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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

D.H. trips 1957 December 7

Remarks by Sec. Gen. at N. York Int. Airport on his return
from the Middle East

NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

REMARKS BY SECRETARY-GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD AT NEW YORK

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 7 DECEMBER 1957, ON HIS RETURN FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

I have been away just for a week out in the Middle East where I visited Jordan, Israel, Syria and, very briefly, also Lebanon. The reason for the trip was that quite recently we have had a couple of particular problems, limited problems, which needed careful and immediate handling. As you know, it is much better to keep the car on the road than to try to get it out of the ditch. I feel that I got what I hoped for. That's a very small step on a long road, but it made this trip very much worth while. That, I think, is what I would like to say by way of general comments.

- Q. Do you think that that preserves the peace in the Middle East as of now -- your accomplishments?
- A. The peace in the Middle East is a much, much bigger question. I refer to what I said -- it is wise to keep the car on the road.
- Q. Did you take any steps to the broader issues?
- A. None at all. The time was sufficient for the smaller, immediate issues and they were what was urgent.
- Q. Mr. Hammarskjold, what conferences have you set up here within the UN to further this last trip that you have made -- the accomplishments on it?
- A. Nothing at all for the moment. I will have to have consultations with a few people, and especially, as you have seen, I decided to appoint a special representative to get this Mt. Scopus agreement going. The Mt. Scopus agreement is a quite important thing because it safeguards an area outside Jerusalem of great significance to all parties.
- Q. Has anything new been established on the status of Colonel Leary?
- A. I have no reason to go into that. I have already, in writing and publicly, given expression to my unwavering confidence in him.
- Q. Mr. Hammarskjold, have the Israelis agreed to complete and full inspection of the Mt. Scopus installations?
- A. Well, the reply is given in the communique. I have said that we set up now this negotiation for implementation of the Mt. Scopus agreement, and the Mt. Scopus agreement implies also full inspection in order to guarantee its implementation. I think that's about all I have to say about it.
- Q. Would you say that the Armistice in the Middle East is now more stable than it was before your trip?
- A. That's a very broad question. The armistice is, I think, reasonably stable, but there are certain possibilities which it is wise to forestall.

(more)

- Q. Thank you, Mr. Hammarskjöld, thank you.
- Q. Where are you going from here, Mr. Hammarskjöld?
- A. To my office.

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(Note: Later in the afternoon the Secretary-General met in his office with Major General E.L.M. Burns, Commander of the UN Emergency Force, who was en route from Canada back to Gaza.)