

# **Trips: Trips - 20**

*HS L 179:76a*



Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Sec. Gen's trip to Copenhagen - Sthlm - Geneva -

- Panama 1959

May 4

Press Conference at Hotel Codan, Copenhagen

PRESS CONFERENCE at Hotel Codan, Copenhagen  
4 May 1959 - 9.00 a.m.

QUESTION by Mr. BJOL, from "Information"

"I would like to ask against the background of your statement last Saturday about the significance of what you term "active preventive diplomacy", why the Secretary-General did not visit Budapest on 1-2 November 1956?"

ANSWER

"This is very easy to answer, if you recall what things looked like on 1-2 November 1956. At that time, no one in the Security Council knew what the situation in Budapest was. But we did know what it was in Suez."

During a brief exchange of views with the representative of "Information" immediately after his press conference, the Secretary-General said as a supplement to his replique to him during the conference, that one ought to remember that Western representatives in the Security Council during the days mentioned raised the question of the credentials of Nagy's representative, which shows how uncertain one was as to the situation in Budapest.

When "Information" representative objected that "one, who was in Budapest" asked himself if the Secretary-General ought not for this very reason have found grounds to get information himself on the spot, the Secretary-General replied that no doubt there might have been grounds for this, but that it would have been impossible to justify the absence at that time of the Secretary-General as the only Executive Officer. It may safely be said that this would have had the result that no decision could have been taken on UNEF in time and that UNEF would not have been set up so as to break the Suez crisis. In answer to that question whether this statement was on record, or off record, the Secretary-General replied that it could be allowed on record, since nothing had been said which could not be read in public documents and public history writings.

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4 May - "INFORMATION"

(headline) Hammarskjöld on his conduct during the Hungary crisis

"Had I gone to Budapest, the Suez war would have continued"

(sub-headline) UN Secretary-General on current and historical problems

UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld concluded his stay in Denmark with a Press Conference this morning and, on this occasion, answered a number of questions in part of current interest for the day, in part of rather historical character.

[re-summit within UN framework, said not direct proposal but simply possibility.]

Future summit meetings could be held in connection with UN but depending on what the working programme was. The question of Germany's reunion was for instance virtually beyond the framework of the UN and its Charter. Neither did he expect to play himself the part as mediator in the problem of Germany. "UN was an interested observer from the side" in the German affairs.

"INFORMATION" asked the Secretary-General Hammarskjöld why considering the importance he himself attached to what he termed "active preventive diplomacy" he had not visited Budapest during the days of 1-2 November 1956. The Secretary-General replied briefly to this: "This is very easy to answer, if you recall what things looked like on 1-2 November 1956. At that time, no one in the Security Council knew what the situation in Budapest was. But we did know what it was in Suez."

"INFORMATION" declared itself satisfied with this reply but after the Press Conference, the Secretary-General came direct up to the Correspondent of the paper in order to elaborate upon the reply. "What would have happened in Suez if I had been in Budapest?" asked Hammarskjöld. He repeated that "in those days one did not know in UN the situation in Budapest."

The correspondent of "INFORMATION" remarked to this: "That was exactly why we who were in Budapest at that time felt that it would have been of interest if the Secretary-General personally had come to the spot

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in order to get information himself on the situation."

Hammarskjöld inter alia replied: "If I had gone to Budapest, the Suez war would have continued."

"INFORMATION" remarked that it was a pity that the Secretary-General had not given this more explicit explanation during the official part of the Press Conference which was recorded on tape; to which Mr. Hammarskjöld declared that he had no objection to his statement being quoted.

[/Not Secretary-General task to take stand in all international questions, lest he became propagandist.] [/No Gaza force to Berlin. e.g. traffic control to Berlin - S.G. "definitely evaded" ]

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Message reçu du Correspondant du Journal de Genève, au Danemark

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Le Correspondant du Journal indépendant "INFORMATION" passa alors une question pénétrante. M. Hammarskjöld avait parlé de "diplomatie préventive active". "Pourquoi le Secrétaire Général n-a-t-il pas visité Budapest les 1-2 novembre 1956?"

La réponse fut courte : "Personne au Conseil de sécurité ne savait ce qui se passait à Budapest, mais nous savions ce qui se passait à Suez."

Bien que son interlocuteur se soit déclaré satisfait, M. Hammarskjöld se précipita vers lui sitôt la conférence terminée pour approfondir sa réponse. "Quelle aurait été la suite des événements à Suez si j'avais été à Budapest?" s'expliqua-t-il. Puis comme il répétait qu'aux Nations Unies on ne savait rien sur la situation en Hongrie : "C'est précisément pour cela que nous, qui étions à Budapest à ce moment là, estimions qu'il aurait été d'un grand intérêt de voir le Secrétaire Général sur place cherchant à s'informer de la situation", reprit le journaliste.

M. Hammarskjöld répondit alors entre autres choses : "Si je m'étais rendu à Budapest, la guerre de Suez aurait continué".

Ces dernières remarques n'ayant pas été captées par l'appareil enregistreur de la Radio danoise, le collaborateur d'Information en exprima le regret. M. Hammarskjöld dit alors qu'il ne s'opposait nullement à ce qu'elles soient citées.

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