desert and think they were going to be looked after properly and were going to be kept in fit condition to perform the services for which they were going there. So we decided at once that in readying the Queen's Own Rifles for that expedition there would be added supplementary forces that could ensure for them the establishment that would be necessary for them to carry out their functions properly and, to make assurance doubly sure, we said we would have the Magnificent loaded with provisions, that we would have a hospital unit on it and that it would serve as a floating base so our men would be sure that until proper army services were organized on a land base in Egypt there would be the possibility for them to get the right kind of treatment,