

I suggest with diffidence, because this is a matter which is or primary concern to the United Kingdom and French governments, that they were very wise indeed in stopping military operations at the time they did. After all, they had indicated that they were going into that area to stop the fighting at the canal and to prevent the conflict continuing between Israel and Egypt in such a way that it would interfere with the operation of the canal.

By this time both Israel and Egypt had accepted the cease-fire. Therefore the original reason given by the United Kingdom and French forces for intervening had been removed. If the United Kingdom and French forces had continued fighting at that time, after the Egyptian and Israeli governments had accepted the cease-fire, I suggest that the Commonwealth might not have been able to stand the strain; that the Asian members of the Commonwealth might not have been able to remain in it in those circumstances. There is evidence from New Delhi, Karachi and Colombo to support that statement. I suggest also that a continuation of the fighting, even if it had had immediately successful military results, would have created even a deeper and more permanent split between the western European and Arab world. It might well have led to the occupation of Egypt, which was not an original objective of British-French intervention. It would have been a standing invitation to the Egyptian government to invite in at that time, when the fighting was going on, Soviet volunteers. Whatever the reasons may have been, and I think they were good ones, the United Kingdom and French governments did accept the cease-fire and we entered a new stage of developments.

There were only two more resolutions subsequent to the one I have just mentioned. The one last Saturday asked for withdrawal once again. We did not support it because we felt that the withdrawal had begun. We had confidence in the good faith of the British and French when they told us that the withdrawal would be completed. We felt at that time that to support another resolution of withdrawal would be to assimilate the position of the British, French and Israelis to that of the Russians in Hungary.

Then the final resolution carried Saturday night approved an aide memoire which gave the Secretary-General further authority to organize the United Nations police force. By a very important paragraph in that resolution he was told to get ahead with the clearing of the Suez canal. In spite of efforts by Soviet and certain Arab-Asian countries to hold up the work on political grounds, he has now authority to go ahead with the vitally important work.

Functions of the U.N. Force

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the United Nations force in being and I am sure the house would like me to say something about the functions, operations and composition of that force, and Canada's contribution to it.