

has already been pointed out, the Secretary-General was required to construct a balanced force, and both he and General Burns began to discover that most of the national offers were solely of infantry units. To this General Burns drew attention when he arrived in New York on November 16 for discussion with civil and military representatives of contributing governments. At the same time the Secretary-General, who was in Cairo, telegraphed to Mr. Pearson that there was not "a lack of troops for the immediate task but of possibilities of bringing them over and maintaining their lines of communication". After the Secretary-General's return from Egypt, he and General Burns again discussed the matter, and, as a result, suggested that the Canadian infantry battalion be for the present held in reserve, and that the Canadian Government should concentrate on meeting the need for air transport, administrative units, signals, engineers, army service, and medical units.

In view of the explanation made, the Canadian Government accepted these suggestions. On November 12 a small Canadian advance party left for the staging-base near Naples, and other units were sent at intervals. As time went on, the Canadian Government received more requests for specialized units and the possibility that the Queen's Own Rifles—the battalion which had been chosen earlier—would be required became more remote. A press release, issued by the Acting Prime Minister on December 10, explained the situation which had developed:

The Acting Prime Minister, the Right Honourable C. D. Howe, announced today that a request has been received from the United Nations, on recommendation of Major-General Burns, the UN Commander in the Middle East, for the immediate provision by Canada of additional maintenance, support and communications personnel for the UN Emergency Force.

Major General Burns states that the detachments of similar troops which have already been sent from Canada have filled a most important and essential role in the rapid build-up of the United Nations Emergency Force and now, as additional infantry units arrive in the Middle East from other countries, there is developing a need for more signals, servicing and maintenance units.

He has accordingly requested, and the UN has authorized the despatch by Canada of a signals squadron of approximately 150 all ranks, a RCEME workshop of about 150 persons and two transport platoons of 120 all ranks.

In addition to these Army personnel, General Burns has asked that upon completion of the airlift between Naples and Egypt, which is now being carried out by the RCAF, an air component for communications and observations be established by Canada in the Middle East as a part of UNEF. The number of RCAF personnel involved in this operation will be between 250 and 300.

In addition to the above-mentioned Army and RCAF contributions, there will be a small number of Canadian officers employed on the staff of General Burns' headquarters.

When the foregoing personnel are despatched to the Middle East the Canadian Army and air force component of the UNEF will comprise over 1,000 service personnel.

The Canadian army component as stated above, with vehicles and equipment necessary for them to perform their tasks, will be despatched in HMCS MAGNIFICENT before the end of the month.

Because of Canada's comparatively favourable position among the nations contributing forces to the UNEF it is apparent that requirements for the support of elements so necessary to round-out and weld the UNEF into an effective and efficient force can best be supplied by Canada. The number of these specialists to be provided by Canada has now reached the point where we are about in balance, so far as numbers are concerned, with the other contributing nations. It is desirable from the UN point of view to preserve this balance and as a result it now appears doubtful whether an infantry unit will be required from Canada. For this reason it has been decided to return, at least for the time being, the 1st QOR of Canada to their home station. This will be done during the next few days. The members of this unit are to be commended