

**Middle East - Suez story No  
27-32: Middle East - Suez  
story No 27-32 - 12**

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Middle East / Suez story - 27

11 - 19 March 57

Bunche, Ralph (Under-Sec. for Special  
Political Affairs)

- 6 code cables to D.H.
- 5 code cables from D.H.

OUTGOING CABLE

CODE

TO: BURNS AND BUNCHE

FROM: SECGEN

DATE: 11 MARCH 1957

NO:

RE UNEF 554, 556, 561

554 para 2. I feel we should distinguish between two sets of problems:

- alpha: those referring to a final settlement of role of UNEF in Gaza which both could and should be postponed until my arrival, and
- beta: all the intermediary problems which should be solved so as not to prejudge final settlement in false direction.

I am convinced that it is desirable to have Gaza situation and UNEF role established de facto as much as possible before a settlement is tried concerning respective responsibilities etc. It is my view that you and Burns should consider yourselves as having full powers to work ahead with intermediary problems partly as covered below in this cable. In view these observations, I hesitate to go earlier to Cairo, although I willingly keep the possibility open. Fawzi will arrive Cairo Wednesday night.

Main intermediary problems seem to be covered UNEF 561, second paragraph, points a-d on which my comments are as follows:

- a) Formal assurance to this effect is less important and more difficult to achieve than gentlemen's agreement. Such agreement should be sought without any delay. I revert to form for approach below.
- b) On this point I consider that we are entitled to ask for explicit assurances.
- c) Assurances should be sought for the time when Egyptian administration may be reestablished in the area and Egyptians responsible for jurisdiction and police.

.../

- d) Fully agreed on the general line with its specific application to food stores in Haifa, but suggest a more general approach. Propose you ask Egyptians what alternatives they can offer for transport of food supplies to Gaza and oranges from Gaza. In a situation where they have no alternative to offer, the duty of UN to safeguard the interests of local population and refugees, entitle us to request Egyptians accept and cooperate for transport by such means and in such directions as we may find possible. With no possibility of taking sufficient food supplies in from Fort Said, we are obliged, as responsible party, to try to get them in from Haifa and Egyptians are obliged to accept that arrangement.

Re latest administrative developments as appointment of administrative governor in Gaza and protest against UNEF exercising police functions. Our stand on appointment and on Helmy's request of yesterday, should be as follows. We do not question Egyptians legal right. We consider that no steps should be taken which prejudge a settlement of problems mentioned in Secretary-General's statement in General Assembly 22 February prior to such a settlement. We further consider that, if such steps are decided upon, they should not be implemented until after a settlement. In the present case we do not deny that liaison group may be useful or that there should be Egyptian "administrative" governor in Gaza, but we consider it politically inadvisable and in relation to us a serious complication if such administrative arrangements were to be put into effect before understanding reached on the whole set of problems regarding future cooperation. Concerning our stand on police functions of UNEF, a full presentation of case may have to be given in reply to protest when received. Immediately we can make the following three points. During "initial take-over" police functions for maintenance of order have been exercised with Egyptian consent in Fort Said; such police functions are in line with statement 22 February in General Assembly as approved by Fawzi; under international law we have the duty and therefore also the right to protect life, property and order when no other civil authority is in a position to do so in the area where we have the resources; unrest directly related to withdrawal should be checked by UNEF under its normal mandate.

Consider it appropriate that Dunche in talk with President clarifies these various points as appropriate and that the same lines are maintained with Hassan and other Egyptian authorities. Regarding points a)-d) above, I recommend that

.../

Bunche in proper wording orally transmit viewpoints as personal message to President from me with special emphasis on b) and a) in that order, but covering all the four points. I prefer this technique to sending text of a message from me via Delegation or through Bunche in view of extreme difficulty in present sensitive situation to find the right words here to convey our firmly held views. I feel you should strive for these points with great insistence but basing yourself on line that they, together with delay in implementation of all administrative measures until after agreement with me, are essential if Egypt is not to blow its cooperation with UN to pieces.

In addition to previous attempts at clarification of situation in UN, I wish to stress that we were faced in the final round of discussions with a picture showing clearly impossibility to reconcile Israeli stand, which backstage was strongly expressed, with stand of UN as endorsed by majority and we believe explicitly also by Americans. Whatever wish we may have had in Secretariat to be able to work on less contradictory basis, the general view even Arab-Asian side, including Egypt, was that after American negotiations overriding concern must be to lead evacuation to completion and that we must accept continued basic contradiction during initial period of greatest possible length. In fact, I had no choice unless I wanted to take on us responsibility for new postponement of withdrawal with very uncertain outcome and against the wishes of all delegations. The best we can make of present situation, is, therefore, to work for slowest and smoothest possible transition during initial take-over to what is likely to be more lasting balance Egyptian - UN elements. Change in small steps will probably be politically possible and not provoke explosion if we can avoid return of Egyptian troops and check raids. These two conditions vital. For the rest we must manoeuvre as best we can with acceptance of step by step clarifications of Egyptian stand but delay of implementation of their decisions. Line suggested in this cable is to be understood in the light of these considerations. This applies also to wish to postpone more clear-cut settlement and work through you on immediate problems in the spirit of such a settlement as we envisage it. Legal aspects will be fully taken care of by Stavropoulos who leaves from here for Cairo Wednesday.

OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TOP SECRET

TO: BURNS AND BUNCHE

URGENT

FROM: SEGGEN

DATE: 12 MARCH 1957

NO:

Re UNEFCA 95. Encouraged by trend reflected in your cable. I firmly maintain that follow up on designation administrative governor comes too quickly not to create serious difficulties for us. I therefore find that you should work for delay as long as possible with the implementation of suggested arrangement. Natural to suggest that Latif does not go until after my talks in Cairo. If this unacceptable in spite of obvious afterthoughts Egyptian side, situation would be improved if it were announced that Latif now goes to Gaza only as "acte de présence" and that time for his taking up of functions remains open question. What remains the most worrying factor in views held around UN is, even with strongly reduced staff of civilians, Governor's position as high-ranking general Egyptian Army with the implication that this position is considered to carry.

TOP SECRET

OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TO: Bunche, Gaza  
FROM: SecGen  
DATE: 16 March 1957  
NUMBER:

TOP SECRET

Re UNEF 604, para 2. Matter has been discussed among us and with Advisory Committee this morning.

We fully appreciate your reasons for wishing to strengthen Force at Demarcation Line but fear that staged without preparation this policy would in most serious way prejudice what is likely to be key issue in future question of administration and of special interest to us in achieving results reflecting even on our possible successes on the Demarcation line. It is our view that your next step should be to tell Egyptians that you wish to strengthen watch at Demarcation Line but that this would lead to undue weakening internal security unless special arrangements agreed upon. Such a weakening obviously against joint interests of Egyptian authorities and UNEF. Cooperation for solution of problem therefore would seem natural. Why could not new arrangement take the form that necessary number of local Palestinian police be put under orders of UNEF which in this context is invited by Egyptian authorities to take care of internal security. If such arrangement approved, it would mean that, without infringement of Egyptian sovereignty in the area, control of, as well as responsibility for internal security would rest with UNEF, at request Egyptian authorities and with utilization, under UNEF orders, of local police. UNEF, of course, would keep for itself essential guards of UNEF and UNRWA installations and personnel. Condition for arrangement would also be clear information to public and instructions to policemen,

TOP SECRET

put at UNEF disposal, that Egyptian authorities have wished such arrangement.

In comments to above, we <sup>wish</sup> ~~with~~ to say following: to start using on large scale local police without prior agreement with Egyptians would involve risk for split responsibility, incomplete check and control by UNEF and disciplinary troubles arising with policemen. Further, as stated above, it might prejudge question of final responsibility for internal security. Rather than to do this, we should get this last issue up in a clear cut form which obviously would happen if Egyptians were to reject proposal in previous paragraph. If they do so, whole question would have to be reconsidered here. If, alternatively, they wish to avoid agreement outlined until discussions with me, a possible formula for the time being might be that you, with Egyptian support, use local police while making a general reservation in line with previous paragraph.

We regret that this procedure, which seems unavoidable, will delay reinforcements at the Armistice line to all the extent that you consider desirable, but we feel that we have to strike a balance, and that risks in pursuance the policy mentioned your cable paragraph 2, without prior agreement, are so great as to warrant the suggested effort with some delay of reinforcement at Armistice Demarcation Line.

Please cable your reaction or, if you go ahead as suggested, outcome of your contact with Egyptians soonest. Matter taken most seriously by Advisory Committee which in this respect certainly is representative of general views here.

OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TO: Bunche, Gaza

FROM: SecGen

DATE: 16 March 1957

NUMBER:

TOP SECRET

Re UNEF 604 para 4. We see this paragraph in relation to concern reflected in paragraph 2. Our stand is as follows:

Primo. UNEF is not a combat force and is, under its terms of reference, not entitled militarily to resist troop movements from Egypt into Gaza or, indeed, from Israel into Gaza.

Secundo. Short of firing in cases mentioned in Tertio, UNEF has to exert its controlling and checking influence without resorting to firing at intruders or raiders. Shots in the air and use of other disciplinary and deterrent measures of similar nature is another matter.

Tertio. If under Primo or Secundo, UNEF in emergencies must act in clear self-defence, they are to be considered as entitled to protect themselves by force.

The whole matter is extremely delicate but the view expressed here is firmly held by whole Advisory Committee with its strong representation of contributing countries. The line you indicate might involve UNEF in impossible situations without preventing <sup>a</sup>military operation by Israel or Egypt. The very presence of UNEF even under "passive resistance" is considered as the maximum deterrent we at present can introduce into the situation.

TOP SECRET

From Labrousse in  
Adv. Com. meet'g 16 March

If UNEF strengthens R/L forces, and weakens its  
internal security forces, who will be responsible  
for internal security? This is something that  
cannot be a divided responsibility. I am  
convinced that local police will work for  
UNEF only with Egyptian agreement.  
If Egypt agrees to having UNEF  
responsible, it should so state publicly  
and act accordingly. Otherwise,  
it is necessary that Egypt be  
saddled with full responsibility  
for internal security.

Good substance for the reply. Let us  
talk it over after lunch.

TOP PRIORITY

OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TO: Bunche

FROM: SecGen

DATE: 17 March 1957

NUMBER:

TOP SECRET

Information available here indicates very threatening Israeli reaction to latest development and visit by Menon to Cairo Tuesday to Thursday. I will not be able to have satisfactory background either points before departure tomorrow and may, therefore, have to arrive directly Cairo for talks starting Thursday morning, with departure from New York Tuesday provided ~~no~~ further developments or results of demarche proposed below do not call for more radical revision of plans.

I ask you to arrange for personal talk with Fawzi tomorrow in Cairo at my request and to transmit to him orally, in paraphrase of your choice, the following message:

"The latest developments, as well as certain developments anticipated for the next few days, make it necessary for me to approach you in order to get your views on the conditions under which I would visit Cairo. When you left New York last Monday we were agreed on usefulness of my visit to Cairo and I understood you to be hopeful concerning positive results on major pending issues. Now I feel uncertain concerning following three questions:

1. Will there still be scope for useful exchange of views on so-called interim arrangements, providing also for informal contact with U.S. before anything is definitely decided? I know well your approach to the substance of the problem. Only on basis that <sup>THIS</sup> ~~an~~ approach is maintained would I see scope for promising joint exploration of the question.

2. Will there be possibilities for positive planning of necessary discussions concerning "settlement" of Canal question, leaving a sufficient margin within the framework of my letter of 24 October to promise an agreed solution in the spirit which has animated our efforts so far?

3. Will there be scope for a discussion on the settlement of those major questions which arise within the frame of my statement of 22 February, the background and implications of which Bunche is most qualified to elaborate from UN side? Sweeping de facto arrangements, especially regarding internal security but also in fields like those now handed over by UNEWA, would render margin for agreement too insignificant for top level settlement. If through Egyptian steps margin is thus reduced, UN would be put in false position at forthcoming talks, and if, furthermore, in particular internal security questions were prejudged also the role of UNEF might become false and untenable. I would have to look at such a development with the utmost concern, and I regret that what has already happened has meant serious deterioration of UN prestige and its ensuing possible influence on general situation.

In the light of these questions which have arisen in their present form since we last met and of the replies that you feel you can give to them, I would appreciate your personal and frank evaluation of usefulness of my planned visit to Cairo beginning Thursday."

Of course, I do not expect any written reply to these questions, but I hope that in the course of conversation with you, Fawzi can elucidate the situation so as to make it clear that visit, if it comes about, is not arranged on false assumptions so as to make us risk humiliating situation for organization.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO : SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM : BUNCHE - BURNS GOT INFO  
DATE : 12 MARCH 1957 - 0721 EST.  
NUMBER : UNEFCA 91

1. Had conference this morning at UN Office with Colonel Gohar at his initiative. Gohar was called into meeting yesterday afternoon with President, War Minister and others which Gaza communique was issued. I took occasion to bring up this release of information department by stating that I had no comment to make and would make none on action concerning Gaza announced by Egyptian Government. However, I did feel it imperative, on basis of my personal observation at Gaza and knowledge of facts, to protest strongly against manifest injustice of any allegation or inference that UNEF had fired at or on civilian inhabitants of Gaza or had in any way acted beyond mandate given to it by Assembly Resolutions. I added that in view of well known UN role here since 15 November, Egyptian Authorities had obligation to correct any unfortunate public misimpression resulting from the communique. Gohar agreed with this view and volunteered to take up matter today with both Nasser and Minister of War. Gohar added that Latif on assuming duties at Gaza would also try to correct any such <sup>mis</sup>impressions.

2. Gohar stated Governments intention to send Larif and nine or ten administrative personnel to Gaza Strip Wednesday. Enquired very seriously if UNEF would "resist" their entry. I assured him that UNEF has no such role and he was relieved he said

that he had understood that General Burns had informed Brigadier Helmy that he (Burns) would permit no Egyptian to enter Gaza Strip. I informed Gohar that I was in Helmy's office Sunday with Burns when question of Helmy's liaison group for Gaza was discussed and Burns had said nothing of the kind, leaving the question open pending consultation with Secretary General. To his direct question whether UN would "object" to Egyptian Administrators in Gaza I replied that we were not in position to do so.

3. Gohar said Egyptian intention is to rely on Palestine Police as before Israeli occupation. Was evasive on question of Egyptian Troops in Gaza.

4. Gohar stated that War Ministry yesterday decided that all of remaining Gaza citrus crop will be purchased for marketing in Egypt.

5. He was fully informed on problem of transportation of UNRWA food stocks from Haifa and saw difficulty only in bringing Israeli train crews into Gaza. Is taking it up with War Minister.

6. Gohar recognized important UN function with refugees, Egyptian need to call on UNEF for interventions with Israelis on currency conversion, closed banks, collection of balances on citrus transactions and similar matters. UNEF, he assumed will be deployed along armistice line.

Gohar suggested that he and I might go together to Gaza tomorrow. I demurred politely. Tentatively planning return to Gaza by UN plane Wednesday or Thursday.

INCOMING CODE CABLE.

TO: SEGGEN (INFO BURNS)  
FROM: BUNGHE, CAIRO  
DATE: 12 MARCH, 1957 1854 EST  
NUMBER: UNEFCA 95

1. Gohar came late this afternoon to see me again. Gave revised information on Government plans concerning Gaza. Number of personnel to be sent to Gaza now reduced to Latif, the Administrative Governor, plus 5 civilian administrative officers. Gohar stresses that these will be concerned exclusively with administration of Gaza strip.

2. Gohar expects the 6 Egyptians to proceed by road from El Arish to Rafah to Gaza, "most probably" on Thursday morning, 14th.

3. I discouraged all of his ideas about formal Egyptian entry, welcome by Burns at Rafah, etcetera on grounds that this would be entirely inappropriate and fanfare probably harmful. He agreed and suggested instead that Burns, Latif, Gohar and myself meet privately in Gaza on Thursday to discuss respective roles of UNEF and Egyptians. I am rather certain that Gohar will take position that UNEF should not remain in Gaza town but should be deployed along armistice line.

4. Gohar referred several times to need to clear up "misunderstanding" which induced Egyptian Government to suspect UN intentions in Gaza and therefore to act more quickly than otherwise it might have done. Again he referred to Helmy's report that Burns had indicated that no Egyptians could return to Gaza. See UNEFCA 83. He says he now understands that Helmy did not realize Burns was referring to initial take over stage.

5. I am hoping that my appointment with Nasser will be for Wednesday as I

feel it important to be in Gaza Thursday morning.

6. Have growing confidence that problem of re-entry of military elements not likely to arise any time soon. Also expect cooperation against raids.

To South 12/13 57.

1. Although the demarche was called a protest, the Secretary-General wished to regard it as a demand for clarification and nothing more, as he could not see any basis for a protest.

2. The first complaint was that the UNEF soldiers had fired on the population. That is not in accordance with the facts. The UNEF has to maintain order and protect itself within the limits of rights existing in the absence of civilian police or other state authority in function.

3. Both as regards the maintenance of order, in the absence of other functioning authorities, and as regards administrative activities, safeguarding basic needs of the population, the UNEF is acting strictly under international law, and its activities do in no way detract from Egypt's rights in the area under the Armistice Agreement. Being the only functioning authority in a position to do so at once, the UN has the duty and therefore also the right to do what is necessary in the interest of the population.

4. During the initial take-over period police functions for maintenance of order were exercised with Egypt's consent in Port Said.

5. Such police functions and the necessary administrative activities are in line with the statement on 22 February by the Secretary-General in the General Assembly, to which the Egyptian authorities did not raise objections, and the legal assumptions of which were made fully clear in the special memorandum annexed to the Secretary-General's report of 26 February.

6. The United Nations Emergency Force has functions related to cease-fire and to withdrawal. The latter functions must be considered as including the maintenance of order in the troubled situation arising on the withdrawal of the occupying forces.

7. It has been repeatedly stressed that the United Nations activities in the area as they have developed the last few days, refer to the "initial" take-over, which indicates that those functions are temporary in nature and to be followed by other arrangements which obviously have to be based on an understanding with the Government in control of the area.

8. The Report of the Secretary-General, 8 March, in its third part, made clear the view of the Secretary-General on the extent of the temporary obligations of the United Nations during the initial take-over. No objections were raised to the views thus expressed.

9. Hoping that these various points would clarify the position, the Secretary-General wishes to repeat that he sees no reason for a protest and that he sees no reason for Egypt to consider that the UN activities infringe upon Egypt's rights. It is his hope that the Egyptian Government, in the assistance of which the United Nations Emergency Force in this case is functioning, will see its way to lay the basis for a fruitful cooperation between Egyptian authorities and the United Nations, as well as between United Nations representatives and the inhabitants of the area. Such cooperation is obviously in the best interest of all parties concerned.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO : LABOUISEE (Personal)  
FROM : CARVER, BEIRUT  
DATE : 12 MARCH 1957 - 0903 EST  
NUMBER : BEICO 55

1. Just learned from press of Egypt declared intention to resume administration of Gaza. Personal comments following weekend in Strip as follows:-

(a) Egyptians are de facto controlling civil affairs. Very few inhabitants are prepared to cooperate with UNEF, even our own Palestinian Staff have asked to be excused. Government workers invited yesterday to distribute rations to remaining Gaza poor refused pending receipt instructions from Cairo. Almost everyone fears reprisals for "collaborating" and presence of Fedayeen in and out of uniform some with arms does little to reassure them.

(b) It was consensus of opinion camp administrators yesterday that people would cooperate with UNRWA over normal programmes but would await orders from Cairo before assisting agency to fulfil additional responsibilities.

(c) In circumstances assume you have considered whether it would not be better for Egyptian Government to be officially responsible relieving UN of financial burden which in prevailing circumstances UN would have borne without possessing effective control. I appreciate risk of serious deterioration International position but operating expanded programme in present conditions almost impossible and public declaration from Cairo and

genuine wholehearted support for UN Administration appears unlikely.

2. Both Jamieson and Lucas understand that if Egypt officially resumes control (presumably with UN concurrence) Jamieson and his team are to hand over administration of recently expanded activities. All measures already taken have foreseen possibility eg Egyptian doctor Taha nominated by Masri to succeed him as director health has been appointed to lead group responsible for hospitals and Public Health and Egyptian Government factors have been asked to resume their posts.

3. Lucas will have a very difficult time if Egyptians return and expects us to release him soon afterwards. Nielsen whose life had been threatened came out yesterday and I will bring out Wood if possible tomorrow. Both are suffering from strain. Three International secretaries also returned Beirut. Only woman Staff Member remaining Ritmeester. Both municipal council and camp administration<sup>ors</sup> advised strongly against import from Israel. We explained position but difficulties will be immense unless lead is given from Cairo.

4. If Haifa is barred supply position acute. Stocks in Gaza sufficient for April. Possibility of procuring, shipping and forwarding by rail via Port Said-Kantara, in time, remote. Understand that train ferry Kantara not yet operational and capacity will be small until more rolling stock has crossed the canal. Even then there will be competing traffic eg. UNEF Base supplies. Israelis will undoubtedly refuse to allow train from Israel into Egyptian territory. Am exploring possibility of transport by road in UNRWA vehicles with UNEF drivers but cost will be high and Israel reactions problematical

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: BUNCHE, CAIRO  
DATE: 13 MARCH 1957 1504 EST  
NUMBER: UNEFCA 101

1. Burns and I had talk with Gohar afternoon 13th.
2. I explained to Gohar that our talks must be regarded as purely exploratory so far as major questions of status and function of UNEF concerned since President Nasser had agreed that such matters be deferred until arrival of Secretary General.
3. Gohar reconfirmed that Latif and his 5 men will enter Gaza Strip sometime Thursday. Although he expects governor to assume authority over Strip, he stated that first task of group would be "observation and report to Cairo on needs." We strongly discouraged suggestion that Helmys military liaison group also enter and we think this will not occur for time being. We also opposed vigorously Gohars suggestion of Egyptian police or "irregulars" to supplement Palestine police.
4. We insisted that any Egyptian take-over of functions such as policing now performed by UNEF must be gradual and effective and not by any proclamation or decree. Gohar finally agreed but this will probably be a tussle all the way.
5. Here seeing Nasser tonight and will back up my effort to slow down Egyptian assumption of authority.
6. I am going to Gaza with Burns morning 14th and will remain there for day or two.

.../.....

7. Burns and I delighted to learn you are coming sooner.  
Every day counts heavily.

UNDERLINED AS PER TEXT REC'D (SI.)

Telegram i chiffer från Utrikesdepartementet till FN-representationen den 13 mars 1957.

Nr 45.

Urgent and confidential for Hammarskjöld from Ralph Bunche.

1. Talked with president Nasser from noon to 1.45 covering all points mentioned your 448 52 53. Your 57 had not been decoded prior my departure for appointment but I made substantially same points in discussion this matter with Nasser and he was fully satisfied. He was friendly and relaxed throughout talk said last six months had caused him to loose faith in just about everyone except Secretary General and United Nations. Added that he appreciated courageous position taken by Eisenhower administration.

2. expressed deep regret on behalf you and general Burns over information received only this morning of death of Ghaza resident resulting from ricochet bullet fired during disturbance on Sunday. Stressed that this was purely accidental and that UNEF had not fired at or on people. He had believed newspaper accounts that shot was

fired by a Canadian but accepted my assurance that this was not the case.

3. President fully confirmed <sup>first</sup> (about) paragraph of my UNEF A-98. Said Egypt had some about U.N. intentions for following reasons.

A. Helmy, reporting on exchanges with Burns on subject Egyptian liaison officers in Ghaza, stated that Burns had flatly rejected idea on grounds that he had orders "to permit no Egyptian to enter Ghaza". Nasser added that attitude of Burns on this matter was "rude" and led to suspicion and resentment. President kept reverting to this. I have no doubt that this is in part a reflection of current feeling against anything Canadian because of recent speeches by St. Laurent and Pearson especially former.

B. Alleged interview given to a Herald Tribune correspondent by Burns which Egyptians noted being cabled, alleging that Egypt had inspired and organized Sunday demonstration and there was communist influence behind it. President very scornful about this Will check this with Burns.

C. Reports received in Cairo about intentions and efforts of UNRWA to greatly extend its function in Ghaza and assume broad administrative responsibility.

D. Reports of UNEF restricting movements in Ghaza and shooting incident.

E. Reports that reprisals being taken that two arabs had been killed and others threatened.

4. I presented ten point case on question of entry of remainder of Canadian contingent stressing that this is only delayed delivery on previous agreement, no new addition and explaining tactical purpose of Pearson speech. President frankly admitted that cabinet decision not to admit any more Canadians was on purely political basis, as Egypt's political reply to political use of UNEF in speeches of St. Laurent and Pearson. Said he knew Egypt turning back Canadians would be politically embarrassing to St. Laurent. I urged that it would be far less so to St. Laurent than to Secretary-General, and he understood. Finally informed me twice that he was in agreement with me, that Canadians here had caused no difficulty and were good members of UNEF, that 150 more Canadians would make no difference and, noting that he would have to consult his cabinet on it, said "give me two or three days on it and it will be all right!"

5. On UNEF and Ghaza the president's position was as follows:

a) Egypt will be in "no hurry" to send any military forces into Ghaza. In any event it is not practical to send even those permitted by the Armistice Agreement because of the exposed geographical position. Even before Israeli invasion Egypt had only a national guard unit there. Willing to have not a normal agreement but a general understanding or "gentlemen's agreement". In this area he said he is quite willing that the "military burden rest on the UNEF".

b) UNEF must be "astride" the Armistice line and he referred to his position -55 in favour of a 5 mile zone on each side of the line.

c) UNEF Headquarters should properly be at El Auja.

d) President Nasser stated flatly that there will be no more fedayeen raids if Israelis do not raid. He said that he could say this confidently, since the fedayeen raids had been arranged by the Egyptian Government in reaction to Israeli retaliatory raids. There had really been only two fedayeen raids he said, in both of which commandos were employed. On the other hand he doubted that Egyptian Government and UNEF together could fully stop individual bedouins from crossing line to plunder or take individual revenge. This has nothing to do with the fedayeen activity.

e). He has ordered the Ministry of Supply to either purchase the remainder of the Ghaza citrus crop or compensate the growers.

f) He will instruct his people to cooperate fully with us in arranging for transportation and unloading the UNRWA food stocks from Haifa.

g) He will instruct his people in Ghaza to extend fullest cooperation to UNRWA and to General Burns in the interest of the people of Ghaza and relaxation of tension in the area. Re UNRWA referring to Fawzi's report from New York as well as my comment, he was surprised to know that there had been difficulty between Egyptians and UNRWA in Ghaza since when he last talked with Labouisse there had been no mention of any problems.

6. In response to my appeal the President agreed that no final decisions on important matters effecting relations between UN and Egypt, and particularly problems set forth in Secretary-General's statement of February 22, should be taken prior to your arrival here. I could not however discern or induce any willingness to defer entry into Gaza of administrative governor and his group. Rather he repeatedly expressed wish for friendly and helpful cooperation between UN-elements and Gaza administration. "We must", he urged, "cooperate to ease tension in the area!"

7. Col. Nasser had been informed by Gohaq of my protest about the references to UNEF in the Egyptian communiqué and assured me that there was no intention to be critical of UNEF for Egypt was well aware of its friendly mission here and that four of its members had lost their lives.

8. The President for whatever reasons is completely serious about Egyptian reentry into Gaza. By skilful and delicate effort UN units may be able to establish de facto responsibilities not previously held but at this stage at any rate Nasser seems bent on political and administrative control of the strip.

9. He repeated the usual fervid declamations about Egypt's desire only for peace, that Egypt will never attack, the false charges of "communist" made against him, Egypt's new confidence in itself and new strength etc.

10. He closed by saying he would like to call me in whenever it might be useful and then we were confronted by a battery of cameramen who had been admitted to his office.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

**TOP SECRET**

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: BUNCHE, GAZA  
DATE: 14 MARCH 1957 1130 EST - 1435 EST  
NUMBER: UNEF 578

Late Wednesday night Ray Hare gave me summary his talk with President emphasizing following points.

1. When Hare finished exposition on basis his instructions to try <sup>to</sup> persuade Nasser preferably to defer implementation of decision re Gaza or at least to try to go very slowly on it, Nasser professed not to understand, saying that what Egypt is doing is most natural thing and will be understood as such by all except Western countries which are never sympathetic to anything he does anyway.

2. Hare argued to no avail that abrupt way in which Egypt is doing this is tantamount to slap in face for United Nations and all those who have worked so diligently and earnestly over past months to bring this Historical effort close to remarkable success. But President responded with same real suspicion, alleged suspicions or rationalizations narrated to me earlier in day, including same allegations mentioned in 3 A and 3 B of my special non-numbered message from Cairo on the thirteenth. Incidentally 3 B confirmed to me as substantially accurate. President clinched his argument with brazen irony that he would not defer sending Governor to Gaza Thursday since arrangement for it had already been made with Dr. Bunche.

3. As last resort Hare tried to convince President that if Egypt must do this now then atleast play it smartly by announcement concerning full cooperation with United Nations along lines of your 22 February statement rather

than playing up entry provocatively as a victory with fiery demonstrations etc. President listened but Hare is doubtful that advice will be followed. So am I. When Hare tried to relate his case to statement of 22 February Nasser asked to see it, read it and observed that at the time he had found latter part of it unacceptable as too vague and had so informed Fawzi.

4. Hare said he left the appointment completely frustrated.

5. Hare's instructions had referred to Egyptian acquiescence in United Nations administration of Gaza which was departments misleading interpretation to Hare of your 22 February statement. Hare consulted me on this before keeping appointment and I assured him this was most inaccurate. Hare subsequently thanked me for advice not to refer to this interpretation saying that had he done so he would surely have been blown out of the office.

6. Prestige no doubt a major influence dictating Egyptian move.

7. Hare informed me of statements about Egyptians being welcome in Gaza etc being attributed to me by Israelis. They are all completely untrue ofcourse and I have issued denial.

8. Though Hare says department worried about Israel threats, Burns thinks provocation not yet grave enough for Israelis to force way through UNEF. I have suggested to Burns that he reinforce UNEF deployment along Gaza line, just in case.

9. Nasser informed Hare, contrary to information previously given me by Gohar, that since Egyptian government maintains "military governor" in all desert areas, personnel accompanying General Latif will be military officers.

10. Sorry for slowness in reaching you of report of my topside meeting. Felt that report should not go by ordinary code, which is all that is available in Cairo office. Regret also inability to achieve deferment of action on surprise Egyptian decision. There was no slightest hint of it to us here prior to public

announcement and I have assumed that you had none. However, as indicated  
my UNEF 554 of 11th had strong impression on first day here that situation  
was racing to a head.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY-GENERAL  
FROM: BUNCHE, CAIRO  
DATE: 19 MARCH 1957 1142 EST  
NUMBER: UNEFCA 131

(This message in two parts)

Following is fill-in on report in earlier messages.

Person in question as usual unhurried, unperturbed. Talked in parables with occasional references to nature, fatalism and \_\_\_\_\_. After carefully listening my communication of a mild paraphrase of your message and having me dictate summary of it to a secretary, he said promptly answer would be in three stages.

1. "First stage": his "Immediate" reactions as follows: A. His letter to you. Hopes for man made as well as nature's sunshine. B. No hesitation in urging usefulness your visit from two aspects: at worst it would be said that UN and SecGen have tried; more optimistic, which he hopes to be justified, is that something "Nearer to concreteness and progress will be accomplished". C. Will be more scope for stating problems better and therefore solving them "When we all get together". D. No one should overlook importance of maintaining UN prestige but this end not served by avoiding explosive situations,

2. "Second stage": specific questions to be considered for discussion. I repeated your three questions and showed him an informal list of specific questions relating to Gaza including UNEF role in Gaza security function. His views are as follows: A. Fully willing to discuss all ways and means of making UNEF useful and effective on the DL. Not prepared to give answers but question is open. B. On question of UNEF within repeat within Gaza, however, he said best procedure is not to say or announce too much. Said UNEF is now all over Gaza but it would create

trouble to announce it. Thus, "We should stop with statement that UNEF will be on  
DL. Question of cooperation of UNEF inside Gaza should be left to Egypt without  
anyone "Pressing too much". (Continued in UNEFCA 132)

Underlined indicates missing word of three  
or four letters ending with the letter n.