

Canadian participation because he felt that that would be improper. On his return and after further discussion with General Burns it was agreed that for the time being we should concentrate on getting these other forces to Egypt and hold the infantry battalion in reserve. General Burns himself said he agreed that it was even more important at the present moment to have an air transport headquarters, administration units, signals, engineers, army service, medical units and forces of that type; which were later to be sneered at by some excitable persons as constituting a typewriter army, something that will not I think commend itself to the members of these very gallant Canadian regiments.

We agreed then to this change in plans, although regretting it. It is indeed our desire to fit in our plans with those agreed upon by General Burns and the Secretary-General and keep the rest of our forces available for transmission to the area; and on Tuesday November 20, the order in council was passed to that end. I ask whether we could or should have proceeded otherwise. I am sure that most members of the house will agree that we would have been wrong if we had not made the offer we did in the first instance without delay, an offer which at that time seemed most appropriate and was considered as such by the Secretary-General.

To have made no offers or to have made no plans; to have held back our offer until everything was cleared up; to have permitted no movement of troops of any kind, would I think have left us open to criticism, to the charge that we were dragging our feet in connection with a proposal which we ourselves had put forward. I think also that we would have been wrong to have interfered with our plans until we were certain that their implementation or the timing thereof was to be changed.

When we were asked to make that change, not by Colonel Nasser but by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the commanding general of the United Nations forces, we could have either accepted or rejected the request. The latter would have meant delaying any action or, as has been suggested in a few extreme quarters, we could have withdrawn from the United Nations force completely. I am confident that if we had taken either of those courses, if we had delayed taking any action or withdrawn from the force, in view of the developments we would have been open to grave criticism and we would have got most of it from some hon. gentlemen opposite who have spoken already in this debate. I think the course we took was the right course, and it was considered the right course by the United Nations officials concerned.

It did not seem to me to be the time--I am talking now about the time we were confronted with the necessity of changing our plans, at least temporarily--or the occasion for national pique or peevishness or sneering at this new United Nations force as being Nasser's farce. It seemed to me that the situation was far too serious for that. What was required from every member of the United Nations was to back up the United Nations force to the best of its ability after