

**Middle East conflict - Jordan.
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1. As I have seen that T. always takes detailed notes, even of informal talks, I feel it would facilitate matters in this talk if I were in position to make a verbatim available. There would be the further advantage of a reliable record if, one or two days later, leaks should start appearing, as has often been the case in the past. I would consider both parties free to use the exact text - which would not be edited - in whatever way we might see fit.

2. I have been away for a fortnight which has been characterised by certain interesting developments, which lead me to the conclusion that it is time for some plain speaking. In this regard, I note the following elements. A press campaign in Israel against the UN, and more particularly myself, of a scope and intensity unparalleled since the culmination of the Suez crisis; a series of demarches at Headquarters of a character calling for special comment; experiences in the course of three press conferences in Latin America, which when unavoidably combined with the demarches and the press campaign shape up to something rather unique; and finally, the emergence of a new and striking theory according to which there is no conflict between Israel and the UAR, but only between the UAR and UN, *This might seem to lead to some rather dramatic word* thus leading to the bizarre conclusions *people say that long requires the inter-pretation* that it is the UN which violates the demilitarized status of El Auja; or that it was UN troops which have made incursions into Egyptian territory killing civilians; or that the UN shelled Gaza in 1956; or that it is the UN which is to pay compensation *readily* for refugee property - to mention some examples that/come to ones mind.

3. Considering these various developments in turn, I note from the Israel press reactions that our efforts in the Inge Toft/^{case} have been "easy going and dilettantish", that in fact I have acted as an agent for President Nasser, and that I have pleaded with you to depend on my action

instead of taking your own. I also note that we are probably pressing for simple human rights for the people of the village of Issawaya - which, incidentally, we have been doing for well over a year - only in order "to prepare an alibi". I also note, for example, that we, of course, are the villains in the case of the Ceylonese frigates regarding which the press strangely has obtained such detailed information on a legal memorandum of ours as to be able to characterise it in highly derogatory terms even as concerns its drafting. In view of all these elements, which seem to be related to the same equation, it would appear that I have recently committed some sins of ^agrave order. However, I do not admit to anything beyond the fact that I have continued with all means at our disposal to try to get somewhere on the Inge Toft problem in particular and free Suez navigation in general, while, on the other hand, to be sure, I have had to continue in the unpleasant role of bearing in mind wrongs committed by Israel as well as those committed by Egypt.

4. Regarding the first point, the continuing work on the Inge Toft case, I had not expected any gratitude; experience made me know better. But on the other hand, I had not expected denunciation. As to the second point, is it really to be considered culpable even to mention any wrongdoing of Israel, while it is a duty to proclaim before the world the sins of others? But we in the Secretariat cannot and do not apply such a double standard and, naturally, I accept without hesitation any blame for adhering to another principle, namely, that of equal treatment and strict objectivity in the evaluation of policies.

5. Needless to say, the press campaign is conducted on a level to which I would never stoop to fight, even if I felt free to do so profes-

sionally. But the true measure of the level of this campaign is found in the fact that it is well known that I neither can nor will reply. I know that you say that Israel has a free press. Let us not quibble about words on this point. Is your press "free" even in the sense that it is in no way guided and cannot be guided? Does it never happen that someone in the Foreign Office has something to do with editorials in the Jerusalem Post? Do you never give a briefing? Do you not correct errors in fact, informally at least, when those errors are detrimental to the Government? If not, your press is indeed unique in the world. But let us assume that it has this unique position. Does the Government not feel any responsibility for the correctness of facts used by the press in polemics against other Governments, and if so, should not the same rule apply to the UN? Of course, the replies to these rhetorical questions are obvious, and for that reason I conclude that the Government of Israel cannot wash its hands of any concern for the press campaign of the last fortnight. I have no reason to define its responsibility, but that such a responsibility exists cannot be denied.

6. Let me now turn to your demarches. Using Jerusalem reports of what I have said - or allegedly said - in Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Rio, you have come to Headquarters on instructions from your Government to offer objection and protest. I must say that I find it almost incredible that a delegate of a country should be instructed to protest, for example, the mere mentioning of an act committed by his government which is a hard and indisputable fact and which indeed was mentioned in a context unknown to the delegate at the time of his protest. Moreover, it would seem clearly questionable to make any innuendoes about a lack of trust without a very firm basis, indeed. Nor is it defensible to raise the question of the proper

interpretation of the word "conflict", when in support of your thesis it is necessary finally to resort to such ideas as the one recently expressed - I believe officially - that is that there is no conflict between Egypt and Israel, but only between Egypt and the United Nations. I strongly protest against these various demarches as unwarranted and discourteous.

7. However, as I have already indicated, both the press campaign and these demarches seem to be somehow linked up with my recent press conference experiences in Latin America. By way of introduction, let me say that I found a general lack of official interest in those particular issues which have been a common preoccupation for you and me. In the light of this circumstance, it was quite remarkable to observe that questions about Suez and related problems, regularly framed exclusively from the Israel point of view, were so prominent in the press meetings - so much so, in fact, that in one of the cities the chairman of the press association interrupted the conference in order to inquire if we had not heard enough about Suez. So much for the background. In Buenos Aires, I was asked the somewhat surprising question "is there a conflict between the UN and the UAR"; surprising because it is not a question of a journalist but a question more to be expected of a lawyer with something of the turn of mind of a scribe of olden times. My reply was the obvious and straight forward one, which, however, I found later reported in the Israel press in a grossly distorted form. This occurrence was followed by your first demarche. After that followed the press conference in Montevideo with questions on Suez so phrased as to be leading and, therefore, committing me to a non-objective stand if I did not make at least a modest attempt to make the picture more complete. As a matter of course, I did so in a very restrained way. However, a new demarche

followed. At the third press conference in Rio, a journalist repeated the question from Buenos Aires on "the conflict" in a somewhat more complete form, as he mentioned non-compliance by Egypt with the Security Council decision of 1951 as the reason for his question. There is no reason to assume that he reads Jerusalem papers; or to suppose that more than a week later he, as a journalist, would repeat a question which had been asked in Buenos Aires if he had happened to read about it in the Argentine press. It may be added that he read out his question from a paper. Again, for the third time a demarche followed. The interpretation and significance of this episode requires no comment from me. I may say, however, that accustomed as I am to the planting by others of questions at press conferences in New York and the immediate relaying of my replies to those initiating the questions, I must, with all due admiration for efficiency, still consider the recent experience most extraordinary.

8. Finally, on the theory of conflict. Let us suppose that I accept this terminology. If I did so, I could offer a long list of reasons in support of a thesis of conflict between Israel and the UN, even then restricting myself to a formal and legal view; were the significance of the word on a moral level to be discussed, I would still not use it regarding myself in relation to Israel, but what I have brought to your attention today forces me to ask myself if I am not obliged to use it for Israel in relation to me.

9. Before concluding what I wish to say, I may perhaps be permitted to indulge in a bit of declaration of principles. We observe strictly some few rules in the diplomatic and political world of the Secretariat: We do not distort information to anybody or about anybody; we do not try

to pry into anyone's secrets; we do not use anyone as scapegoats; we keep our promises, and if we cannot do so for reasons beyond our control, we frankly admit that such is the case; we try to assist, irrespective of the reaction of the assisted; we try to maintain as balanced a picture of political events as possible, and we do that not in order to "placate" anybody or to "balance out" guilt, but because we believe that peace is not possible without justice; and, finally, we do not betray any of these principles even if this might seem to yield a short-term advantage in the direction of the aims we are serving. You, as all others with whom we deal, will have to accept these principles and you will have to accept the consequences of their application. I happen to believe that just as no propaganda in the world can move us from them, no propaganda in the world will be able to undo what is achieved on the basis of those principles.

10. I am sorry for the length of my statement and I am even more sorry, indeed, that it has become necessary for me to make it. I should perhaps add one word of warning. My first responsibility is in relation to this Organisation, and if attacks are made on it in public which put in question its integrity, I will reply, and no one should any longer count on that silence which seems to have led some into temptation.