

*External Affairs*

house about the forces that were going to be set up by the United Nations. We said Nasser is going to determine the membership of those forces. Nasser is going to determine their tour of duty. Nasser is going to determine the length of the tenure of their duty. In the light of subsequent events, Nasser has done just that. Did the Queen's Own sail? Nasser said he did not like their appearance.

On November 26 last the Prime Minister stated, as recorded at page 22 of *Hansard* for that date:

It is the United Nations that is going to determine the composition of the force going there. It is the United Nations that will determine where in that country the force will be stationed and when and how long it will be there.

This statement has been proven wrong, Mr. Speaker, in the light of experience. All the way along Nasser has said, this we will do and that I will accept; whatever he has chosen to accept has finally been the determinant.

Next, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, speaking on November 27, 1957 as recorded at page 61 of *Hansard* had this to say:

This force will stay in Egypt until the United Nations decides that its functions are discharged or, of course, until the governments participating in the force withdraw their contingents. It must, of course, not infringe on the sovereignty of the government of the territory in which it is operating. That is obvious.

This statement has no application to Gaza because today the minister stated there was no sovereignty in Egypt in the Gaza strip.

But the exercise of that sovereignty in the case of the government of Egypt where the force is operating now must be qualified by the acceptance by Egypt of the resolution of the United Nations concerning the force . . .

But that does not mean, as I understand it—and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, this has been made very clear in meetings of the advisory committee—that Egypt or any other government can determine by its own decision where the force is to operate, how it is to operate or when it must leave.

In the light of subsequent events, Nasser has done those three things and done them effectively. He has done them to a degree that we have not seen since those days of the League of Nations when contemptuous disregard was shown to the orders and directions of that body. We found then, and we found subsequently, what will happen in the event a world organization finds itself challenged by the actions of one man.

Then, on November 29, page 168 of *Hansard* the Secretary of State for External Affairs said:

Those functions under that earlier resolution were to bring about a cease fire, and that has been done; to bring about the withdrawal of forces behind the armistice lines; to desist from raids across the armistice line into neighbouring territory;

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

to observe scrupulously the provisions of the armistice agreement, and to take steps to re-open the Suez canal and to restore and secure freedom of navigation.

In the light of subsequent events, is there anyone who will tell me that Nasser has lived up to these terms? In so far as clearing the Suez canal is concerned, he has been dragging his feet, to use Mr. Dulles' expression. He has been determining who should operate there and when it should be opened. All along the line, Nasser has been in the position of a victorious wrongdoer and, having the U.S.S.R. behind him, has been able to treat the forces of freedom with contempt that amounts to a disgrace.

Then, finally I come down to 1957. On March 6, various questions were asked in this house regarding the situation and the Prime Minister gave answers. The first of these answers is at page 1924 of *Hansard* for that date, when he used those words which a moment ago he denied:

The Canadian government's demands are being made through the United Nations. It is quite true that unless there is acquiescence—and there should be acquiescence—in the attitudes adopted by the majority of the members of the United Nations the only alternative would be the use of force to overcome resistance, and that is an alternative which I hope it will not become necessary to consider.

There was the statement on the part of the Prime Minister that unless action were properly taken by Nasser force was contemplated. What happened? How was it interpreted? Does a constitutional lawyer have to have a secretary of state for external affairs to interpret the meaning of ordinary words? However, that is exactly what took place. All over the world those words were interpreted as a statement on the part of the Prime Minister that the Canadian government had adopted the policy that, in the event the United Nations orders were not met with, force would be used. The Cairo newspaper stated that the Prime Minister had become an imperialist. Various newspapers across Canada interpreted these words as they could only be interpreted. The *Montreal Star*, which, over the years, has not been an uncomplimentary supporter of the Prime Minister has an editorial on March 11, headed, "Force at Suez". The only interpretation that could be placed on those words he used here in the house, and which had a very serious effect, was given to them. Here, I have the Prince Edward Island *Guardian* and the Edmonton *Journal*. The British newspapers complimented him.

What was the meaning of this statement? There was only one meaning that could possibly be taken from those words, and that was the meaning that was taken by every newspaper in all parts of the world.