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Israel - Jordan border

28 May 58

Rifai, Samir (Prime Minister of Jordan)

- 1 letter from D.H. (draft. by R. Bunche)
- 1 letter to D.H. from Ralph Bunche.

28 May

To: The Secretary-General

Herewith a draft of a suggested letter from you to Rifai'i, in connection with UNTSO 7171. The flare-up on Sephus and Flint's death made the timing a bit awkward and I have not rushed it. But something should get out there well in advance of the next convoy.

I haven't made any reference to Israeli return to the MAC, despite Rifai's deep interest, since there doesn't seem to be much to say. In my letter to him just before I left Jerusalem, I told him I had taken the question up with the Israelis & they were considering it.

You may wish to add something on the Parade issue.

I am not sure whether in this letter it would be advisable to include a sentence to the effect that in general we would expect the next convoy, especially as regards things to be brought down, to be on about the same basis as the last one.

"Posting" is terribly boring, but it seems that it is helping me, though all too slowly to suit me.

Raph

28 May 1958

Dear Mr. Rifa'i,

On his return from the Near East, Mr. Bunche informed me fully of his very helpful talk with you on 11 May and conveyed to me your concerns and views.

Your willingness to see Mr. Bunche on such short notice and at a very busy time for you, the constructive spirit which animated the discussion and your co-operation which enabled the convoy of 21 May to proceed without incident are much appreciated by me.

As I understand it, your main concern relates to the question whether there are any activities underway in the Israeli sector of Mount Scopus which might threaten to "change the character of the area from a demilitarized to a militarized zone". In this regard, you would wish to know something of the result of the first visit, in pursuance of paragraph 4 of the Urrutia Report of 17 January 1958, whereby Mr. Urrutia as the specially designated representative of the Secretary-General, accompanied by Lt. Col. G.A. Flint, visited Mount Scopus on April 9, 10 and 11, 1958.

When this matter was brought up by you in your talk with Mr. Bunche, he took the correct position that although the Urrutia visit was extensive and revealed no evidence of any activity contrary to the Urrutia Report and particularly its paragraph 2, it was a single visit and did not afford adequate basis for more positive assurance.

His Excellency
Mr. Samir Rifa'i
~~Vice-Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs~~
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Amman, Jordan

*Prime Minister of
the State of Jordan*

As you know, the first visit to Mount Scopus of Major-General von Horn, as Chief of Staff of UNTSO, took place on 15 and 16 May, 1958. This visit, of course, is quite apart from the Urrutia Report and was undertaken exclusively in General von Horn's capacity and duty as Chief of Staff. He has reported fully to me on his observations. I was, of course, much interested in hearing from Mr. Bunche of the importance you attached to such a visit.

I now feel that there is sound basis for saying that paragraph 2 of the Urrutia Report is being observed and that no evidence has been found of any new military installations. In this regard, therefore, there would seem to be no threat to the character of the area as a demilitarized zone.

As Mr. Bunche informed you, our legal people are looking carefully into the question of "visits of properly accredited individuals" to Mount Scopus under the terms of the Mount Scopus Agreement, and the matter will be taken up with you further when our study is completed.

I must also say that the recent tragic death of Colonel Flint, a dedicated and fearless servant of the United Nations, underscores the urgency of the problem of patrols in the Mount Scopus area, especially in the vicinity of Issawiya Village.

Sincerely yours,

Dag Hammarskjöld

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