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„Odd documents of possible relevance to U.N. action or history"

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AIDE MEMOIRE

On Friday, 11 October, I saw Dr. Fawzi. On that occasion I mentioned to him that I was thinking of calling all Arab Delegates to an informal meeting. Whether I did so or not would ultimately depend on his reactions. The meeting would be given publicity as being called by me. At the meeting I would point out that we were at present living under a series of emergency arrangements. I did not forecast or threaten with a breaking up of those arrangements, but we must all realize that they were not of a lasting nature and I had to plan for risks and not for chances. In this situation I felt in great need of free and frank advise which Members of the group could give me concerning possible elements tending to stabilize the situation so as to reduce the risks in case of any change in the present arrangements.

I pointed out that this initiative probably would not lead to any very useful exchange of views, but that it might represent a positive development indicating Arab unity in a contact concerning these matters with the Secretariat. It would also set the framework for more intensified talks between Fawzi and myself. I reminded him of the fact that on his arrival to New York this fall I indicated my wish to cover the field together with him and that he had expressed his acceptance of the idea that I started out again on the basis of our discussions and plans before the outbreak of the Suez crisis in the summer of 1956.

Fawzi said that he wanted to think the matter over. He later reverted to it on Monday when in a letter he said that he was giving the proposal further thought.

On Wednesday, 16 October, I asked him what his stand was. He replied that he had carefully weighed the pros and cons. The main objection would be the risk for "competitive" statements from Arab delegates which would in no way help me. Another risk was undue emphasis on the Palestine issue. He recognized, however, that there were considerable advantages to be reaped from the initiative. It followed from what he said that he did not object against the initiative but that he felt that I had to choose my timing carefully so as to avoid any collision with the Syrian issue.

On Friday 18 October he got back to the main question, saying that he felt that with successful handling of the Syrian item, possibilities would be widened for an approach to other regional problems. If the development took that turn, he would not even object against the matter being raised in a continued session of the General Assembly after Christmas.

In the various talks Fawzi showed reluctance to the inclusion of the Arab countries West of Egypt. However, he had no firm view on the matter and recognized that, from my angle, a wider invitation might have considerable advantages.

19 October 1957

AIDE MEMOIRE

When Dr. Fawzi saw me on Wednesday, 16 October, he himself raised the Syrian issue. He said that Egypt had done what it could in order to stop the Syrian initiative. The reason was that they felt strongly that it would be very difficult to limit it to the narrow question of security involved; "Syria may well find itself with very curious bed-fellows". What had tipped the scales, was that unless some outlet was found for the present difficulties, the internal position of the Syrian Government would be in danger and in case it was kicked out, the next stage was a big question-mark which was black rather than white.

Dr. Fawzi felt strongly that it would be wise for me to exert my influence also with the Syrians in order to keep the matter at the lowest and most limited key possible and in order also to leave the door open for talks and negotiations out of court.

I asked him if I was correct in my impression that there was a beginning rapprochement Cairo - Ankara. He said yes, adding that this development, which could not but be useful, however was too young to have any fruit in this context. He maintained a close contact with the Turkish ambassador, even at the present juncture.

In this context Fawzi complained about the fact that he had no personal contact with Lodge; he had met him only once since his arrival in New York and then only for a very short talk.

The following day, Thursday, 17 October, Fawzi brought the Syrian issue up again, this time with a much sharper accent. He said that he felt that the Russians were playing a very devious game and so made an attempt of establishing themselves as a party with whom the Middle Eastern issues had to be negotiated.

The Russians would prefer to become the dominant power in the area and certainly hoped, at least, to get their position so established as to be an unavoidable party to all settlements in the region. In order to counter such a development, it was essential to develop the tactics in such a way as to play down Russia's chances to establish itself as a major party or as a protector. Although this was difficult, it undoubtedly could be done and it was of major interest that everything possible in that direction was done.

On Friday 18 October Fawzi again brought the matter up, this time more hopefully but with a continued sharp anti-USSR accent. He felt that the General Committee's handling had turned out well and hoped that a similar line might be maintained. He further hoped that a Committee would be set up quickly and that it could report at least within a fortnight so that one could close this special chapter. If the Committee were to continue for a longer period, he felt that he would be obliged to go back to Cairo.

I used the picture Fawzi had given me, first, in a conversation with Sir Pierson Dixon and Francis Wilcox in order to try to demonstrate that at all events it would be wise to handle the matter as a bona fide Syrian initiative, playing the Soviets out of the picture. It seemed to me that a reaction which treated the whole issue as a cold war question, would be exactly what the Russians would hope to provoke as it would give them all chances to strengthen their hand on and in the area. Later on Friday I took the matter up with Ambassador Wadsworth in the same spirit. I also had a short talk that day with Sir Pierson Dixon who, on that occasion, after the General Committee debate, said that he was inclined to believe in the alternative interpretation of the situation to which I had drawn attention.

19 October 1957

Avskrift.

Strängt förtroligt.

P.M.

Mr. Stassen hade önskat ett samtal om nedrustningen med mig idag. Jag bad Sandler såsom vår representant i utskottet följa mig.

Stassen började med att något utveckla, hur han såg på nedrustningsfrågans läge. Han hade velat konsultera oss, eftersom Sverige hade tillgång till framstående experter på kärnvapnens område och vi dessutom genom vårt lands geografiska läge och historia hade särskilda möjligheter att bedöma, vilken den sovjetiska inställningen i nedrustningsfrågan verkligen är. Han ville också gärna få veta den svenska ståndpunkten i olika frågor, ifall vi var beredda att meddela något därom. Man vore överhuvud på amerikansk sida angelägen att få alla informationer, som kunde underlätta deras ställningstagande. Han hänvisade till att Jarring sagt i nedrustningskommissionen, att vi inte haft tillräcklig tid att studera rapporterna från underkommissionen men att vår delegation skulle uttala sig under utskottsbehandlingen.

Jag svarade ungefär följande: Några särskilda underrättelser om ryssarnas verkliga ståndpunkt i nedrustningen hade vi inte. Stassen vore säkerligen bättre informerad härom än vi. Allt jämt var vi på svensk sida inte i tillfälle att ta en bestämd ståndpunkt till alla frågor, som behandlats av subkommittén i London. Som exempel ville jag nämna förslaget om överflygning över svenskt territorium såsom ett led i luftinspektionen. Jag hade lagt märke till att Mr. Dulles i ett tal sagt att somliga territorier kunde undantagas, t.ex. Schweiz. Jag kunde tänka mig, att vår militärledning skulle önska samma ställning för Sveriges del. Dock ville jag inte därmed säga, att en sådan ståndpunkt skulle hävdas av regeringen. Men frågan vore för vår del ännu öppen.

Jag kom så in på testningsfrågan. Med hänvisning till vad Sandler sagt förra året i första utskottet ville jag framhålla, att vi alltjämt hade åsikten, att ett moratorium vore motiverat. Det skulle inte betyda någon större uppoffring för de västliga stormakterna i trygghetshänseende. Sovjet-

unionen accepterade ju kontroll över en överenskommelses efterlevande. Ett positivt beslut skulle mottagas med stor tillfredsställelse både i Sverige och i andra länder och betyda, att något resultat framkommit ur nedrustningsdebatten. Jag hänvisade också till de japanska och indiska resolutionsförslagen i testningsfrågan. Jag hade inte till fullo penetrerat dem men de är av intresse såsom försök till kompromiss.

Sandler reste frågan om "jordsatelliterna". I ett tidigare utkast till västmaktsresolution hade funnits en punkt därom men den hade sedan utgått. De senaste dagarnas händelser hade väl aktualiserat frågan, och Sandler undrade därför om den inte skulle tas upp i den blivande västmaktsresolutionen.

Stassen gjorde några kommentarer till vad vi sagt.

Beträffande luftinspektion över svenskt område vitsordade han vad jag anfört från ett anförande av Dulles. Europeiska stater utanför Atlant-gruppen, resp. Warszawa-alliansen, stode i en särställning. Han ifrågasatte inte att vi skulle behöva ta ställning till denna fråga under debatten i församlingen. Huruvida Sverige kunde sättas i samman läge som Schweiz finge väl bero på i vad mån de bägge sidorna hade intresse därav. Han hoppades att vi inte skulle offentligt ta avstånd från tanken, då en sådan hållning kunde vålla olägenheter. Men vi hade som sagt god tid för prövning av frågan.

Vad anginge jordsatelliterna meddelade han, att punkten därom fått utgå därför att den gjorde ett komplicerat program ännu mer invecklat. Men den skulle komma tillbaka med hänsyn till vad som hänt.

Angående testningarna framhöll han bl.a. följande. En svårighet vore, att man inte visste Sovjetunionens verkliga ställning. Visserligen hade ryssarna accepterat kontroll, men de hade aldrig närmare uttalat sig om kontrollens art. Det vore ur amerikansk synpunkt av stort intresse att veta, hur långt ryssarna vore beredda att gå, om de accepterade tillräckligt talrika övervakningsposter, om posterna finge förses med erforderliga vetenskapliga instrument. Stassen undrade om vi kunde sondera Sovjet på denna punkt. Ifall en suspension av testningen bleve genomförd, skulle U.S.A. hindras i utexperimenteringen av mindre atomvapen, som kunde användas till försvar utan att åstadkomma stor förödelse. Men

Sovjet, som inte torde ha intresse av mindre atomvapen, skulle inte hindras att fullfölja sin tillverkning av stora vapen. Detta vore en viktig invändning. Vidare vore det svårt att förstå det ryska motståndet mot att överföra klyvbart material till fredligt ändamål. Ville ryssarna överhuvud en nedrustning? Gromykos tal samma dag hade förefallit synnerligen kyligt.

Jag replikerade: Att avskilja testningsfrågan såsom fristående från andra frågor vore motiverat även av det skälet, att ett andra steg - nämligen bestämmelser om klyvbart materials överförande till fredligt bruk - krävde mer kontroll och därför längre tids förberedelser än ett fristående testningsförbud. Västmakterna förefölle alltför försiktiga i denna sak. Det vore fråga om ett temporärt förbud. Detta skulle vara ömsesidigt. Redan möjligheten att starta en kontrollapparat genom poster på vederbörande länders territorier var av så stort intresse, att tillfället inte borde försittas. Jag underströk också betydelsen av att förbudet mot vapenprov hindrade andra stater att börja en produktion.

Stassen medgav att bägge dessa synpunkter måste tillmätas vikt vid bedömandet av frågan. Han bekräftade också, att kontrollen över det "andra steget" krävde långt mer ingripande åtgärder än kontrollen över att testningsförbudet upprätthölles. Han ville emellertid ställa en fråga: Antag att ett moratorium infördes, skulle då läget i världen efter några år medgiva, att experimenten återupptoges? Jag svarade, att jag inte ville ge något svar på den frågan, och Sandler underströk att ingen kunde veta hur läget då skulle te sig.

Vid avskedet underströk Stassen på nytt, att en sondering av ryssarnas planer rörande kontrollens art skulle vara av det största intresse. Han hoppades på fortsatt kontakt.

New York den 10 oktober 1957.

Östen Undén

EL AUJA DEMILITARIZED ZONE

Background Note

I

1. The Egyptian-Israeli General Armistice Agreement of 24 February 1949 provided, in Articles VII and VIII, for a reduction of military forces to defensive forces only (as defined in Annex III of the Agreement) in certain clearly defined areas on both sides of the Armistice Demarcation Line. The area of the village of El Auja and vicinity was to be demilitarized and both Egyptian and Israeli armed forces were to be "totally excluded therefrom". The Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission and United Nations Observers attached to the Commission were to be responsible "for ensuring the full implementation of this provision" (Article VIII, paragraph 1). Egyptian defensive positions were excluded from a corresponding area in Egyptian territory west of the El Auja Demilitarized Zone, an area over twice the size of the Demilitarized Zone (Article VIII, paragraph 3). Situated at an important road junction some 140 miles from Ismailia and 35 to 40 miles from Beersheba, the village of El Auja formed a focal point for the set of mutually balancing and complementary provisions of the General Armistice Agreement, Articles VII and VIII, which were intended to safeguard each of the parties against invasion by the other.

2. In conformity with the strategic importance of the El Auja Demilitarized Zone, the Armistice Agreement provided that "the Mixed Armistice Commission shall maintain its headquarters at El Auja ...", although the Commission was also empowered to hold its meetings "at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary for the effective conduct of its work" (Article X, paragraph 2).

3. During the first year of the Armistice regime, the situation in the Demilitarized Zone and vicinity was relatively calm. Egypt and Israel alternated every two weeks in providing civilian guards for the headquarters of the Mixed Armistice Commission at El Auja. Relations between the representatives of the two parties were co-operative. The records of the Mixed Armistice Commission

contain references only to minor incidents of "infiltration", i.e. illegal crossings of the Armistice Demarcation Line by nomadic Bedouins from the Sinai and the Negev regions.

II

Expulsion of the Bedouins

4. Beginning in May 1950, the Israeli authorities adopted the policy of forcibly expelling groups of Arabs, mostly Bedouins, from Israeli territory into the Gaza Strip and into Jordan. This policy culminated in the large-scale expulsions of August-September 1950. On 2 September 1950 the Israeli armed forces rounded up about four thousand Bedouins living in the Negev in and around the El Auja Demilitarized Zone and drove them into Egypt. Investigation by the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission showed that these Bedouins, comprising members of five Bedouin tribes, had lived in the Beersheba area under the British mandate, but had moved to El Auja under Israeli pressure; that since 20 August 1950, the Israelis had conducted operations to clear the Bedouins, employing army troops with armored cars and guided by reconnaissance aircraft; that after driving the Bedouins across the border, the Israelis burnt tents, crops and possessions; and that thirteen Bedouins were killed during these operations (Report by the Chief of Staff, 18 September 1950, S/1797). The Israelis claimed that the Bedouins had fought against them in the Negev; that some had fled to the Sinai at the beginning of the war and illegally returned to Israel; that a large proportion of them were originally from Sinai; and that they were responsible for border trespassing, smuggling, shooting at vehicles and mine laying.

5. The Security Council considered the Egyptian complaint regarding these expulsions. In its resolution of 17 November (S/1907), the Council inter alia requested the Israeli-Egyptian Mixed Armistice Commission "to give urgent attention to the Egyptian complaint of expulsion of thousands of Palestine Arabs"; called upon both parties "to give effect to any finding of the Israeli-Egyptian Mixed Armistice Commission regarding the repatriation of any such Arabs who in the Commission's opinion are entitled to return"; authorized the Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervision Organization "to recommend to Israel, Egypt and to such other Arab States as may be appropriate such steps

as he may consider necessary to control the movement of such nomadic Arabs across international frontiers or armistice lines by mutual agreement"; and called upon the Governments concerned "to take in the future no action involving the transfer of persons across international frontiers or armistice lines without prior consultation through the Mixed Armistice Commission".

6. By June 1951 the efforts of the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission to resolve the problem of the Bedouins had failed[1/]. By a resolution adopted on 30 May 1951, the Mixed Armistice Commission decided that the "Bedouins estimated at between 6,000 and 7,000 ... be repatriated to the Israeli-controlled area". Israel immediately appealed against this decision to the Special Committee.

General situation along the Armistice Demarcation Line: 1951-1953

7. In the meantime the situation along the Armistice Demarcation Line was deteriorating, especially in the area of the Gaza Strip. The Israelis complained of armed robberies and attacks on Israeli settlements and Israeli patrols by Arab bands from the Gaza Strip. The Egyptians complained of retaliatory raids by Israelis and of violations of the waters and territory under Egyptian control (Report by Chief of Staff dated 8 November 1951, S/2388). From 3 October 1951 to July 1952, no meetings of the Mixed Armistice Commission were held.

8. When the Mixed Armistice Commission resumed its meetings in August and September 1952, the outstanding complaints totalling 324 were filed. Mixed patrols along the Armistice Demarcation Line were reinstated. An informal agreement was also concluded that no further complaints would be brought before the Mixed Armistice Commission by either party and that direct and frequent contact between representatives of both sides would be established. By 28 November 1952 the former practice of lodging complaints was resumed. Allegations by

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1/ The Chief of Staff's report dated 12 March 1951 (S/2049) describes in detail the various proposals advances by the Chairman for the solution of this problem.

the Israelis of thefts and infiltration alternated with Egyptian complaints of firing across the Demarcation Line, thefts and some minor retaliatory activity. Most of these were in the vicinity of the Gaza Strip.

9. During 1952 only one incident appears to have occurred in the Demilitarized Zone when a mine exploded killing an Israeli soldier and wounding three others. The incident was attributed to Bedouin activity.

10. On 3 February 1953 a meeting of the Mixed Armistice Commission considered an Egyptian complaint about the presence of Israelis in the Demilitarized Zone. They were alleged to be driving up in cars to the western boundary of the Zone. The Israelis claimed that the cars were in the Demilitarized Zone to protect the Israeli camp maintained in the Zone in conjunction with the headquarters of the Mixed Armistice Commission, from marauding Bedouins.

III

Establishment of an Israeli settlement in the Zone

11. Until September 1953, except for the incidents mentioned in paragraphs 9 and 10 above, the El Auja Demilitarized Zone was reasonably quiet. The reactions of the Bedouin expulsion were not felt in the Zone itself but rather in the Negev generally and in the vicinity of the Gaza Strip to the extent that the Bedouins were in fact responsible for attacks upon Israeli settlements, the placing of mines, shooting at vehicles and other illegal acts. These, in turn, produced retaliatory actions by the Israelis, such as the attack on the El Bureij refugee camp on 28 August 1953.

12. On 28 September 1953 an Israeli Armed Force entered several times into the Demilitarized Zone, attacked Bedouins in the area, killing them and their livestock and established a new kibbutz or settlement in the Zone near the road junction in the area of El Auja village. This settlement had the special character of many Israeli settlements in border areas. Its personnel was made up exclusively of youths of military age who, after one year of service with the active forces, were allowed to become reservists provided they joined

such settlements. The Egyptians considered such a settlement to constitute, in effect, a military position. The Mixed Armistice Commission on 2 October 1953 considered the Egyptian complaint but did not condemn the establishment of the kibbutz. The Chairman abstained from voting on the grounds that, unlike the Syrian-Israeli General Armistice Agreement, the Egyptian-Israeli Agreement contained no specific mention of civilians in the Demilitarized Zone. In another resolution, however, the Mixed Armistice Commission found that the existence of an Israeli police in the new kibbutz was a violation of both Article VIII, which provides for total withdrawal of armed forces from the Demilitarized Zone, and of Article IV, paragraph 1, which affirms the principle that no military or political advantage should be gained under the truce ordered by the Security Council. The resolution also condemned the attack on the Bedouins and called upon the Chairman to take measures to avoid future violations of the Zone. The Israelis promptly appealed against this decision to the Special Committee. Because of that Committee's failure to meet, the Israeli representatives in the Security Council claimed that the decision of the Mixed Armistice Commission was "not final" and that the matter was sub-judice.

13. On 4 February 1954 the Security Council decided to place the Egyptian complaint on the agenda and to keep the discussion of this item entirely separate from that on the Israeli complaint regarding navigation through the Suez Canal. However, the Egyptian delegation never requested the Council to discuss the complaint, nor did it submit the explanatory memorandum requested by the United Kingdom representative on the question of whether the matter was, in fact, sub-judice.

14. During most of 1954 the situation in the El Auja Demilitarized Zone was again largely quiescent. In the beginning of that year, the Mixed Armistice Commission was heavily involved in efforts to agree on a definition of "non-regular" and "paramilitary" forces and to determine whether violations by a unit belonging to such a category would be a violations of Article II, paragraph 2, or of the Article regarding illegal crossing of the Line by civilians (Article V, paragraph 4).

On 21-22 May 1954 "a group of armed Arab civilians" attacked some Israeli Bedouins in the El Auja Demilitarized Zone. On 21 May an emergency meeting of the Mixed Armistice Commission condemned Israel for the crossing of the Egyptian-Israel International Frontier by armed Israelis proceeding from the Demilitarized Zone in two command cars and for firing against an Egyptian checkpost with small arms fire. The Commission regarded this as a violation of Article II, paragraph 2. Most of the tension, however, was developing around the Gaza Strip.

15. In the meantime the personnel of the kibbutz established in the Demilitarized Zone were constantly moving about the whole area and patrolling it up to its western boundary. In the opinion of the Chief of Staff, they were responsible for many incidents, including some interference with the Egyptian personnel assigned to the headquarters of the Mixed Armistice Commission at El Auja. Partly as a result of these activities, the Egyptians established three checkposts on the Egyptian side of the western boundary of the Zone, in the area in which, under Article VIII, paragraph 3, of the Armistice Agreement, Egyptian defensive positions were prohibited. This action was authorized by the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission on the grounds that the checkposts were necessary to control smuggling and illegal movement into Egyptian territory. At a meeting of the Mixed Armistice Commission on 22 June 1955, the Chairman laid down the specifications of the checkposts which would distinguish them from "defensive positions" prohibited in that area by the Agreement: the complement of each was not to be over approximately ten men; the armament was not to exceed the normal equipment of an infantry squad; and there were to be no permanent fortifications.

16. On 24 and 29 December 1954, two incidents took place in the El Auja Demilitarized Zone. In the first, an Egyptian military unit crossed the Israel frontier and took up position within the Zone. The Mixed Armistice Commission condemned Egypt for this violation, and the unit, which did not exceed the strength of a platoon, was withdrawn. Although both parties had agreed at the time to call upon the Sub-Committee of the Mixed Armistice Commission to mark the frontier on the ground, the Egyptian authorities subsequently decided to mark the

frontier themselves. In the second incident, the Egyptian delegation alleged that armed Israelis and vehicles coming from the Demilitarized Zone had approached the Israel frontier and shot at an Egyptian check-post. The Israel delegation alleged that an Egyptian military unit had crossed into the Demilitarized Zone and opened fire inside the Zone. The Chairman abstained on both complaints.

17. In January 1955 the trial took place in Cairo of several Jews charged with espionage. Two of the defendants were executed. Considerable tension followed the Cairo trial. The Israel delegation stated that it would henceforth agree to meet the Egyptian delegation only in emergency meetings of the Mixed Armistice Commission, i.e. not at the regular headquarters of the Mixed Armistice Commission at El Auja, but in a hut near the Armistice Demarcation Line in the Gaza Strip.

A total of 37 complaints relating to incidents in the El Auja Demilitarized Zone were lodged with the Mixed Armistice Commission from March to 21 September 1955. 14 of these were Egyptian complaints, 23 Israeli. The more serious of the Egyptian complaints related to firing from Israeli command cars at Egyptian positions and shepherds on the Egyptian side of the boundary and interference by settlers from the Israeli kibbutz with the movements of the Egyptian representatives to the Mixed Armistice Commission. The more serious of the Israeli complaints concerned firing from Egyptian positions, the movement of Egyptian checkposts into the Demilitarized Zone and interference by Egyptians with the border pillars erected by Israelis marking the international boundary.

18. During 1954-1955 there were recurrent proposals for the marking of the boundary along the western side of the Demilitarized Zone, and in January 1955 agreement was reached that the boundary should be marked jointly by the Egyptians and Israelis in the presence of a United Nations Observer. Subsequently the Egyptians stated that they would undertake the marking alone. The Egyptian survey was interrupted by the Gaza incident of 28 February. In May 1955 the Israelis again expressed readiness to continue with a joint survey and marking of the frontier. The Egyptians refused but stated that "the Israelis can mark the Egyptian-Palestinian frontier". In June 1955 the Egyptians requested a joint marking of the line around the whole of the Demilitarized

Zone. The Israelis replied that they preferred to continue their own survey of the western boundary only. In July the Israelis completed the topographic work and began the physical demarcation of the border by the erection of concrete pillars. The tense situation following the incident of 22 August 1955 in the Gaza area led the Egyptians to request that the marking of the international frontier be suspended. The Chairman agreed to this request. Subsequently, it was established that some 21 Israeli pillars marking the boundary had been pulled down and destroyed.

Mounting tension near the Gaza Strip: 1954-1955

19. In his first Report to the Security Council since taking over the post of Chief of Staff on 11 November 1954 (S/3319), General Burns reported on the gravity of the situation prevailing around the Gaza Strip. To reduce tension, General Burns recommended four agreed measures: the establishment of joint patrols, the conclusion of a local commanders' agreement, the erection of a double-apron barbed-wire fence along certain portions of the Demarcation Line and the manning of outposts on both sides by regular troops.

20. Throughout 1954 the Israeli press had been alleging that Egyptian intelligence patrols were being sent into Israel to perform espionage and sabotage activities, although in only two complaints during 1954 was any reference made to alleged Egyptian intelligence activities. In the first of these, submitted on 3 May 1954, it was alleged that an intelligence report was found on one of two spies killed by an Israeli patrol. In the second complaint, dated 22 November 1954, a member of an armed group of four men had been captured, and upon being questioned by a United Nations Observer, stated that he was an Egyptian agent. At the same time, according to the Egyptian authorities, armed Israeli groups were alleged to have been carrying out repeated reconnaisances deep into the Gaza Strip in September and November 1954.

21. The sabotage activities inside Israel of a group of three armed men from the Gaza Strip, which were connected by an Israel Army spokesman with previous activities of the Egyptian intelligence service, were used as justification by Israeli armed forces for their

attack on Gaza in the night of 28 February 1955. An Israeli force estimated at two platoons' strength, using mortars, anti-tank projectiles, hand granades, Bangalore torpedoes and heavy explosive charges, attacked an Egyptian military camp, the Gaza station master's house and a water pump house more than 3 kilometers inside Egyptian-controlled territory, inflicting heavy casualties. This action was condemned by the Security Council in its resolution of 29 March 1955.

22. Between 28 February and 1 June 1955, there were frequent incidents along the Gaza Strip arising from the combination of Israeli motor patrols along one side of the Demarcation Line and Egyptian outposts on the other side and close to it. A lull of about three months was interrupted by a serious incident on 22 August, in which an Egyptian camp near the Demarcation Line in the Gaza Strip was occupied by Israeli forces. One Egyptian officer and two soldiers were killed and three others were wounded. This episode was soon after followed by an organized series of acts of sabotage perpetrated well inside Israel territory. Their number and nature was such as to suggest to the Chief of Staff (S/3430) that they were the work of an organized and well-trained group. Efforts of the Chief of Staff to stabilize the situation by an appeal for a cease-fire were met by a demand of the Israel authorities that he obtain "the assurances of the Egyptian Government that it accepts responsibility for these acts and that it is ready to give guarantees for an immediate, complete and definitive cessation of all further hostile acts". General Burns pointed out that acceptance by the Egyptians of responsibility for previous incidents was an unreasonable and unacceptable condition for a cease-fire. Moreover, the Egyptians had accepted a cease-fire appeal which covered all future hostile acts.

23. On 31 August 1955 six United Nations Military Observers and three other United Nations personnel were detained by the Israelis in Beersheba. This action immediately preceded an organized Israeli attack on the town of Khan Yunis on 31 August - 1 September. The casualties were estimated at 36 Egyptians killed and 13 wounded. On 4 September Israel accepted the Chief of Staff's renewed appeal for a cease-fire.

IV

Military occupation of the Demilitarized Zone

24. On 21 September 1955 an Israeli military force entered the Demilitarized Zone at El Auja. They occupied the camp which was the headquarters of the Mixed Armistice Commission and detained the Egyptian personnel who were in the camp in accordance with agreed arrangements. A United Nations Military Observer at El Auja was prevented from moving during the operation. The Israelis dug trenches, planted minefields and set up obstacles on a hill nearby. The operation was carried out with the active assistance of the Israeli "settlers" from the kibbutz. To the request of the Chief of Staff for an immediate withdrawal, a spokesman of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied that Israeli forces would be withdrawn when two Egyptian checkposts allegedly inside the Demilitarized Zone had been withdrawn. The Israeli action was attributed to the illegal establishment of these checkposts in the Zone and to the interference of Egyptian authorities with the markers erected by the Israelis on the international frontier along the western boundary of the Demilitarized Zone.

25. The Government of Egypt accepted the request of General Burns for the withdrawal of military forces substantially without conditions. Acceptance by the Government of Israel was subject to a number of conditions, clarifications and reservations. The Israelis demanded assurances that Egypt would withdraw all Egyptian military positions east of the El Qouseima-Abou Aougeila line, would undertake to cease interfering with the marking of the border and would reaffirm "her resolve to abide by the cease-fire both in Gaza and Nitzana areas".

26. General Burns explained that the Egyptian checkposts conformed to the specifications laid down by the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission at the meeting of 22 June 1955 (see paragraph 15 above). The rights of the Mixed Armistice Commission and the Special Committee to interpret the term "defensive position" were specifically reserved. Israel noted the specifications of the checkposts enumerated by the Chairman but reserved its position on the maintenance of such

checkposts. If Egypt violated any of these specifications, Israel would regard herself free to take all necessary defensive measures "on her side of the frontier". At the same time Israel "understood" that the Chief of Staff's request for the withdrawal of military forces from the Demilitarized Zone did not apply to any civil police forces.

27. General Burns agreed to the retention of the civilian police necessary to ensure the protection of the civilian population in the Demilitarized Zone, provided such police were strictly limited in numbers (he later suggested 30, which would be roughly equivalent to the strength of the three Egyptian checkposts) and provided that their armament should not be heavier than those normal for civil police, i.e. rifles and sub-machine guns. This understanding was subject to the interpretation of the term "armed forces" by the Mixed Armistice Commission or the Special Committee and was without prejudice to any action by the Security Council with respect to the complaint by Egypt on its agenda concerning the establishment of an Israeli kibbutz in the Demilitarized Zone. General Burns added that it would be understood that the withdrawal of Israeli Defence Forces would include the removal of all obstacles and minefields in the area.

28. The withdrawal which took place on 2 October 1955 was not fully completed. On the Egyptian side barbed wire had not been removed in the Demilitarized Zone from around two checkposts; on the Israeli side a number of armed personnel were observed near two checkposts and one position within the Demilitarized Zone. Moreover, the Israeli minefield near the kibbutz had not been removed. In fact, three additional minefields were established. The Israeli explanation was that the agreement to remove minefields was understood by them to apply to those established by the Israeli Defence Forces and not to those established by the kibbutz as "routine security precautions". The members of the kibbutz and the civilian police were reported as being frequently in forward positions far away from their settlement. To the Chief of Staff's suggestion that the Israeli civil police approach no nearer the border than 500 metres, the Israelis stated that they would comply, provided the Egyptians on their side stayed 500 metres away from the boundary of the Demilitarized Zone.

29. In the increasingly tense situation in the Demilitarized Zone, several psychological factors appear to have played an important role. The Israelis abandoned the established Arabic name of El Auja and began to call the area by the Hebrew name Nitzana. Increasingly, the Israelis tended to equate the status of the clearly defined Demilitarized Zone with that of the area in Egypt west of the Zone in which defensive positions were prohibited but which was not, under the Armistice Agreement, a totally demilitarized zone. The constant reference by the Israelis to the western boundary of the Demilitarized Zone as the "international frontier"[1/], the frequent references by Israelis to the Demilitarized Zone as "the Israel side of the international frontier", and as "Israel territory", did not serve to allay Egyptian apprehensions over the marking of the boundary by the Israelis alone.

30. On 26 October 1955 an incident involving Israeli and Egyptian forces occurred in the Demilitarized Zone. An Israeli checkpost at El Sabha in the Demilitarized Zone was attacked. The evidence showed the presence of Egyptian soldiers some 200 metres inside the Zone and the presence of Israeli settlers armed with heavy and light machine guns in a position close to the western boundary of the Zone and far from their kibbutz. Casualties included one Israeli policeman killed, 4 wounded and 2 taken prisoners. In retaliation for this incident, an Israeli force on 28 October attacked an Egyptian army camp near Kuntilla, a post in Egyptian territory near southern Negev.

31. On 2-3 November 1955 a major Israeli military operation was undertaken to clear the Egyptian forces from the Demilitarized Zone. An official Israeli Army communique claimed that 50 Egyptians were killed, more than 40 taken prisoners, including two officers, and a quantity of military equipment was captured. Israeli losses were said to be 4 dead and 19 wounded. Before and during the action the movement of United Nations Military Observers was severely restricted by the Israelis.

1/ It is described in the Armistice Agreement as a line running "along the Egypt-Palestine frontier" (Article VIII, paragraph 2).

32. An official statement of the Israel Foreign Office described the action as "aimed at expulsion of Egyptian forces from Israel territory". The statement referred to urgent appeals to Egypt by the Chief of Staff, to withdraw its forces from the Demilitarized Zone and to the failure of Egypt to comply. The statement concluded: "There is no place in Israel for Egyptian troops. They belong in Egypt and they should go back there. If they do not go of their own free will, they must be pushed back." The action coincided with the presentation to the Israeli Knesset of the new cabinet by Prime Minister Designate, Mr. Ben Gurion, who stated: "Israel has never initiated war and never will. This is our policy, but if Israel territory is invaded, the invader will be thrown back."

V

The Three Points: 3 November 1955

33. At the end of October 1955, General Burns came to New York for consultations with the Secretary-General regarding the explosive situation in the El Auja Demilitarized Zone. The incidents at El Sabha, Kuntilla, and the Israeli action in the Demilitarized Zone on 2-3 November 1955 took place in his absence from Jerusalem and in violation of the pledge given by both sides to the Chief of Staff that they would refrain during his visit to New York from any actions which would tend to aggravate the situation. Following consultations between General Burns and the Secretary-General, a proposal dated 3 November 1955 was submitted to both parties by the Chief of Staff and the Secretary-General. It consisted of the following three points:

(1) Completion of the marking of the old Egyptian-Palestine frontier along the western boundary of the Demilitarized Zone.

(2) Restriction by Egypt of all checkposts and defended posts to positions west of the western boundary of the Demilitarized Zone and the removal of personnel, obstacles and mines from all positions within the Demilitarized Zone.

(3) Simultaneous removal by Israel of all obstacles and mines and the limitation of Israeli personnel in the Demilitarized Zone to the inhabitants of the kibbutz and the 30 civilian police allowed for the protection of civilian activities, subject to the

reservations previously made by General Burns with regard to the definition of "armed forces" and any possible decision by the Security Council concerning the presence of the kibbutz in the Demilitarized Zone.

34. It was proposed that the three points would be put into effect immediately and without prejudice to any of the provisions of the General Armistice Agreement. The marking would be done by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization alone. The purpose of the marking would be to "define a clear line of separation between the personnel under the control of one party and those under the control of the other". Such marking, or the way in which it was undertaken, would in no way affect the rights of the parties under the General Armistice Agreement. To implement these proposals and to ensure against further breaches of the General Armistice Agreement, both parties were requested to give specific assurances that the United Nations Military Observers would have full freedom of movement and observation.

35. In the interviews between General Burns and top officials of the Egyptian Government on 11 November 1955, the Egyptian Government expressed its preliminary views on the three-point proposal. Egypt reserved its position with respect to the presence of the kibbutz in the Demilitarized Zone which, in the view of the Egyptian Government, constituted a militarily defended position and was subject of a complaint on the agenda of the Security Council. Egypt regarded the Israeli civilian police as, in fact, an armed force, and felt that, in order to restore the status quo ante 21 September 1955, there should be a complete withdrawal of the Israeli civilian police and military forces. If that withdrawal took place, Egypt would reduce its positions near the boundary to checkposts, as defined by the Chairman of the Mixed Armistice Commission on 22 June 1955. Egypt considered that it must maintain defensive positions in the area west of the Demilitarized Zone, prohibited under Article VIII, paragraph 3, so long as Israel maintained other than defensive forces in the area of the western front under Israeli control from which, under Article VII, paragraph 4, all forces other than defensive are prohibited. The

The Egyptian Government considered that the entire boundary of the Zone, as given in Article VIII, paragraph 2, of the Armistice Agreement, should be marked.

36. After these views of the Egyptian Government were communicated to the Israeli Government, a press campaign began in the Israeli press designed to prove that Egypt had rejected the three-point proposal. The proposal for the marking of the entire boundary of the Zone was interpreted as intended to separate the Demilitarized Zone from Israel. The Egyptian position was interpreted to mean that Egyptian forces in the area west of the Demilitarized Zone would remain so long as the kibbutz and the Israeli police remained within the Demilitarized Zone. This was interpreted as a design to undermine the validity of the international frontier in the Nitzana area and as an attempt to prevent Israel's development in that part of the Negev.

37. In order to correct these misinterpretations, the Chief of Staff was compelled to issue a press release on 18 November 1955, stating that there has been no rejection of the proposals by Egypt, that the views of Egypt on the proposals had been communicated to the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but that the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs had not, as yet, expressed its position on the three points. In a letter of 21 November 1955, General Burns was informed by the Director of Armistice Affairs of the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs that "Israel accepts the proposals in principle. Egypt does not accept." Israeli press statements~~, however,~~ alleging that Egypt had rejected the three points, continued with the addition, on 22 November 1955, of allegations that Egyptian Fedayeen were now operating from Jordan territory.

38. In order to prevent this intensive press campaign from closing the door to further negotiations, the Chief of Staff issued on 24 November 1955 a further communique defining the final position of the parties as follows:

> "The Government of Egypt, while not rejecting the proposals, have suggested certain additional points for consideration in connection with the situation in the demilitarized area.
>
> "The Government of Israel, while stating that they accepted the proposals in principle, have also indicated that there are

points in regard to their implementation on which they intend to clarify their position."

39. At a further meeting of General Burns with the Egyptian Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence on 8 December 1955, the Egyptian desire that the boundary of the entire Demilitarized Zone be marked was reaffirmed. As regards the second point, Egypt indicated that it had no checkposts, defensive positions, personnel, obstacles or minefields in the Demilitarized Zone. If it was true, as reported, that a part of one Egyptian checkpost encroached on the Demilitarized Zone, it would be removed. With regard to the third point, Egypt maintained that the presence in the Demilitarized Zone of Israeli military forces, civilian police and kibbutz, as well as the presence of other than defensive forces in the areas of Israel from which they were excluded under Article VII, paragraph 4, destroyed the equilibrium established under Articles VII and VIII. Consequently, for her own security Egypt had to maintain defensive positions in the area west of the Demilitarized Zone in which they were prohibited.

40. The Israeli press campaign culminated in an official statement on 27 December 1955. Israel was said to have accepted the three points in principle because Israel reserved the right of clarifying the manner of marking the international frontier. The statement referred to ~~the~~ Prime Minister Ben Gurion's conversation with the Chief of Staff on 5 December 1955, in which the Prime Minister reiterated Israel's agreement "in principle" with the proposals, adding that "if Egypt agreed to ensure an effective cease-fire and to honour fully all the provisions of the General Armistice Agreement, Israel would then agree, in a sincere desire to facilitate the United Nations Chief of Staff's task, and without further clarification, that the international frontier in Nitzana (El Auja area) be marked by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization alone". The provisions of the General Armistice Agreement specifically referred to were Articles I; II, paragraph 2; IV, paragraph 4; and Article VIII, paragraph 3. Israel's demand for the implementation by Egypt of the Security Council's decision regarding freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal was also stressed. At the same time Mr. Ben Gurion had

announced Israel's intention of proposing the convocation of a conference under Article XII of the General Armistice Agreement. The Israeli statement then referred to Mr. Ben Gurion's conversation with General Burns on 11 December 1955: "To the Israeli Government's regret, it transpired that Egypt did not agree to the Secretary-General's proposals, nor to an unconditional cease-fire. Neither had Egypt given an undertaking to observe, among others, those basic provisions of the General Armistice Agreement to which the Prime Minister had referred specifically on 5 December ... The Egyptian Foreign Minister ... had not even agreed to a cease-fire. Attacks from across the border on Israeli armed forces continued, and Colonel Abdel Nasser had sent a remarkable message to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, serving notice that Egypt intended to use force in dealing with the present situation."

41. On the following day, 28 December 1955, the Chief of Staff issued a press release denying the Israeli assertion that Egypt had rejected the proposals, the third such release since 4 November. The release pointed out that both parties had stipulated conditions for their acceptance. The Israelis replied in a further press communique on 29 December asserting that "Israel's suggestions for promoting border quiet and faithful observance of the General Armistice Agreement were at no time made a condition for the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposals". The statement affirmed Israel's unconditional acceptance of the proposals and described Egypt's attitude as "tantamount to their rejection". During the following week General Burns attempted to secure an official Israeli confirmation that Israel's acceptance of the proposals was in fact unconditional.

42. In a letter dated 4 January 1956, the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed "on behalf of the Government of Israel that Israel accepts the proposals ..." In the light of the previous history of this question, General Burns asked the Israelis to reply in detail to a number of practical questions relating to the implementation of the three-point programme. He was told in reply that the Director General's letter was "specific and self-explanatory ... We await a like acceptance on the part of the Government

of Egypt and until that is forthcoming, it does not seem to my Government that any purpose is served by entering into details of implementation as set out in your above-mentioned letter".

43. During the Secretary-General's visit to Egypt and Israel in January 1956, both parties signified their unconditional acceptance of the three points. A statement issued by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization on 24 January 1956 stated that the Government of Egypt accepted the three proposals. With regard to the first, "the Government of Egypt agrees to the marking on the ground of the lines demarcating the Demilitarized Zone by United Nations Truce Supervision Organization personnel wherever such marking is required". With regard to the second proposal, calling for military withdrawal, it had already been implemented, "but, if survey on the ground by the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization should disclose that any minor encroachments remain, these also will be removed at once". The third point did not require action by Egypt. The portion of the statement of 24 January 1956 referring to the position of Israel was approved by the Israeli Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in a conference with the Secretary-General on that date. With regard to the Israeli position, the statement read:

> "The Government of Israel in a letter of 4 January 1956 informed the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization that Israel accepted the proposals in the Secretary-General's letter.
>
> "It is expected that these proposals will be implemented in about a week's time."

VI

Failure to implement the Three Points

44. The Chief of Staff requested that the first step of the implementation, namely withdrawal by Israeli armed forces from the Demilitarized Zone, should begin on 30 January 1956. As indicated, no Egyptian positions or forces were any longer in the Zone. The Israeli reply was deferred from day to day on various grounds, such as, that the Prime Minister was absent, the Cabinet was pre-occupied with budgetary matters, the Prime Minister was personally handling issues

raised by a strike, etc. On 11 February 1956, in an informal conversation, the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs told General Burns that the Prime Minister "had not understood that implementation of the proposals did not require prior acceptance by Egypt of Article VIII, paragraph 3, of the Armistice Agreement". (This paragraph, prohibiting Egyptian defensive positions west of the Demilitarized Zone, did not form part of the three proposals.)

45. In a letter dated 21 February 1956, the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Office referred to conversations and correspondence in which "the acceptance by the Government of Israel of the Secretary-General's proposals, as set forth in his letter of 3 December 1955, was made clear". The letter went on to say, "The implementation of those proposals, however, depends on further clarification on a number of important details ..." The linking of Articles VII and VIII and the absence of prior implementation of Article VIII was interpreted "as a condition imposed by Egypt for the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposals". The refusal of the Egyptian authorities to permit United Nations Military Observers to conduct investigations in connection with a complaint of 11 October 1955 and ante-dating the three proposals was also interpreted as such a condition. The letter then requested further clarification with the Egyptian authorities with the object of "removing those conditions". Thus the Israeli demand that Article VIII, paragraph 3, together with certain other matters mentioned in previous conversations, but extraneous to the three points, be implemented by Egypt before Israel agreed to implement the three-point programme was turned into an Egyptian "condition" blocking the implementation of the programme.

46. Withdrawal from the Demilitarized Zone by Egyptian forces had already been completed. However, a certain reluctance was shown on the Egyptian side in giving immediate assurances as to the freedom of movement of United Nations Military Observers. Some inconclusive correspondence was exchanged with regard to a number of subsidiary matters, particularly the use of the Rafa-El Auja road in connection with the marking of the international frontier. These hesitations came out into the open in the letter to the Chief of Staff, dated 18 February 1956, from the Senior Egyptian Delegate to the Egyptian-

Israeli Mixed Armistice Commission. The letter inquired as to the steps taken by Israel to implement the three proposals. The Chief of Staff, in his reply of 20 February, stated that no steps had as yet been taken by Israel. Meanwhile, he again requested from Egypt the assurance previously asked for regarding the free movement of United Nations Military Observers and the use of the Rafa-El Auja road. In turn, the Chief of Staff gave his assurance that implementation of any of the three proposals would not begin before implementation of the proposal for the withdrawal of Israeli military forces and equipment from the Demilitarized Zone had first been cleared, and Egypt had been duly notified, and had signified its readiness to implement the proposal for marking the international frontier.

47. In a confidential letter of 28 February 1956 to the Foreign Minister of Israel, the Secretary-General expressed his disappointment and great concern over the delay in implementing the agreements on El Auja. He suggested that further difficulties raised at this stage would have, in the light of the previous history of this problem, an importance beyond the question of El Auja as such, and would influence the possibility of making other mutually acceptable arrangements between Israel and the neighbouring states. "With what authority", asked the Secretary-General, "could I or Burns discuss these matters (incidents between patrols and outposts along the Armistice Demarcation Line) with the Egyptians, if you in the El Auja case may be said to have backed down from commitments to us which were part of the very background for the Egyptian acceptance of the proposals?"

48. On 12 March 1956, to clarify the situation, the Chief of Staff presented an Aide-Memoire to the Israeli Government, conveying, on behalf of the Secretary-General, several questions:

(1) The Government of Israel, while maintaining that it unconditionally accepts the 3 November proposals, makes their implementation conditional upon the implementation by Egypt of Article VIII, paragraph 3. Is this, in fact, the Government of Israel's position?

(2) Does the Israeli Government realize that, with equal legal right, Egypt could make the full application of Article VII and VIII a condition for the implementation of the proposals?

(3) Assuming that the answers to the above two questions were in the affirmative, the Israeli condition for the implementation of the proposals must be recognized as forcing the Secretary-General and the Chief of Staff into a position where they would have to negotiate directly the full implementation by both parties of Articles VII and VIII. These Articles go beyond the two points concerning withdrawal of the forces in the 3 November proposals. Therefore, a condition for the implementation robs the previous acceptance of the proposals of all substance. Indeed, conditions forcing an approach directly to the second step in the full implementation of Articles VII and VIII nullify the acceptance of the proposal concerning the first step. The Secretary-General asked whether the Israeli Government concurred in these conclusions.

(4) With regard to an objection advanced by Israel against the use of refugee labour in the demarcation of the international frontier, the Secretary-General asked if this work could be carried out effectively if the Egyptians took the same stand, mutatis mutandis, as the Israelis. Assuming that the answer to this question must be negative, the Secretary-General asked if Israel's attitude on this point did not also nullify in practice her pervious acceptance of the proposal.

49. The Israeli Foreign Minister, in a letter dated 20 March 1956, outlined the concern of the Israeli Government over the alleged build-up of Egyptian forces in the Sinai, the anti-Israel campaign carried on by the Egyptian press and radio, and the accumulation of supplies and equipment both within the Defensive Zone and outside it in Egyptian territory. Mr. Sharett stated that "we must insist not only on the removal of the unauthorized Egyptian positions from the area facing Nitzana in accordance with Article VIII(3), but also on the reduction of Egyptian forces in all parts of the Defensive Zone to the maximum laid down in Article VII, both these measures to be carried out simultaneously with the withdrawal of our military forces from Nitzana." As regards the questions in the aide-mémoire of 12 March, Mr. Sharett stated that "the Government of Israel differentiates

between acceptance and implementation. While its acceptance stands, it believes that the implementation of the 3 November proposals should be in conjunction with that of both Article VIII(3) and Article VII." With regard to the second question, the answer was in the affirmative: Egypt's right to make the same stipulation was conceded.

50. With regard to the third question, the Foreign Minister did not accept the negative conclusion. "Our assumption is that the Nitzana issue was definitely and conclusively resolved when both parties accepted the Secretary-General's proposals as formulated on 3 November. Hence in the examination of complaints concerning Articles VII and VIII, the Nitzana issue need not and, in our view, should not be reopened. The examination need not and should not extend over the ground already covered by the Nitzana settlement, but should concern itself with issues relating to other points or aspects of the border situation. In other words, the fact that action upon the 3 November proposals, which have been accepted by both parties, is to be deferred pending an agreement on other outstanding issues, by no means entails the nullification of those proposals. In international and other negotiations it is customary not to conduct the discussion of all the items on the agenda _en bloc_ but to tackle them _seriatim_, i.e. having reached an agreement on the first, pass to the second and so on, on the understanding that when all items have thus been disposed of, action on all of them will follow simultaneously. While discussion and decision can be successive, implementation can be simultaneous, and there is absolutely no contradiction between the two procedures."

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SECRET

11 October 1957

Note on conversation between the
Secretary-General and Mr. Stassen.
(3.15 - 4.15 p.m., 11 October 1957)

After the Secretary-General explained to Mr. Stassen how he looks at the situation regarding the disarmament problem, particularly the question of suspension of nuclear test explosions, saying that in view of the possibility that no constructive decision may be taken as appears for the time being from the positions taken by the two major sides, the Secretary-General indicated that he thought that, without interference with the so to speak "political aspect" of this problem and in order to avoid a definite failure on an issue which may be exploited for propaganda purposes by one side, thereby embarrassing the other, and being altogether disappointing and even harmful from the United Nations point of view, a formula might be introduced, either as part of the joint draft resolution in the form of an eventual amendment or as an independent proposal, requesting the Secretary-General to make an appropriate study, with the assistance of technical and scientific experts, of an adequate system of effective international control on the suspension of the testing of nuclear weapons ... etc. and to report to the Disarmament Commission by ... etc. This study would proceed parallel to any other undertakings regarding the disarmament problem and consequently would not interfere or in any way hamper possible progress on that problem by competent organs, nor would it automatically bind the parties concerned to accept the findings or recommendations resulting from the study.

Mr. Stassen explained to the Secretary-General at length certain aspects of the London negotiations, particularly regarding the decisions

taken by the President and the American Government on the 25th of May this year, stressing the complexity of negotiations between various agencies and authorities of the United States. He also reviewed the Soviet attitude on the cessation of nuclear test explosions, in particular their acceptance of international control including inspection posts equipped with appropriate scientific instruments to be located within the territories of the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom and the Pacific Ocean area. He emphasized the feeling of a certain amount of suspiciousness and incertitude regarding the meanings on the application and the effectiveness of that specific control, adding that the Russians had indicated they would not agree to any working group of experts or scientists to elaborate a system of control unless agreement was reached on the question of suspension itself.

He personally felt that the Secretary-General"s "suggestion" may have a very favourable effect, particularly if it is acceptable to both sides. He made it clear that his reaction was his own and that, in view of the somewhat complicated system of consultation which exists in Washington, and having in mind certain divergencies of view and the complexities of the problems involved, an official reaction might take a week or two in coming. Still expressing his own views, Mr. Stassen indicated he thought the idea should be developed through an independent proposal rather than as part of one side's resolution which might create some suspiciousness on the other side. He also emphasized the need for them to consult with the United Kingdom, France and Canada, apart from the usual necessary consultations in Washington, and he stressed the

French position regarding the separation of test explosions from the rest of the disarmament problems, which the "suggestion" might in fact lead to if it is accepted and put into operation. At the same time, he also pointed out certain differences which exist on this problem between the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Secretary-General indicated that this is not yet really a "suggestion" but more a kind of question and that it depends on the reply from the West whether an approach to the Soviet would be useful, but at the same time in view of the departure of Mr. Gromyko from New York next week it might be useful, even without waiting for the reaction from Washington and the West, to touch upon this possibility in an appropriate way. Mr. Stassen agreed that it would be useful to know the Soviet reaction if this could be done unobtrusively, touching on the question of effective international control when talking about disarmament which undoubtedly will be one of the topics of conversation between the Secretary-General and Mr. Gromyko before he leaves. Mr. Stassen promised to inform the Secretary-General of his conversations and the reactions in Washington as soon as possible.

The impression was that Mr. Stassen personally was favourable and very much interested in this "suggestion", but stressed past positions and difficulties in moving forward, especially regarding the cessation of test explosions, mentioning one of the so-called "new arguments" of certain milieux, namely the testing of defensive nuclear weapons. He tried somehow to give an excuse for not replying more definitely by stressing the complexity of the consultations that are always involved in any aspect of the disarmament problem.

AIDE MEMOIRE

After the talk with Mr. Stassen covered by a memorandum by Mr. Protitch, the following developments took place.

On Monday night, 14 October, I had an opportunity to have a one-hour talk with Selwyn Lloyd at a British dinnerparty. I mentioned then that I had put my question to Stassen, but I explained that that was only as an indication of one of many possible fields in which attempts might be made to break up the threatening stalemate. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd retained a very flexible attitude also as to the way in which the Secretariat might be played in the whole matter. He felt that something was within reach, but that one had to find "a mecanism". He was happy to note that I had no hesitation having the Secretariat, and the Secretary-General, played as pawns in the game if that would prove to be helpful.

On Tuesday, 15 October, Mr. Stassen came to see me in order to ask me if I accepted that the US discussed the question I had raised with UK, France and Canada. I said that that was perfectly all right and I added that I had mentioned the matter to Selwyn Lloyd although in such a form that I did not believe that he had reported to his Delegation.

The same afternoon I saw Mr. Kuznetsov. I expressed to him my grave concern about the situation which had got off ~~with~~ to a bad start. On the one side I found Gromyko's speech worrying and unhelpful, and I knew that this attitude was widely shared. On the other hand the Western resolution, if taken

by majority vote - which could safely be anticipated - would not mean anything and might represent a set-back as to the possibility of negotiations. My questionmarks referred in this situation particularly to areas where a meeting of minds might be possible, but where I had an insufficient understanding of the viewpoints to be able to judge for myself. I mentioned in particular controls (in the case of tests) and production. I said that I would appreciate any clarification that he could give me concerning the Soviet stand.

Kuznetsov gave me a very long analysis of their stand, stressing their fear that the presentation of a comprehensive proposal from the Western side might be intended to lock the door to negotiatons which obviously required some flexibility. They themselves had limited the proposal to specific points because they felt that no comprehensive proposal was possible which would not complicate progress. He felt that the Russian stand on controls was clarified in London and that, in fact, a kind of agreement existed. He further felt that the link between tests and production was ~~a technical~~ merely a tactical one.

I said that I could not agree with him on these various points. To some extent a meeting of minds might have existed in London concerning controls, but very much remained to be filled in. How efficient observation posts should there be? What technical equipment should they have, etc? For my part, I took for granted that the West could not accept anything ~~else~~ less than the best possible technical equipment in the ~~line~~ light of the present development of science. He said that they felt on their side that the West~~xxx~~ "desired a technical equipment on the basis of the stand of science, let us say, ~~on the basis~~ of 1965," and that seemed to him unreasonable. What I had said, seemed more common sense.

He stressed that he felt that if one got down to negotiations, this point of controls would not present any difficulties, provided that ~~noone~~ nobody were to ask for things which still were technically beyond reach. He mentioned that it must be recognized that there just was no system of control which was 100 o/o water-tight; an additional element of confidence would be required.

Concerning production I said that I thought they should realize that in public opinion production for good reasons had very nearly the same ~~value~~ importance as testing. Thus, it was not a tactical combination but one dictated by political realism also as to the development of public opinion.

I further stated that I had the most firm conviction, corroborated by direct experience, that there was no intention in responsible Western quarters to block or complicate negotiations.

Summing up my position I said that if I were to give any advice to the Soviet Union in this matter, inspired by my wish to see progress or at least to avoid a set-badk , it would be two-fold. On the one side that they ~~to~~ come out in a specific and precise way as to the controls they would accept for the suspension of tests, and in the second place ~~to~~ that they should show their hand on production, so as to open up some possibilities for a negotiation and meeting of minds.

Through Protitch part of Kuznetsov's reactions were transmitted to Stassen on Wednesday, 16 October. I later gave ~~the~~ a full picture of them to Mr. Wadsworth on Friday, 18 October.

19 October 1957

SECRET 23 October 1957

Note on the second conversation between the Secretary-General and Mr. Stassen (3.35 - 4.25 p.m., 23 October 1957)

Mr. Stassen informed the Secretary-General of the "first stage" reactions concerning consultations in Washington and with Canada, France and the United Kingdom on the Secretary-General's "suggestion". He emphasized that "their" position was more flexible than that of the others who felt that this might lead towards the separation of the question of the cessation of test explosions from the other disarmament problems. Also, that this might conflict with the rôle of the Sub-Committee which they are anxious to fully preserve and that, in view of the feeling that it is necessary to obtain a large majority for the 24-Power resolution, any "suggestion" of this kind might influence the vote or "distract attention".

The Secretary-General, after commenting on Mr. Stassen's exposition of the various reactions following this first round of consultations, gave an account of his conversation with Mr. Kuznetsov last Tuesday, particularly regarding the question of control in connection with cessation of test explosions and on the Soviet attitude regarding limitation or cessation of further nuclear production for weapons purposes.

Mr. Stassen was very much interested in Mr. Kuznetsov's reaction that control will not in their mind present particular difficulties. He asked a number of questions in this connection, inquiring what was the Secretary-General's impression of Mr. Kuznetsov's attitude - was he outspoken and sincere or did he show any hesitation and restraint in his conversation?

The Secretary-General explained that the conversation was open and that Mr. Kuznetsov was, as is usual when he speaks to him, by nature outspoken

but guarded and that he gave the impression that on their side there is a lack of trust towards the Western positions on the problem of disarmament which may be one of the reasons for the stiffening of the Soviet positions.

Mr. Stassen, who obviously personally is very much interested in the Secretary-General's "suggestion" and very much in favour of it, asked a number of questions of procedure; how the Secretary-General envisages the composition of the group of scientific experts which would assist him and concerning the way of reporting and to whom. There again he was anxious to preserve the Sub-Committee's proper functioning in suggesting that the report, if the "suggestion" is to be put into effect, should be for the attention of the Sub-Committee through the General Assembly or Disarmament Commission. He also asked whether the Secretary-General had given more thought to this initiative coming, if it does, independently and not through the 24-Power resolution or an amendment thereto.

The Secretary-General said that, with the reservation that it is subject to his fuller consideration of these questions, he felt that if the "suggestion" is put into effect the composition of the group of scientific experts should be left to him, but that a scientist from each member country of the Sub-Committee would be chosen and perhaps one from a neutral country (Norway or Sweden) and informal consultations will take place in this respect. The report would be the Secretary-General's, based on the conclusions reached by the scientific experts, and that there would be no difficulty in the report's being directed through the General Assembly or Disarmament Commission for the attention of the Sub-Committee. The Secretary-General indicated that if the "suggestion" is agreed to it should come as an independent proposal from the floor proposed by a Delegation, if not neutral, at least "acceptable" to both sides.

Mr. Stassen, with the intention of avoiding the impression that only control and the suspension of test explosions is singled out for study, inquired whether it would not be appropriate for the same group to be entrusted with the study of the technical and scientific aspects of control in connection with the further production of nuclear weapons.

The Secretary-General's first reaction was that it would perhaps be possible, but at a later stage and somehow not as a part of the initial "suggestion", in order to avoid any feeling that might arise that the problem of cessation is being tied up with production. Tentatively a formula could be worked out in order to indicate that if this study and its report proved to be of assistance to the Sub-Committee on the question of cessation, then the same group could be requested to make a further study regarding control over further nuclear production for weapons purposes, perhaps in the form of statements on the record or any other appropriate way.

Mr. Stassen promised to keep the Secretary-General informed on any new developments in the further consultations regarding this matter.

The impression is that Mr. Stassen is genuinely interested in the Secretary-General's "suggestion" and that he really wishes that something will come out of it.