

*Supply—National Defence*

One reason they did not feel that way was that they themselves had been discussing it with the United States and the United States was hesitant about the wisdom at that time of trying to introduce a police force on the borders, with a demilitarized zone. Behind all this hesitation and objection, if you like, was the fact that—and this is quite contrary to what the hon. member for Prince Albert said this morning; I think he must have been misinformed on this matter—neither the government of Israel nor the government of any one of the Arab states was in favour of that kind of force. I can assure the committee we have received arguments from the government of Israel, which indicate why they did not favour that kind of force.

What it was thought might be done at that time was to increase the truce observation organization. That was done, and Canada did send additional officers to it. It was with that background that the discussion was introduced in the house here last January or February—I forget the exact date—by the hon. member for Prince Albert, and it was with that background that I expressed some hesitation as to whether it was a wise move to make at that time. But I did mention the matter again in the committee on external affairs when I was making my opening statement which, as any hon. members who are members of that committee know, is designed for the purpose of introducing matters for later and full consideration by the committee. I said at that time, on April 17, 1956:

The idea of an international force for Palestine—which a few weeks ago got a good deal of attention—

I was referring to the debate in the house. —does not appear now to be regarded on either side, the Jewish side or the Arab side, or by the others most concerned—

I meant the United Kingdom, the United States and the French governments, —as practicable.

That was my statement to the committee, and no reference was made by any member of the committee to that matter subsequently. Therefore I assumed that they accepted that statement of the impracticability of this move at that time.

As I think I said on another occasion, what the three countries most concerned, the United Kingdom, the United States and France, apart from Israel and the Arab states, desired to do was to use the tripartite agreement for the purpose of preventing an outbreak in that area. And it is one of the unhappy aspects of this tragedy that this agreement fell by the wayside in the events of last summer.

So much, then, for the origin of the idea of the United Nations force. There was an occasion, however, a few weeks ago, when a resolution of this kind, under the circumstances which then existed, could be taken up and made effective by the United Nations assembly, and that was done. But I would point out to my hon. friends opposite who have all, I think, without exception expressed themselves as being in favour of the idea of a United Nations force and even felt that it should have been in existence long before this crisis, that if the Canadian delegation had taken the action at the first meeting of the United Nations special assembly which some of them have suggested we should have taken, to support the United Kingdom and France in their efforts to prevent the consideration of this question at the United Nations assembly in that action, and if that support and that of other members of the assembly had been effective, there could have been no consideration of any United Nations force at this time, or possibly at any other time in the future.

I think that is a valid point to make, because when the Canadian delegation voted against the United Kingdom and France on that first measure before the assembly I was charged by some hon. members opposite as lining up with Russia and the United States. But if we had not defeated that move we would never have been able to introduce a resolution for a United Nations force, and when that resolution was first introduced it got—

**Mr. Brooks:** Did not Great Britain and France ask for a United Nations force?

**Mr. Pearson:** Well, I shall try to explain that. What I am talking about now is the first session of the special assembly of the United Nations after everything had collapsed in the security council. When that assembly met the first item before it was the putting of this Middle Eastern question from the security council on the agenda of the assembly. If it had not been put on the agenda we could not have discussed the question at all, and the special assembly would have dissolved and there would have been no opportunity to bring up the United Nations force proposal at that time. The United Kingdom and France, for reasons which they thought were quite good, did attempt to keep this matter off the agenda. A few days later, when the proposal was made for a United Nations force, it got a very large vote and no member of the assembly voted against it. But the United Kingdom and France again—and I am not criticizing, because they felt this to be the proper course for them to