OTTAWA FACED DILEMMA ON SUEZ
By RAYMOND DANIELL Special to The New York Times.
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Choice in U. N. Was to Back Britain or the U. S.— Solved by Abstaining

By RAYMOND DANIELL
Special to The New York Times.

OTTAWA, Nov. 1 — Canada appeared today to be caught in the middle of the United States' dispute with Britain and France on the Middle East.

Lester B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, left to head Canada's delegation at the meetings of the General Assembly of the United Nations without Cabinet instructions on Canada's position.

Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent said after a Cabinet meeting that no decision had been reached on whether to support the British and French intervention in Egypt or United States reliance on the United Nations. If Canada had to take a stand, he said, Mr. Pearson would telephone him and he would call the Cabinet in an emergency meeting.

The Canadian Cabinet was said to be divided on whether to follow the United States and reject British leadership or to pursue a policy of moderation. Mr. Pearson was reported to be hoping that a resolution that Canada could support might be substituted for the one now before the Assembly of the United Nations.

[In the United Nations Assembly vote Friday morning, Mr. Pearson solved the dilemma for Canada by abstaining.]

Nevertheless, while there is sympathy and understanding of Israel's tribulations at the hands of the Arab states there is a strong feeling here that she was guilty of an act of aggression. There is also disapproval of the French and British decision to act with force without waiting for United Nations decisions.

Attitude to the Canal

Canada's attitude toward the Suez issue is about the same as it was in 1885 when Britain asked Sir John A. Macdonald, the first Prime Minister, to provide Canadian armed help for Egypt.

Said Sir John: "The Suez Canal is nothing to us. Why should we waste money and men; in this wretched business?"

What is of vital concern to Canada is the preservation of the Western alliance, now seen to be threatened with collapse because of dissension among the principal allies. Since the end of World War II Canadian foreign policy has been based entirely on the United Nations and such regional alliances within it as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which Canada played an imporant role in establishing.

The dilemma facing the Canadian Government is that Canada's ties to Britain, as a member of the British Commonwealth, are as strong as her friendship with the United States. Under the circumstances, a forthright expression of opinion is difficult although in this instance Canadian opinion leans toward the United States position.

Press Exemplifies Problem

This ambivalent attitude was commented upon this morning by The Toronto Globe and Mail, one of the country's most serious and influential papers published in a city where public opinion usually is strongly pro-British. The newspaper said:

"Sharing an undefended border with the United States, Canada has become that country's closest friend. At the same time she has the most intimate ties with Britain and strong ones with France." The editorial held that in this instance Canada had failed in her duty.

The Ottawa Citizen also noted the dilemma in an editorial. It said:

"Barring information which may change the picture, Canada is faced with a choice between two evils—to support Britain and renounce its adherence to the United Nations as a source of policy, or to support the United Nations and turn its back on Britain, which, to many Canadians, would appear unthinkable."

Husseini el Khatib, the Egyptian Ambassador here, issued a statement saying that the Canadian Government's halting of the shipment of jet aircraft to Israel could only be taken as "condemnation" of Israel, France and Britain.

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