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Israel - Syria border

12-14 Dec. 58

Horn, Carl C: son von (Major-Gen, Chief of Staff, UNTSO)

- 4 code cables to D.H. (from Jerusalem)
- 1 code cable to D.H. from Spinelli (Amman)

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: VON HORN, JERUSALEM  
DATED: 12 DECEMBER 1958 0838  
NUMBER: UNTSO 1794

A. Following letter delivered in Damascus and Jerusalem 11 December 1700 hours LT. "I have the honour to inform you that I have instructed Chairman of the Israel-Syrian MAC to arrange as early as possible for a visit by UN Military Observers of the areas referred to in the last paragraph of Article V of the GAA. According to paragraph 5(C) of Article V the chairman "and U N Observers attached to the commission shall be responsible for ensuring the full implementation of this article".

The U N Observers <sup>will</sup> ~~shall~~ be instructed to report on the observance of the last paragraph of Article V regarding the maintenance of 'defensive forces only ... in accordance with the definition of defensive forces set forth in annex 4' to the GAA.

The chairman will also arrange for a visit of the Demilitarized Zone by U N Observers instructed to report on the observance of the provision which forbids any advance of armed forces into the Demilitarized Zone.

U N Observers visits in the areas referred to in the last paragraph of Article 5 should begin simultaneously on both sides, as soon as the chairman is advised that the U N Observers will have the facilities of movement and access necessary for the fulfilment of their mission.

I would appreciate receiving at your earliest convenience the assurance that the U N Observers will have such facilities on your side. It would be desirable if the visits could be arranged for tomorrow.

A similar communication is being sent to the other party <sup>to</sup> ~~of~~ the GAA. "

B. Faizal agreed immediately asking if we wanted to start following morning (today). Was told of intention to start simultaneously both sides on assurance of freedom of movement. Whole response was obliging with only one specific request for inspection <sup>NG</sup> UNMOS to address their questions to accompanying LO's.

C. All planning was completed by midnight. Since 1000 LT standing by to start operation.

D. By now no Israeli reply yet and other reaction than impossible to establish telephone contact with anyone of importance. Everybody seems to be hiding although I did manage to pass on word to government at 1045 LT that other ~~six~~ party had agreed immediately and without reserve.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: VON HORN, JERUSALEM  
DATED: 12 DECEMBER 1958 0746  
NUMBER: UNTSO 1795

Following are comments requested on draft in your 828. Para 4 first sentence; delete "loss of lives". Neither 6 Nov. nor 3 Dec. shellings resulted in loss of lives. Para 5: you may be asked for explanations about words "action taken by both sides" in second sentence. Perhaps last part of sentence after word "continuing" might be deleted. Some changes might also be introduced in this para depending on the results of visits of defensive areas by UNMOS if such visits take place. Should they not take place following denial by one party of UNMOS freedom of movement, you might consider possibility of some reference to MAC Chairman's responsibilities under Article V of GAA and to assurances concerning freedom of movement you received in 1956 (S/3596, end of part II "General Observations")

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL

FROM: VON HORN, JERUSALEM

DATE: 12 DECEMBER 1958, 1446.

NUMBER: UNTSO 1800.

A. Action taken on your last suggestions and own Bell-elements moved north.

B. Unconfirmed signs of Israelis last night started pulling out of area, at least elements of what seems to have been recent considerable build up.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: VON HORN, JERUSALEM  
DATE: 14 DECEMBER 1958, 1302  
NUMBER: UNTSO 1808.

Further to UNTSO 1803.

I met Biran at his request at 1530 LT. He said they had had much hesitation about my letter requesting visit of defensive and demilitarized zones because they did not think time was opportune to revive discussion of basic principles concerning demilitarized zone and freedom of movement. They had, however, checked with you and found out that we were concerned mainly about build-up in area. If we just wanted to go and see, we were welcome to do so at any time. He would confirm his answer in writing tomorrow. I pointed out that delay in answering was unfortunate. It was agreed that visit would start tomorrow morning and Biran is lining up Liaison Officers on his side. Thus visit on both sides scheduled to start tomorrow morning. I hope to have preliminary report as to how things shape up sent to you before start of Security Council meeting.

Question of informal reports on damage to Israeli settlements also broached during our meeting.

UNTSO 1781 refers.

I told Biran that I had forwarded those reports to you and suggested that question of their publication be raised at Headquarters. Biran was emphatic about matter, stressing that my report spoke of damage on Syrian side and not on their side. I pointed out that this was consequence of their decision not to request investigation of their complaints, and that their attempt now to achieve the same result by an indirect way raised procedural and legal problems which could not be lightly ignored.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TOP SECRET

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL  
FROM: SPINELLI, AMMAN  
DATE: 12 DECEMBER 1958 1446  
NUMBER: SP 192

I have had in mind for past few days to cable you some impressions on this problem, but wished a little time to clarify my views. My present impressions are as follows: In general there is not much feeling either at top or among general public that dramatic developments are imminent, although responsible authorities and individuals do not exclude possibility. Among top persons I have impression that King is most concerned. He said to me that while Ben Gurion claims that Nasser is the enemy, what he really wants is the West Bank, and any military action on part of Israel would in fact put Jordan in most difficult situation.

Rifai on other hand theorizes on whole problem on premise that Nasser, because of difficulties particularly in Syria is adopting a provocative attitude as a counter measure, with belief that if anything goes wrong the U.N. will save the day. As regards Israel Rifai theorizes that on next provocation Israel will retaliate, but with limited objective of ~~gik~~ giving a sharp lesson and retiring before U.N. or big powers could act.

Present mood of general public in Jordan appears to be on all issues calm and rather passive. As far as our impressions go, this seems to be the case both on West Bank and elsewhere. Most people appear to regard present issue before SecCouncil as a limited incident, and are not excited by it.

On question of external influences I have no real indication except for a feeling which I sense on part of British Embassy that they would not be unhappy

to see Nasser discomfitted and might not discourage any reaction in direction you indicate officers and Bedouins might take.

In case of flare up not involving <sup>Jordan</sup> directly, I would guess that Jordan would make a statement of full support hoping to stay out. The King was non-committal on action in such a case while Rifai in presence of King said that Jordan would not attack directly, but that assistance might be given on Syrian territory against an Israeli aggression. Both he and King recognize their dilemma in that they open themselves to attack by any assistance given against Israel and that there is some risk in sending troops to Syria. Rifai believes that U.N. and big power action would save them before Israel's overrun West Bank. The King did not seem <sup>quite so</sup> sure.

Rifai did not offer a substantive answer to suggestion that Nasser might not welcome Jordan assistance in Syria, but would expect diversionary attack on Israel.