

Speeches, statements and press conference by Dag Hammar skjöld concerning Mi...

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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Middle East

6 June 57

Transcript of D. H.'s press conference
held at U.N. HQ.

TRANSCRIPT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL'S PRESS CONFERENCE
HELD AT UN HEADQUARTERS ON THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 1957

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I shall first call on Mr. Wilder Foote to make an announcement.

Mr. FOOTE: In case some correspondents here have not yet been informed of this, I should like to state that, after consultations with the Executive Committee of the United Nations Correspondents Association -- which welcomed this idea -- we have decided to adopt for these press conferences, beginning today, a practice sometimes followed elsewhere, for example at White House press conferences -- that is, when a correspondent is recognized for a question, he will give his name and the name of the newspaper or press agency which he represents. We think that this will improve both the written transcript and the voice recording for radio, films and television, by making the record a complete one on the correspondents' side as well as on the Secretary-General's side.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Will you please now put your questions, ladies and gentlemen?

Mr. FREUDENHEIM (Chicago Daily News): In view of the widespread interest in the radiation danger, could you tell us something of the present state of accomplishments of the United Nations Scientific Committee on radiation?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The Committee has had three sessions, during which many technical aspects of the physical data concerning radiation levels and the biological effects of radiation have been discussed. It has circulated requests for information and has received a very considerable number of technical reports from many Governments and also from specialized agencies. In fact, the Committee is today circulating a letter, which I think will be released, concerning an isotope, Sr-90, which they tell me is particularly important -- of course, this does not say very much to me. The Committee is circulating the

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letter in order to invite Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies to participate in an international programme of standardization of the measurement of this isotope.

I am also informed that the Committee does intend to meet again in January, when it will consider a draft report, to be transmitted later in the year to the Secretariat. In fact, the work on this report has already started at Headquarters.

I am sure that you would be rather interested in having, so to speak, interim results. The Committee, however, has refrained from drawing interim conclusions for the reason -- which is certainly a very wise one -- that it would like first of all to complete its consideration of the problem as a whole, in order to remain on safe and stable ground. It follows that no contribution to the present debate is to be expected within the near future from this Committee.

Mr. MALLEY (Al Gomhouria, Cairo): Recently, you have been seized of various communications and memoranda from Arab diplomats regarding the incidents in Tunisia and the situation in Algeria. Could you please tell us whether you have communicated these views to the French Government and what that Government's reactions have been?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: For reasons which are well known to you, we can exclude the last part of that question.

As regards the first part, it is always my practice when I receive a démarche from one Member Government, or one group of Member Governments, concerning another Member Government to have an informal contact with the Member Government concerned for a discussion. That has happened in this case, as it has happened in other, similar cases. I do not think that I am entitled or that it would be appropriate to go more deeply into the matter.

Mr. HOROWITZ (World Union Press): During the past few weeks there have been reports of break-throughs in the UNEF lines at the Gaza frontier. There have also been reports of the planting of mines. I have been wondering whether there has been, in some form, a lack of proper security measures on the part of the United Nations Forces on the border which have permitted such

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incidents to take place. This also brings up the question of a fence. I wonder whether you have given that question any consideration.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think that a few observations are necessary on the first point. First of all, you have referred to the "past few weeks"; in fact, you are referring to two mining incidents last week. One of these mining incidents took place two and one-half kilometres from the demarcation line; the other one took place practically on the demarcation line -- only twenty metres from it, according to the information I have. If they could be properly characterized as "break-throughs" -- which is the term you have used -- they certainly would give a reason for even more concern than I naturally feel about every such incident.

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I think, however, one must recognize that that part of the world is not such that, behind a story of this kind, ^{there} need be any "break-through." One, or possibly two men can sneak through any kind of military line. That happens even with a cordon of the most effective kind, and, unhappily, mines are still lying around in the ground in Gaza and have been picked up, and can be picked up, by any one. That is to say, it certainly indicates that the present -- so to speak -- human fence is not water tight; but it does not, on the other hand, indicate that it is so loose as to make possible a break-through, to use your term again.

I feel, generally speaking, that I am on solid ground in warning against too far-reaching conclusions from incidents of this type, either as to the intentions back of the incidents or as to the effectiveness of UNEF.

If you will permit me to turn to the effectiveness of UNEF and the effectiveness of our arrangements generally, you know that we have not been able to follow through the programme which was established by the General Assembly. I, for one, would be happy to see further developments in the direction thus indicated. But, on the other hand, I do not feel that this is either a time or a situation in which I should go into that aspect of the matter or raise that issue again. That leaves us partly with the question of the type which you indicated -- the question of a fence, which is under what, in professional language, is called active consideration. I guess that this additional word "active" is to indicate that the consideration really is serious and not just a nice way of turning aside a question. The issue is in no way dead. We have not reached solutions or formulae which satisfy us or others, but we are pursuing the matter, and I think that if it is really considered to be an additional safeguard of significance, we shall certainly end by finding some way of getting it.

Mr. SWET (Maariv): You certainly have heard about the decision of the Arab League to tighten the boycott and blockade against Israel and to extend the boycott to all foreign concerns which do business with Isarel. What is your attitude to that? Do you not consider that it is a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter? Does the United Nations intend to take any measures to stop this action of a United Nations Member group against another Member of the United Nations?

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I have another question. According to Reuters, the ^{Norwegian} / tanker "Westward" was refused permission to pass through the Suez Canal while on her way from Tel Aviv to the Persian Gulf. The CBC and many other sources said yesterday that the tanker had passed through the canal without any interference. What does the United Nations know about it?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: As to the second question, I do not know any more than what you have read. I read the same despatches. But there is one indication which supports the later series of despatches or cables, and that is that we certainly would have heard about it in another way if it had really been stopped. Therefore, I not only prefer to believe the later reports, but I think there is a reason to believe that they are right.

Regarding the boycott, it is, as you know, a move in line with the repeatedly declared policy of that group of countries. I think that the evaluation of that policy has been given by the proper United Nations organs already, and what they have said on other similar occasions necessarily applies also in this case. I would go this far and say again what I have said before that, as a matter of course, I endorse those previous decisions and the principle endorsed in those decisions as my own. I have to do it professionally, and I do it also personally.

Mr. MEZERIK (International Review Service): I want to take up the question of the infiltrations in the Gaza Strip which were reported as being the subject of a special statement from Israel on 2 June, in which it is said that there were more than fifty instances of theft and border incursions on the Gaza Strip since the Israelis withdrew. I should like to ask you, in connexion with this, whether, in conformity with the statement made by you on 1 April, in which you said that the Government of Egypt had advised you that Egypt was making known effectively to the refugees and other inhabitants of the Strip that it was Egyptian policy to prevent infiltration across the demarcation line, and also that Egyptian regulations against infiltration, which included penalties, were being put into force, these things have been done; and what is the role of UNEF in preventing infiltration, which was also mentioned here?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The infiltrations to which you refer, with the high number of fifty, are, I think, difficult to evaluate without looking at the things which really have happened. I think that this is a typical case where statistics and the generalization implied in statistics are definitely rather dangerous. I would, for that reason, advise you, when you ponder on this problem, to go back into the story and to see a little bit what these incursions, which now are lumped together as fifty, have meant. I would also invite you to look at the incursions in the opposite direction, with the same proviso; be cautious with statistics. The UNEF has difficulty in this case because it is not fully, and never immediately, informed and has no possibility, such as UNESO once had, of following through with investigations of its own. That, of course, does not mean that it is not interfering and doing what is its duty under its terms of reference in every case which comes to its attention and which is within the orbit of its judgment and action. As to the Egyptian attitude on these matters, I am not now aware of any very recent developments where this has been, so to speak, high-lighted as a specific problem; but I know, on the other hand, that what was once promised has been done. I would, however, like to refer to Mr. Bunche, who may be more up to date if there have been recent developments on this special point.

Mr. BUNCHE: There have been no recent developments. It is only necessary to add that in most of these incidents -- if it is fifty -- we have had no reports at all and are not informed, therefore, about the details. But we do know from sketchy information that many of them are inconsequential. Others are thefts -- I was going to say normal thefts -- in that area, of irrigation pipe, animals, and other incidents of animals straying across the line. There have been casualties only in the two mine incidents reported last week.

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Mr. KRISHNAYYA (P.G. Krishnayya's News Service and Publications): Now that the British have made the tests as regards the hydrogen bomb and no other Power is contemplating similar tests, don't you think the time is opportune, Mr. Secretary-General, for you to make a public appeal against further tests or to use your good offices to promote an agreement for that purpose? In this connexion, might I ask you whether you have been approached by any Governments which have called for a cessation of these tests?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think the first question really repeats one which has been presented here before, and my reply is the same. Whether you approve of that stand or not, I do not believe in public appeals by the Secretary-General. As to the good offices which he may use, they are properly used within the normal forms of his activities which in this case necessarily and naturally are related, first of all, to the activities of the Disarmament Commission Sub-Committee. No Government has approached me in the sense you indicated.

Mr. MACVANE (American Broadcasting Company): Do you expect that the United Nations Scientific Committee that has been studying radiation will have any information for the big United Nations Scientific Congress which is coming up in the fairly near future?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Their report will be out before that time, and I am sure for that reason there will have been an opportunity to study this aspect of the problem.

Mr. MACVANE (American Broadcasting Company): Do you think that discussion of this problem in the big scientific meeting may have a useful effect on future political talks?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: You know the agenda of the Scientific Conference has already been laid down. I do not remember how it stands on this specific item, but I do not think that the discussion in the Conference is likely to touch upon the aspect of the problem you now have in mind.

Mr. LESUEUR (Columbia Broadcasting System): I would like to ask whether you consider the status now existing in the Middle East approaches that of the status before the Armistice, and if so whether a state of belligerency still exists in the Middle East?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: A comparison backwards is very difficult, and what I say can be nothing more than a very personal impression. I cannot speak with any specific authority. I would say that on the basic things which interests you most it is most definitely not a return to the situation we had before. There are fundamental changes in it, and I for one believe that those changes are for the better. There is a continuous development which has been going on, as I once expressed it, behind the smokescreen of continued difficulties; and one day, if we manage to lift the smokescreen, I think we may have the pleasant surprise of seeing some solid progress. It is rather intangible, you know, as regards these matters, because progress necessarily is up to 50 per cent psychological. For that reason it is difficult to put your finger on it and describe it. I refer again to what I said in the beginning. I can talk only as somebody who follows it closely and gives expression to personal impressions. We have discussed several times the question of belligerency and the use of the term, what it means, what it does not mean, what it justifies and what it does not justify. If I have to add anything to what has been said before, it might perhaps be that belligerency, as the word is now understood in common usage -- that is to say, a kind of active or quasi-active state of war -- cannot be admitted as existing in the area, and I do not think that the deplorable and regrettable incidents to which reference has been made in any way contradict my judgment if I say that it does not exist.

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Mr. LASH (New York Post): Can you tell us what is happening on Egypt's acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the court?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I have no communication to that effect yet from the Egyptian Government. You know that they have made a declaration of intention in the General Declaration, which should be followed up by their depositing here and with the International Court special recognition of the mandatory jurisdiction. That is the letter or communication which I have not received.

Mrs. GRAY (Greenwich Time): Mr. Secretary-General, when the Security Council recently considered the Syrian complaint about building a bridge in the demilitarized zone there, the members of the Council strongly upheld the Armistice Agreement as the law for the zone and the UNTSO Chief of Staff as the authority for implementing the provisions of the Agreement, as well as freedom of movement for observers. My question is: Is this applicable to each demilitarized zone under the separate Armistice Agreements, including El Auja?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: There is, legally speaking, and from the point of view of the Security Council, as I understand its decisions, no difference between the various areas covered by different Armistice Agreements. It is exactly the same position. Politically for the moment we are of course in difficulty, because, as you know, from the Israel Government expression has been given to the view that, without being cancelled or annulled, somehow the Egypt-Israel Armistice Agreement is, let us say, put in such serious jeopardy as not to function at all. I do not know exactly how to describe this somewhat ambiguous legal situation. From that point of view one of the Governments concerned makes a difference between the various Armistice Agreements, and that of course has a bearing on the developments in the field and on the discussion. But I repeat what I said in the beginning. The reply to your question is definitely, on the basis of the Security Council's jurisprudence, that the various Armistice Agreements and the areas covered by the various Armistice Agreements are legally in the same position.

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Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): Mr. Secretary-General, you said a moment ago that the situation in the Middle East had not returned to what it was before the war. Would you be more specific and tell us exactly how it has not returned to the situation it was before the war?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: When I referred, as you may remember, to what I felt to be the basic situation, I added concerning that that it was very difficult for me to be specific because it is a question of psychology, of attitudes, actions and anticipation of the future and so on and so forth. Political thinking in Governments and among peoples does develop, and I think there has been such a development going on. If, on the other hand -- I forgot to give that reply, and I should perhaps have given it -- you look at the practical aspects, I think that everybody can see for himself that the situation is a different one in the sense that the very presence of the UNEF with its functions has introduced a most important new element in the picture, which at least gives you a period during which various matters can be discussed on new assumptions.

Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): May I follow that up, Mr. Secretary-General? When you say there is a psychological change there, does that mean that the parties are any closer to some kind of negotiation of their differences than they were before the war?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: You put the question in such a concrete form that you really called, not a bluff but, so to speak, the vagueness of my general impression. I think that this attitude to which I referred is far from articulate and probably could not be expressed in the words you used, but is an improvement of the psychological situation which, if maintained and strengthened, may provide us with a basis on which I could reply to your question with a "yes"; I would feel rather rash if I did that today.

Mr. EDINGER (Agence France-Presse): During the last debate in the Security Council on Suez, several members of the Council asked you to continue your talks with the Egyptian Government or representative in order to find out some new particulars about the Suez regime and the declaration of Egypt of 26 April. May I ask you if you have spoken to the Egyptian representative about Suez and if the talks are continuing between you and the Egyptian Government?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: What members of the Security Council did was perhaps rather to ask me to continue the contact which was already functioning, to continue the contact with of course the expectation of a step-by-step clarification of stands in order to get the necessary supplements on such points, where it was felt that such supplements were needed in order to give a firmer basis.

I have, as a matter of course, continued those talks and I remain in very active contact indeed both with the representative of Egypt and, through him, with his Government.

Mr. BEER (Neue Zurcher Zeitung): I had wanted to ask the same question as Mr. Edinger, but with your permission I will ask this other question. Since these contacts are going on, is it not rather disappointing, from the general point of view, that the first step which might be expected has not been taken from the Egyptian side: that is, the adherence to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: This should naturally be a very early step. Of course I can in no way explain why there has been a delay; I hope it will not continue very much longer.

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Mr. HOROWITZ (World Union Press): In regard to your reply to Mr. Lesueur and Miss Frederick, may I ask you whether you consider full acceptance of the Armistice Agreements as the first step towards a peace settlement. The reason I am asking this is because lately there have been pronouncements from Arab leaders that they view the 1947 resolutions as the only step towards some kind of settlement between Israel and the Arab States.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think I made my stand on the Armistice Agreements very clear in reports; but to try to sum up my reaction I would say this: if we do not give their proper weight to the Armistice Agreements we shall have rather an anarchic state of affairs because they are the legal documents by which we have to work. For this reason I would be sorry if they were to be thrown out of the window and I consider it a very natural duty for me to give them all the weight and the sanctity they can have. That does not mean that every single clause is still alive. They were drafted a very long time ago, and as a matter of course there are clauses which are vital and those which are less vital than they were at the beginning. I feel specifically that the first and the second articles of those Armistice Agreements, which refer to the general state of affairs and to the cease-fire, are "musts". If they are not upheld, if they are not respected, we just do not have the springboard from which we have to jump.

How far, on that basis, we can or should go in practical politics, in the detailed implementation, is a question which I would leave myself for a somewhat later stage, while maintaining the principle that the Armistice Agreements, being the key legal documents in the area, are to be respected.

Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): I wish to ask two questions pertaining to certain constitutional aspects of the United Nations which I think involve the spirit and the prestige of the Organization.

First is the recent tendency on the part of a number of delegations in voting not to vote at all. I do not know what the constitutional aspect of this is. I know that many of them knocked at the door of the United Nations very frantically and are now "playing hockey" and in many conferences their seats are empty.

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The constitution talks about being "able and willing to carry out these obligations". My question is: What is the constitutional status of a vote other than yes, no, or abstention -- that is to say, a truant vote?

My second question is: What is the obligation of Member States in respect of the question of underhand slander either of the United Nations directly or through the Secretariat? I notice lately a tendency towards an underhand slander campaign against the Secretary-General. My question is: What is the constitutional or ethical obligation of Member States in respect of poison propaganda tactics and also, how do you personally react to them?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: On the first question, if we try to rationalize it and find some kind of word covering the situation you have in mind, I think that the word "absent", physically or in some other way, would be adequate. We would have: yes, no, abstention, absent.

On the second point, I do not know that any other laws -- ethical or otherwise -- apply to Member States than to you, ladies and gentlemen, and to myself. There are some simple rules of human intercourse and human living together which certainly should be observed by everybody. I am not aware of the background of what you say and therefore it does not strike me as very necessary to express a personal opinion concerning what may or may not be said concerning myself. But if I am to give a hypothetical reply to what is, I hope, a hypothetical question, I would say I do not care a bit.

Mr. OATIS (The Associated Press): The British Government has announced that it will start shipping more goods to Communist China. How does this affect the United Nations embargo on strategic shipments to Communist China adopted in 1951? How does it affect the possibility of Communist China eventually sitting here in this building?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: This is certainly a rather relevant question, but you will excuse me if, in the stage where we find that question just now, I prefer to say "no comment".

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Mr. MEZERIK (International Review Service): May I ask another question? You have touched several times on compliance and non-compliance in the question of the resolutions on Suez and the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, Gaza and Sharm el-Sheikh. Perhaps it would be helpful for us all if you gave us your opinion on the areas of non-compliance as they exist at this time.

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not like to make an address, and I would have to because the area of non-compliance is very wide. I would also like to have before me the legal texts on which to reply because if I were to say that there was non-compliance in any specific case it would be a serious statement, an accusation. I would not like to do that without being very precise indeed. That is my first duty.

In a very general sense I can say that the state of non-compliance, as I have said, is very wide indeed. It was, as you know, the reason for the initiative of the Security Council last spring. As you remember from my own report, I had to put on record the fact -- I now mention it again -- that the area of non-compliance is wide. The problem facing us is not to get back to wholesale implementation, wholesale compliance. It is, as always, a question of a step-by-step development where both the calendar and the sequence between various steps back towards compliance have to be determined with great care and in continuous contact with the parties. That is to say, much as I deplore and must deplore this lack of compliance, I regard it more as a challenge to good practical political operation to establish what should be re-established. This lack of compliance is not something which should lead us to a feeling of defeat or that everything is a wreck. It is not.

Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): Mr. Secretary-General, do you have the impression that any progress is being made towards even a first small step in disarmament at the meetings of the United Nations Sub-Committee in London?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: To judge a runner in the course of a race is always rather dangerous. All I can say is that he is running and that I think his condition is good.

May I go back for a moment to your question, Mr. Gabriel, because I perhaps was not sufficiently explicit on one point. You made a rather sweeping statement concerning a tendency among delegations. I would not like to leave that on record without saying and emphasizing what I think I said perhaps too lightly that I am not aware of such tendency. I think we should not leave the impression with the public in general that there is any such tendency.

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Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): Are you referring to the second part of my question?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I am referring to the first part. You remarked about a tendency towards absenteeism. The other one I leave aside.

Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): I am very happy to let the other one stand. As to the first one, I would say that if you feel this is something that should not go out to the public, that it would hurt the United Nations, I am perfectly willing to withdraw the question and answer to the whole first part and expunge it from the record. I do not want to hurt the United Nations; I merely asked the question because I thought this was a tendency that detracted from the whole concept of universality. There is no use in coming here and calling yourself a Member -- that is a plus sign -- and then running out again, thus cancelling the plus sign by a minus sign. But as I say if you feel that way about it, and apparently you do, I am only too happy to have it expunged.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. Gabriel, I do not feel that way at all about your question. Your question is perfectly legitimate, as are your views. What I want to make clear is that I do not share those views. That is what I want to have on record, and I think we can leave the whole thing with that clarification.

Mr. LEICHTER (Austrian News Agency): Mr Secretary-General, the last two debates in the Security Council ended without anybody introducing a resolution and with the President of the Council summing up the debates. Do you think this may grow into a method of avoiding the veto and of relying rather on the moral power of public opinion as summed up by the President of the Council than on the sanction power or the powers of resolutions which, in many cases, practically do not exist?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not like to generalize in that way at all and I would not like to guess about future tendencies. There are situations where this procedure seems to be very appropriate, and I believe that this one is a case in point. It is very appropriate because there is no need to try to hammer out, so to say, a text which may take a very long time without really adding anything to what comes out of it. The discussion as such gave sufficient guidance to the Chief of Staff and to me. We are in a position, when the matter is of this nature, to draw conclusions. There is no specific need to spell these matters out.

In other cases when it is a question of, let us say, Security Council jurisdiction, the method of course is not appropriate because a vote must be taken. For that reason, I think we can register that there is recognition of the fact that in some situations the most practical procedure is the one resorted to, without believing that there will be a tendency to abuse that method.

Mr. LASH (New York Post): Gaza and the west bank of the Jordan are the main centres of refugee camps. Recently there have been convulsive events in both areas. I wonder whether you have any reports on what the morale of the refugees is now in those areas or on the morale of the United Nations workers; on how the operation is proceeding; and on whether there have been any changes as a result of the events that have taken place.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I can handle the last point now by saying that I am not aware of any such changes. However, Mr. Labouisse arrived this morning. I have had a first meeting, which was short, with him as these are matters which are much better treated in personal contact and conversation than by letters. I have asked myself these questions. Now I have a chance to discuss them with Mr. Labouisse, and I will certainly do so as soon as I can.

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Mr. KESHISHIAN (Al Ahram, Cairo): The Saudi Arabians have made a number of charges against Israel of aggression on Saudi territory. Is it the duty of the Sharm el-Sheikh unit to investigate these or is there any other procedure by which the Secretary-General can ascertain the truth of these charges?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: It is outside the mandate of UNEF, as I understand it. We have no other means for the present to investigate. I am not aware of any initiative by Saudi Arabia inviting us to investigate, and of course we cannot undertake an investigation without acting on the basis of an agreement with or an invitation from a sovereign country.

Mr. MALLEY (Al Gomhouria; Le Progrés Egyptien): Do you plan any new trips to the Middle East, particularly to Cairo, in the near future?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: No, I have no such plans for the present. That does not mean that I may not find reasons for it.

Mr. LESUEUR (Colombia Broadcasting Company): In the light of statements by Communist First Secretary of the Party Khrushchev on the Face the Nation programme last Sunday regarding the situation in Hungary in which he said that the Government of Janas Kadar would flourish for ages if Soviet troops were withdrawn, and preliminary reports of the Hungarian Committee of the United Nations which is investigating the situation there saying that if the Soviet Union does not withdraw its troops there will be an evendeadlier uprising, do you feel a resumption of the emergency session of the General Assembly on Hungary is necessary?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The question of whether or not there will be an emergency session or rather a reconvening of the General Assembly depends in the first instance on the reactions to the forthcoming report. I scarcely believe that the point you raised will be of decisive importance in the context.

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Mrs. ROBESON (New World Review): Mr. Hammarskjold, would you care to comment on the matter about which Mr. Menon spoke yesterday in the Trusteeship Council -- whether or not it is proper for an Administering Authority to use a Trust Territory for a nuclear explosion?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not comment on that.

Mr. CARPENTER (Associated Press): Could you bring us up to date on the developments in the case of the American flyers in Red China. We have not heard anything about that in some time. Are there not still some in prison? What is being done in this connexion?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: There are definitely no American flyers in prison because that story, to the extent that I am aware of it, was settled by 1955. There are still Americans in prison in China. My only knowledge is indirect. I think that that question should be directed to the American authorities as they are negotiating the issue.

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QUESTION: Mr. Secretary-General, is delay of the ratification of the Statute for the Atoms for Peace Agency by most of the atomic powers holding up plans for the next atomic conference?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: No, it is not.

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Mr. MEZERIK (International Review/): Mr. Labouisse is in the city, you say, and we understand he has come on some sort of emergency, either financial or political or what not. Could you tell us a little about it, because the plight of the Palestinian refugees is very important?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I do not think there is any emergency aspect to it, but, as you know, the man in charge of this very important operation has not only his job to do in the area but also the sometimes, not very grateful task of seeing that he gets all the necessary financial means. So he is now contacting this Government and he has also contacted en route other Governments. I think that is the proper accent to give to it.

MR. MUNN (United Press): We have taken almost an hour of your time.
Thank you, sir.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Thank you.

The Conference rose at 11:55 a.m.

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HELD AT UN HEADQUARTERS ON THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 1957

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I shall first call on Mr. Wilder Foote to make an announcement.

Mr. FOOTE: In case some correspondents here have not yet been informed of this, I should like to state that, after consultations with the Executive Committee of the United Nations Correspondents Association -- which welcomed this idea -- we have decided to adopt for these press conferences, beginning today, a practice sometimes followed elsewhere, for example at White House press conferences -- that is, when a correspondent is recognized for a question, he will give his name and the name of the newspaper or press agency which he represents. We think that this will improve both the written transcript and the voice recording for radio, films and television, by making the record a complete one on the correspondents' side as well as on the Secretary-General's side.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Will you please now put your questions, ladies and gentlemen?

Mr. FREUDENHEIM (Chicago Daily News): In view of the widespread interest in the radiation danger, could you tell us something of the present state of accomplishments of the United Nations Scientific Committee on radiation?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The Committee has had three sessions, during which many technical aspects of the physical data concerning radiation levels and the biological effects of radiation have been discussed. It has circulated requests for information and has received a very considerable number of technical reports from many Governments and also from specialized agencies. In fact, the Committee is today circulating a letter, which I think will be released, concerning an isotope, Sr-90, which they tell me is particularly important -- of course, this does not say very much to me. The Committee is circulating the

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letter in order to invite Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies to participate in an international programme of standardization of the measurement of this isotope.

I am also informed that the Committee does intend to meet again in January, when it will consider a draft report, to be transmitted later in the year to the Secretariat. In fact, the work on this report has already started at Headquarters.

I am sure that you would be rather interested in having, so to speak, interim results. The Committee, however, has refrained from drawing interim conclusions for the reason -- which is certainly a very wise one -- that it would like first of all to complete its consideration of the problem as a whole, in order to remain on safe and stable ground. It follows that no contribution to the present debate is to be expected within the near future from this Committee.

Mr. MALLEY (Al Gomhouria, Cairo): Recently, you have been seized of various communications and memoranda from Arab diplomats regarding the incidents in Tunisia and the situation in Algeria. Could you please tell us whether you have communicated these views to the French Government and what that Government's reactions have been?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: For reasons which are well known to you, we can exclude the last part of that question.

As regards the first part, it is always my practice when I receive a démarche from one Member Government, or one group of Member Governments, concerning another Member Government to have an informal contact with the Member Government concerned for a discussion. That has happened in this case, as it has happened in other, similar cases. I do not think that I am entitled or that it would be appropriate to go more deeply into the matter.

Mr. HOROWITZ (World Union Press): During the past few weeks there have been reports of break-throughs in the UNEF lines at the Gaza frontier. There have also been reports of the planting of mines. I have been wondering whether there has been, in some form, a lack of proper security measures on the part of the United Nations Forces on the border which have permitted such

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incidents to take place. This also brings up the question of a fence. I wonder whether you have given that question any consideration.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think that a few observations are necessary on the first point. First of all, you have referred to the "past few weeks"; in fact, you are referring to two mining incidents last week. One of these mining incidents took place two and one-half kilometres from the demarcation line; the other one took place practically on the demarcation line -- only twenty metres from it, according to the information I have. If they could be properly characterized as "break-throughs" -- which is the term you have used -- they certainly would give a reason for even more concern than I naturally feel about every such incident.

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I think, however, one must recognize that that part of the world is not such that, behind a story of this kind, ^{there} need be any "break-through." One, or possibly two men can sneak through any kind of military line. That happens even with a cordon of the most effective kind, and, unhappily, mines are still lying around in the ground in Gaza and have been picked up, and can be picked up, by anyone. That is to say, it certainly indicates that the present -- so to speak -- human fence is not water tight; but it does not, on the other hand, indicate that it is so loose as to make possible a break-through, to use your term again.

I feel, generally speaking, that I am on solid ground in warning against too far-reaching conclusions from incidents of this type, either as to the intentions back of the incidents or as to the effectiveness of UNEF.

If you will permit me to turn to the effectiveness of UNEF and the effectiveness of our arrangements generally, you know that we have not been able to follow through the programme which was established by the General Assembly. I, for one, would be happy to see further developments in the direction thus indicated. But, on the other hand, I do not feel that this is either a time or a situation in which I should go into that aspect of the matter or raise that issue again. That leaves us partly with the question of the type which you indicated -- the question of a fence, which is under what, in professional language, is called active consideration. I guess that this additional word "active" is to indicate that the consideration really is serious and not just a nice way of turning aside a question. The issue is in no way dead. We have not reached solutions or formulae which satisfy us or others, but we are pursuing the matter, and I think that if it is really considered to be an additional safeguard of significance, we shall certainly end by finding some way of getting it.

Mr. SWET (Maariv): You certainly have heard about the decision of the Arab League to tighten the boycott and blockade against Israel and to extend the boycott to all foreign concerns which do business with Israel. What is your attitude to that? Do you not consider that it is a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter? Does the United Nations intend to take any measures to stop this action of a United Nations Member group against another Member of the United Nations?

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I have another question. According to Reuters, the /- tanker "Westward" was refused permission to pass through the Suez Canal while on her way from Tel Aviv to the Persian Gulf. The CBC and many other sources said yesterday that the tanker had passed through the canal without any interference. What does the United Nations know about it?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: As to the second question, I do not know any more than what you have read. I read the same despatches. But there is one indication which supports the later series of despatches or cables, and that is that we certainly would have heard about it in another way if it had really been stopped. Therefore, I not only prefer to believe the later reports, but I think there is a reason to believe that they are right.

Regarding the boycott, it is, as you know, a move in line with the repeatedly declared policy of that group of countries. I think that the evaluation of that policy has been given by the proper United Nations organs already, and what they have said on other similar occasions necessarily applies also in this case. I would go this far and say again what I have said before that, as a matter of course, I endorse those previous decisions and the principle endorsed in those decisions as my own. I have to do it professionally, and I do it also personally.

Mr. MEZERIK (International Review Service): I want to take up the question of the infiltrations in the Gaza Strip which were reported as being the subject of a special statement from Israel on 2 June, in which it is said that there were more than fifty instances of theft and border incursions on the Gaza Strip since the Israelis withdrew. I should like to ask you, in connexion with this, whether, in conformity with the statement made by you on 1 April, in which you said that the Government of Egypt had advised you that Egypt was making known effectively to the refugees and other inhabitants of the Strip that it was Egyptian policy to prevent infiltration across the demarcation line, and also that Egyptian regulations against infiltration, which included penalties, were being put into force, these things have been done; and what is the role of UNEF in preventing infiltration, which was also mentioned here?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The infiltrations to which you refer, with the high number of fifty, are, I think, difficult to evaluate without looking at the things which really have happened. I think that this is a typical case where statistics and the generalization implied in statistics are definitely rather dangerous. I would, for that reason, advise you, when you ponder on this problem, to go back into the story and to see a little bit what these incursions, which now are lumped together as fifty, have meant. I would also invite you to look at the incursions in the opposite direction, with the same proviso: be cautious with statistics. The UNEF has difficulty in this case because it is not fully, and never immediately, informed and has no possibility, such as UNTSO once had, of following through with investigations of its own. That, of course, does not mean that it is not interfering and doing what is its duty under its terms of reference in every case which comes to its attention and which is within the orbit of its judgment and action. As to the Egyptian attitude on these matters, I am not now aware of any very recent developments where this has been, so to speak, high-lighted as a specific problem; but I know, on the other hand, that what was once promised has been done. I would, however, like to refer to Mr. Bunche, who may be more up to date if there have been recent developments on this special point.

Mr. BUNCHE: There have been no recent developments. It is only necessary to add that in most of these incidents -- if it is fifty -- we have had no reports at all and are not informed, therefore, about the details. But we do know from sketchy information that many of them are inconsequential. Others are thefts -- I was going to say normal thefts -- in that area, of irrigation pipe, animals, and other incidents of animals straying across the line. There have been casualties only in the two mine incidents reported last week.

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Mr. KRISHNAYYA (P.G. Krishnayya's News Service and Publications): Now that the British have made the tests as regards the hydrogen bomb and no other Power is contemplating similar tests, don't you think the time is opportune, Mr. Secretary-General, for you to make a public appeal against further tests or to use your good offices to promote an agreement for that purpose? In this connexion, might I ask you whether you have been approached by any Governments which have called for a cessation of these tests?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think the first question really repeats one which has been presented here before, and my reply is the same. Whether you approve of that stand or not, I do not believe in public appeals by the Secretary-General. As to the good offices which he may use, they are properly used within the normal forms of his activities which in this case necessarily and naturally are related, first of all, to the activities of the Disarmament Commission Sub-Committee. No Government has approached me in the sense you indicated.

Mr. MACVANE (American Broadcasting Company): Do you expect that the United Nations Scientific Committee that has been studying radiation will have any information for the big United Nations Scientific Congress which is coming up in the fairly near future?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Their report will be out before that time, and I am sure for that reason there will have been an opportunity to study this aspect of the problem.

Mr. MACVANE (American Broadcasting Company): Do you think that discussion of this problem in the big scientific meeting may have a useful effect on future political talks?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: You know the agenda of the Scientific Conference has already been laid down. I do not remember how it stands on this specific item, but I do not think that the discussion in the Conference is likely to touch upon the aspect of the problem you now have in mind.

Mr. LESUEUR (Columbia Broadcasting System): I would like to ask whether you consider the status now existing in the Middle East approaches that of the status before the Armistice, and if so whether a state of belligerency still exists in the Middle East?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: A comparison backwards is very difficult, and what I say can be nothing more than a very personal impression. I cannot speak with any specific authority. I would say that on the basic things which interests you most it is most definitely not a return to the situation we had before. There are fundamental changes in it, and I for one believe that those changes are for the better. There is a continuous development which has been going on, as I once expressed it, behind the smokescreen of continued difficulties; and one day, if we manage to lift the smokescreen, I think we may have the pleasant surprise of seeing some solid progress. It is rather intangible, you know, as regards these matters, because progress necessarily is up to 50 per cent psychological. For that reason it is difficult to put your finger on it and describe it. I refer again to what I said in the beginning. I can talk only as somebody who follows it closely and gives expression to personal impressions. We have discussed several times the question of belligerency and the use of the term, what it means, what it does not mean, what it justifies and what it does not justify. If I have to add anything to what has been said before, it might perhaps be that belligerency, as the word is now understood in common usage -- that is to say, a kind of active or quasi-active state of war -- cannot be admitted as existing in the area, and I do not think that the deplorable and regrettable incidents to which reference has been made in any way contradict my judgment if I say that it does not exist.

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Mr. LASH (New York Post): Can you tell us what is happening on Egypt's acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the court?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I have no communication to that effect yet from the Egyptian Government. You know that they have made a declaration of intention in the General Declaration, which should be followed up by their depositing here and with the International Court special recognition of the mandatory jurisdiction. That is the letter or communication which I have not received.

Mrs. GRAY (Greenwich Time): Mr. Secretary-General, when the Security Council recently considered the Syrian complaint about building a bridge in the demilitarized zone there, the members of the Council strongly upheld the Armistice Agreement as the law for the zone and the UNTSO Chief of Staff as the authority for implementing the provisions of the Agreement, as well as freedom of movement for observers. My question is: Is this applicable to each demilitarized zone under the separate Armistice Agreements, including El Auja?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: There is, legally speaking, and from the point of view of the Security Council, as I understand its decisions, no difference between the various areas covered by different Armistice Agreements. It is exactly the same position. Politically for the moment we are of course in difficulty, because, as you know, from the Israel Government expression has been given to the view that, without being cancelled or annulled, somehow the Egypt-Israel Armistice Agreement is, let us say, put in such serious jeopardy as not to function at all. I do not know exactly how to describe this somewhat ambiguous legal situation. From that point of view one of the Governments concerned makes a difference between the various Armistice Agreements, and that of course has a bearing on the developments in the field and on the discussion. But I repeat what I said in the beginning. The reply to your question is definitely, on the basis of the Security Council's jurisprudence, that the various Armistice Agreements and the areas covered by the various Armistice Agreements are legally in the same position.

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Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): Mr. Secretary-General, you said a moment ago that the situation in the Middle East had not returned to what it was before the war. Would you be more specific and tell us exactly how it has not returned to the situation it was before the war?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: When I referred, as you may remember, to what I felt to be the basic situation, I added concerning that that it was very difficult for me to be specific because it is a question of psychology, of attitudes, actions and anticipation of the future and so on and so forth. Political thinking in Governments and among peoples does develop, and I think there has been such a development going on. If, on the other hand -- I forgot to give that reply, and I should perhaps have given it -- you look at the practical aspects, I think that everybody can see for himself that the situation is a different one in the sense that the very presence of the UNEF with its functions has introduced a most important new element in the picture, which at least gives you a period during which various matters can be discussed on new assumptions.

Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): May I follow that up, Mr. Secretary-General? When you say there is a psychological change there, does that mean that the parties are any closer to some kind of negotiation of their differences than they were before the war?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: You put the question in such a concrete form that you really called, not a bluff but, so to speak, the vagueness of my general impression. I think that this attitude to which I referred is far from articulate and probably could not be expressed in the words you used, but is an improvement of the psychological situation which, if maintained and strengthened, may provide us with a basis on which I could reply to your question with a "yes"; I would feel rather rash if I did that today.

Mr. EDINGER (Agence France-Presse): During the last debate in the Security Council on Suez, several members of the Council asked you to continue your talks with the Egyptian Government or representative in order to find out some new particulars about the Suez regime and the declaration of Egypt of 26 April. May I ask you if you have spoken to the Egyptian representative about Suez and if the talks are continuing between you and the Egyptian Government?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: What members of the Security Council did was perhaps rather to ask me to continue the contact which was already functioning, to continue the contact with of course the expectation of a step-by-step clarification of stands in order to get the necessary supplements on such points, where it was felt that such supplements were needed in order to give a firmer basis.

I have, as a matter of course, continued those talks and I remain in very active contact indeed both with the representative of Egypt and, through him, with his Government.

Mr. BEER (Neue Zurcher Zeitung): I had wanted to ask the same question as Mr. Edinger, but with your permission I will ask this other question. Since these contacts are going on, is it not rather disappointing, from the general point of view, that the first step which might be expected has not been taken from the Egyptian side: that is, the adherence to the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: This should naturally be a very early step. Of course I can in no way explain why there has been a delay; I hope it will not continue very much longer.

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Mr. HOROWITZ (World Union Press): In regard to your reply to Mr. Lesueur and Miss Frederick, may I ask you whether you consider full acceptance of the Armistice Agreements as the first step towards a peace settlement. The reason I am asking this is because lately there have been pronouncements from Arab leaders that they view the 1947 resolutions as the only step towards some kind of settlement between Israel and the Arab States.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I think I made my stand on the Armistice Agreements very clear in reports; but to try to sum up my reaction I would say this: if we do not give their proper weight to the Armistice Agreements we shall have rather an anarchic state of affairs because they are the legal documents by which we have to work. For this reason I would be sorry if they were to be thrown out of the window and I consider it a very natural duty for me to give them all the weight and the sanctity they can have. That does not mean that every single clause is still alive. They were drafted a very long time ago, and as a matter of course there are clauses which are vital and those which are less vital than they were at the beginning. I feel specifically that the first and the second articles of those Armistice Agreements, which refer to the general state of affairs and to the cease-fire, are "musts". If they are not upheld, if they are not respected, we just do not have the springboard from which we have to jump.

How far, on that basis, we can or should go in practical politics, in the detailed implementation, is a question which I would leave myself for a somewhat later stage, while maintaining the principle that the Armistice Agreements, being the key legal documents in the area, are to be respected.

Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): I wish to ask two questions pertaining to certain constitutional aspects of the United Nations which I think involve the spirit and the prestige of the Organization.

First is the recent tendency on the part of a number of delegations in voting not to vote at all. I do not know what the constitutional aspect of this is. I know that many of them knocked at the door of the United Nations very frantically and are now "playing hookey" and in many conferences their seats are empty.

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The constitution talks about being "able and willing to carry out these obligations". My question is: What is the constitutional status of a vote other than yes, no, or abstention -- that is to say, a truant vote?

My second question is: What is the obligation of Member States in respect of the question of underhand slander either of the United Nations directly or through the Secretariat? I notice lately a tendency towards an underhand slander campaign against the Secretary-General. My question is: What is the constitutional or ethical obligation of Member States in respect of poison propaganda tactics and also, how do you personally react to them?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: On the first question, if we try to rationalize it and find some kind of word covering the situation you have in mind, I think that the word "absent", physically or in some other way, would be adequate. We would have: yes, no, abstention, absent.

On the second point, I do not know that any other laws -- ethical or otherwise -- apply to Member States than to you, ladies and gentlemen, and to myself. There are some simple rules of human intercourse and human living together which certainly should be observed by everybody. I am not aware of the background of what you say and therefore it does not strike me as very necessary to express a personal opinion concerning what may or may not be said concerning myself. But if I am to give a hypothetical reply to what is, I hope, a hypothetical question, I would say I do not care a bit.

Mr. OATIS (The Associated Press): The British Government has announced that it will start shipping more goods to Communist China. How does this affect the United Nations embargo on strategic shipments to Communist China adopted in 1951? How does it affect the possibility of Communist China eventually sitting here in this building?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: This is certainly a rather relevant question, but you will excuse me if, in the stage where we find that question just now, I prefer to say "no comment".

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Mr. MEZERIK (International Review Service): May I ask another question? You have touched several times on compliance and non-compliance in the question of the resolutions on Suez and the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai, Gaza and Sharm el-Sheikh. Perhaps it would be helpful for us all if you gave us your opinion on the areas of non-compliance as they exist at this time.

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not like to make an address, and I would have to because the area of non-compliance is very wide. I would also like to have before me the legal texts on which to reply because if I were to say that there was non-compliance in any specific case it would be a serious statement, an accusation. I would not like to do that without being very precise indeed. That is my first duty.

In a very general sense I can say that the state of non-compliance, as I have said, is very wide indeed. It was, as you know, the reason for the initiative of the Security Council last spring. As you remember from my own report, I had to put on record the fact -- I now mention it again -- that the area of non-compliance is wide. The problem facing us is not to get back to wholesale implementation, wholesale compliance. It is, as always, a question of a step-by-step development where both the calendar and the sequence between various steps back towards compliance have to be determined with great care and in continuous contact with the parties. That is to say, much as I deplore and must deplore this lack of compliance, I regard it more as a challenge to good practical political operation to establish what should be re-established. This lack of compliance is not something which should lead us to a feeling of defeat or that everything is a wreck. It is not.

Miss FREDERICK (National Broadcasting Company): Mr. Secretary-General, do you have the impression that any progress is being made towards even a first small step in disarmament at the meetings of the United Nations Sub-Committee in London?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: To judge a runner in the course of a race is always rather dangerous. All I can say is that he is running and that I think his condition is good.

May I go back for a moment to your question, Mr. Gabriel, because I perhaps was not sufficiently explicit on one point. You made a rather sweeping statement concerning a tendency among delegations. I would not like to leave that on record without saying and emphasizing what I think I said perhaps too lightly that I am not aware of such tendency. I think we should not leave the impression with the public in general that there is any such tendency.

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Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): Are you referring to the second part of my question?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I am referring to the first part. You remarked about a tendency towards absenteeism. The other one I leave aside.

Mr. GABRIEL (Transradio News Agency): I am very happy to let the other one stand. As to the first one, I would say that if you feel this is something that should not go out to the public, that it would hurt the United Nations, I am perfectly willing to withdraw the question and answer to the whole first part and expunge it from the record. I do not want to hurt the United Nations; I merely asked the question because I thought this was a tendency that detracted from the whole concept of universality. There is no use in coming here and calling yourself a Member -- that is a plus sign -- and then running out again, thus cancelling the plus sign by a minus sign. But as I say if you feel that way about it, and apparently you do, I am only too happy to have it expunged.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Mr. Gabriel, I do not feel that way at all about your question. Your question is perfectly legitimate, as are your views. What I want to make clear is that I do not share those views. That is what I want to have on record, and I think we can leave the whole thing with that clarification.

Mr. LEICHTER (Austrian News Agency): Mr Secretary-General, the last two debates in the Security Council ended without anybody introducing a resolution and with the President of the Council summing up the debates. Do you think this may grow into a method of avoiding the veto and of relying rather on the moral power of public opinion as summed up by the President of the Council than on the sanction power or the powers of resolutions which, in many cases, practically do not exist?

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The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not like to generalize in that way at all and I would not like to guess about future tendencies. There are situations where this procedure seems to be very appropriate, and I believe that this one is a case in point. It is very appropriate because there is no need to try to hammer out, so to say, a text which may take a very long time without really adding anything to what comes out of it. The discussion as such gave sufficient guidance to the Chief of Staff and to me. We are in a position, when the matter is of this nature, to draw conclusions. There is no specific need to spell these matters out.

In other cases when it is a question of, let us say, Security Council jurisdiction, the method of course is not appropriate because a vote must be taken. For that reason, I think we can register that there is recognition of the fact that in some situations the most practical procedure is the one resorted to, without believing that there will be a tendency to abuse that method.

Mr. LASH (New York Post): Gaza and the west bank of the Jordan are the main centres of refugee camps. Recently there have been convulsive events in both areas. I wonder whether you have any reports on what the morale of the refugees is now in those areas or on the morale of the United Nations workers; on how the operation is proceeding; and on whether there have been any changes as a result of the events that have taken place.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I can handle the last point now by saying that I am not aware of any such changes. However, Mr. Labouisse arrived this morning. I have had a first meeting, which was short, with him as these are matters which are much better treated in personal contact and conversation than by letters. I have asked myself these questions. Now I have a chance to discuss them with Mr. Labouisse, and I will certainly do so as soon as I can.

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Mr. KESHISHIAN (Al Ahram, Cairo): The Saudi Arabians have made a number of charges against Israel of aggression on Saudi territory. Is it the duty of the Sharm el-Sheikh unit to investigate these or is there any other procedure by which the Secretary-General can ascertain the truth of these charges?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: It is outside the mandate of UNEF, as I understand it. We have no other means for the present to investigate. I am not aware of any initiative by Saudi Arabia inviting us to investigate, and of course we cannot undertake an investigation without acting on the basis of an agreement with or an invitation from a sovereign country.

Mr. MALLEY (Al Gomhouria; Le Progrés Egyptien): Do you plan any new trips to the Middle East, particularly to Cairo, in the near future?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: No, I have no such plans for the present. That does not mean that I may not find reasons for it.

Mr. LESUEUR (Colombia Broadcasting Company): In the light of statements by Communist First Secretary of the Party Khrushchev on the Face the Nation programme last Sunday regarding the situation in Hungary in which he said that the Government of Janas Kadar would flourish for ages if Soviet troops were withdrawn, and preliminary reports of the Hungarian Committee of the United Nations which is investigating the situation there saying that if the Soviet Union does not withdraw its troops there will be an evendeadlier uprising, do you feel a resumption of the emergency session of the General Assembly on Hungary is necessary?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The question of whether or not there will be an emergency session or rather a reconvening of the General Assembly depends in the first instance on the reactions to the forthcoming report. I scarcely believe that the point you raised will be of decisive importance in the context.

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Mrs. ROBESON (New World Review): Mr. Hammarskjold, would you care to comment on the matter about which Mr. Menon spoke yesterday in the Trusteeship Council -- whether or not it is proper for an Administering Authority to use a Trust Territory for a nuclear explosion?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I would not comment on that.

Mr. CARPENTER (Associated Press): Could you bring us up to date on the developments in the case of the American flyers in Red China. We have not heard anything about that in some time. Are there not still some in prison? What is being done in this connexion?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: There are definitely no American flyers in prison because that story, to the extent that I am aware of it, was settled by 1955. There are still Americans in prison in China. My only knowledge is indirect. I think that that question should be directed to the American authorities as they are negotiating the issue.

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QUESTION: Mr. Secretary-General, is delay of the ratification of the Statute for the Atoms for Peace Agency by most of the atomic powers holding up plans for the next atomic conference?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: No, it is not.

Mr. MEZERIK (International Review/)^{Service}: Mr. Labouisse is in the city, you say, and we understand he has come on some sort of emergency, either financial or political or what not. Could you tell us a little about it, because the plight of the Palestinian refugees is very important?

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: I do not think there is any emergency aspect to it, but, as you know, the man in charge of this very important operation has not only his job to do in the area but also the sometimes, not very grateful task of seeing that he gets all the necessary financial means. So he is now contacting this Government and he has also contacted en route other Governments. I think that is the proper accent to give to it.

MR. MUNN (United Press): We have taken almost an hour of your time.
Thank you, sir.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Thank you.

The Conference rose at 11:55 a.m.