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MEDIATOR ON THE OBSERVATION OF THE TRUCE IN  
PALESTINE DURING THE PERIOD FROM 11 JUNE  
TO 9 JULY 1948

Letter of transmittal addressed  
to the Secretary-General:

Rhodes, 16 September 1948

I have the honour to enclose herewith two copies of my report on the observation of the truce respecting Palestine during the period from 11 June 1948 to 9 July 1948. This report is being submitted in view of the provisions in the Security Council's resolution of 15 July (document S/902) which "Instructs the Mediator... to establish procedures for examining alleged breaches of the truce since 11 June 1948...".

I would be grateful if you would bring this report to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Folke BERNADOTTE

United Nations Mediator  
on Palestine

Note: This report was approved and signed by the late Mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, the day before his tragic death in Jerusalem. I regret the delay in transmitting it, owing to circumstances beyond my control.

Ralph J. Bunche

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE OBSERVATION OF THE FOUR-WEEK TRUCE  
RESPECTING PALESTINE DURING THE PERIOD  
FROM 11 JUNE TO 9 JULY 1948

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Security Council, in its resolution of 29 May calling for a four-week cease-fire (S/801), instructed the United Nations Mediator, in concert with the Truce Commission, to supervise the observance of the provisions of that resolution and decided that a sufficient number of military observers should be provided. In my report to the Security Council on 12 July 1948 (S/688) I reviewed the situation in Palestine and reported on the discharge of my duties generally under the various provisions of the Security Council resolution, including the functions assigned to me by the resolution of the General Assembly of 14 May 1948. This further report is submitted in view of the provision of the Security Council's resolution of 15 July 1948 (S/902), which instructed "the Mediator to supervise the observance of the truce and to establish procedures for examining alleged breaches of the truce since 11 June 1948...". The report is confined to the period of the four-week truce from 11 June 1948 to 9 July 1948. The Security Council is being kept currently informed regarding the present truce ordered by the resolution of 15 July 1948.

2. The provisions of the Security Council's resolution of 29 May 1948 were somewhat general in their language, but it was clear that the intention of the resolution was to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Palestine without prejudice to the rights, claims and position of either Arabs or Jews, while ensuring that no military advantage would accrue to either side during the period of the truce or as a result of its application. I accordingly made certain interpretations of the resolution and certain decisions as to its application which were accepted by both sides. They were as follows:

"(1) No fighting personnel, which shall include persons identified as belonging to organized military units as well as all persons bearing arms, shall be introduced into any part of the Arab States or into any part of Palestine.

"(2) As regards men of military age, the Mediator shall exercise his discretion during the period of the truce in determining whether men of military age are represented among immigrants in such numbers as to give one side a military advantage if their entry is permitted, and in such event shall refuse them entry. Should men of military age be introduced in numbers necessarily limited by the application of the foregoing principle, they are to be kept in camps during the period of the truce under the surveillance of observers of the Mediator, and shall not be mobilized in the armed forces or given military or para-military training during such period.

"(3) The Mediator shall exercise, to the fullest extent practicable, a check on all immigration at the ports of embarkation and debarkation, and shall place United Nations observers in ships bearing immigrants, and, to this end, shall be notified well in advance as to the port of embarkation of any ship bearing immigrants.

"(4) During the first week following the truce, in consideration of the time required for setting up the controls essential to effective application of the resolution, the Mediator shall exercise his discretion as regards the entry of any immigrants irrespective of age or sex.

"(5) Movement of troops or war materials from one interested country to another, or closer to the borders of Palestine or to the fighting fronts in Palestine are prohibited during the period of the truce.

"(6) All fighting fronts and lines shall remain stabilized during the period of the truce, and there shall be no increase in the fighting strength deployed along the fronts and lines, nor in the war materials on hand. Routine replacement of personnel may be undertaken.

"(7) War materials shall not be imported into the country or territory of any interested party.

"(8) Relief to populations of both sides in municipal areas which have suffered severely from the conflict, as in Jerusalem and Jaffa, shall be administered by the International Red Cross Committee in such a manner as to ensure that reserves of stocks of essential supplies shall not be substantially greater or less at the end of the truce than they were at its beginning.

"(9) All warlike acts, whether on land, sea or air, shall be prohibited during the truce."

3. In order to carry out the supervision of the observance of the four-week truce, I requested the services of five colonels of the Swedish Army to act as my personal representatives in supervising the truce. They arrived in Cairo on 9 June 1948. I also requested the member States of the Truce Commission -- Belgium, France and the United States of America -- each to furnish twenty-one officers from their armed forces (army, navy and air force) to act as military observers. These sixty-three observers arrived in Cairo between 11 and 14 June and were immediately dispatched to Palestine and some of the Arab States. It soon appeared, however, that this number was insufficient to discharge fully the task of observation, and I obtained from the Secretary-General of the United Nations the services of fifty-one guards recruited from the Secretariat in order to assist the military observers and relieve them of some of their more routine tasks. I also

requested each of the member States of the Truce Commission to send ten more officers to act as military observers, and these thirty additional officers arrived during the period 27 June to 5 July. In addition to the military observers and United Nations guards, I obtained from the United States armed forces some seventy auxiliary technical personnel consisting of aircraft pilots and maintenance men, radio operators, motor-vehicle drivers and maintenance men, and medical personnel.

4. The Governments of France and the United States placed at my disposal for the observation operation the following equipment that was necessary for purposes of communication, transportation and patrolling:

France: The naval corvette "Elan" on 24 June 1948

United States: 11 June - 4 C47 (Dakota) airplanes

18 June - 18 jeeps

9 trucks

2 jeep-mounted radio sets

2 truck-mounted radio sets with trailer-mounted generators

6 low-powered field radio sets

2 ultra high-frequency radio sets

24 June - 3 naval destroyers, the "Henley", "Owens" and "Putnam"

The United States Navy also provided the services of an attack cargo vessel, the "Marquette", which transported personnel and equipment to Palestine on 17 June, and at the end of the truce, the "Marquette" and the escort carrier "Palau" to evacuate personnel and equipment from Palestine.

The United Kingdom Government delivered to me on 12 June six passenger automobiles that were the property of the Palestine Government. In addition, I obtained on loan the following equipment from the armed forces of the United Kingdom:

19 June - 24 jeeps

8 jeep trailers

42 sets of field equipment consisting of binoculars, compasses, water bottles, web belts, etc.

Miscellaneous camping equipment consisting of tents, blankets, maps, mosquito netting, rations, etc.

4 Auster observation planes, which were stationed at Amman, were also made available for use on a daily loan basis.

21 June - 2 truck-mounted radio sets with trailer-mounted generators, and some miscellaneous spare parts.

Miscellaneous medical supplies

## II. ORGANIZATION OF THE SYSTEM OF OBSERVATION

5. At the time of the commencement of the truce on 11 June, the truce-supervision work was directed from my headquarters at Cairo. In the absence of a large number of observers, it was obviously an impossible task to establish full-time observation posts to cover all the ports, airfields, boundaries, coastlines, main arteries and fighting lines of all seven Arab States, as well as of Palestine, in order to check the importation or movement of war material, troops and immigrants. Since Palestine was the actual scene of the conflict and of the battle lines, where the Arab and Israeli armies would be in close juxtaposition during the suspension of hostilities, I decided that the immediate direction of the truce-supervision work should be located in Palestine and the main work of observation, on both sides of the fighting lines, should take place there, although my own headquarters had been transferred to Rhodes. Accordingly, on 26 June 1948 the observers' headquarters was transferred from Cairo to Haifa, where it has remained.

6. I appointed as my personal representative and Chief of Staff of the truce supervision Count Thord Bonde, a colonel of the Swedish Army. On 11 June there were available for purposes of observation only the Chief of Staff, four Swedish colonels and seven American naval officers. One of the Swedish colonels was immediately dispatched to Jerusalem and one to Damascus. The seven American naval officers were dispatched to Tel Aviv and Haifa in order to control the Israeli coast by physical observation and patrolling by automobile.

7. During the first few days of the truce, when only a few military observers were available, I instructed Secretariat personnel, who were located at various centres and in contact with governments, to do whatever possible on their part to supervise the observance of the terms of the truce and to maintain liaison with the respective governments regarding the incidents which I expected would eventually occur, until such time as observers were available and ready to assume their functions on the spot.

Secretariat personnel were at that time located at Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. During the somewhat unsettled early days of the truce before conditions had become stabilized, and to lesser extent subsequently, these members of the Secretariat dealt with incidents and helped settle potentially explosive local disputes, often at the risk of their lives. I cannot but comment favourably on the manner in which they discharged dangerous tasks which normally would not come within the purview of Secretariat duties.

8. By 14 June, the military observers had arrived and been deployed. The following plan of structural organization was adopted in Palestine:

- Western area - under the command of the senior American officer, with headquarters at Tel Aviv and observation posts at Acre, Jibna and Haifa.
- Jerusalem area - under the command of a Swedish officer, with headquarters at Jerusalem and a mobile convoy control post at Bab el Wad to supervise convoys on the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem road.
- Central area - under the command of a Swedish officer, with headquarters at Ramallah and observation posts at Tulkarm, Jenin, Nablus and Lydda.
- Southern area - under the command of the senior French officer, with headquarters at Gaza and observation posts at Rafa and Hebron.
- Northern area - under the command of the senior Belgian officer, with headquarters at Afula (which was later changed to Nazareth) and an observation post at Safad.

This organization was used as the basic plan of the truce-observation system. It was kept flexible and was changed as circumstances required; inactive posts were transferred to new trouble spots and new posts were established when necessary. In the Arab States, the plan of organization was more fluid. Observers were stationed in Damascus and Beirut during most of the truce period, in Beirut 1, Lebanon (from 28 June to 7 July), in Amman (11 to 18 June), in the Egyptian ports and airfields (15 to 18 June), and in Baghdad (16 to 19 June). Observers were also sent to Cyprus from time to time to supervise Jewish immigration to Palestine. In addition, a member of the Secretariat was stationed in the Suez area from 11 to 18 June and visited the United Kingdom military depots and camps in that area, until relieved by military observers. On 21 June the United Nations guards arrived in Palestine, and were stationed in Haifa, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and at the convoy check post at Bab el Wad.

9. It was agreed between the Truce Commission and myself that the Commission would be immediately responsible for the supervision of the cease-fire and

truce in the city of Jerusalem, and that the observers would assist them in that task and would deal with incidents and breaches of the truce that occurred in Jerusalem. Although our respective spheres of authority were somewhat vague and were never clearly defined, I received the fullest co-operation at all times from the members of the Truce Commission.

### III. INSTRUCTIONS TO OBSERVERS AND OBSERVATION PROCEDURE

10. On arrival in the area, the observers were given a short but intensive briefing on the nature of their duties and functions. The "Instructions to Observers", contained in Annex "A" to this report, sets forth the material that was given to each observer and the basic instructions respecting his role.

11. The Security Council had approved my procedural suggestion that all communications from the interested parties concerning the execution of the cease fire and truce should be submitted to me, and that I should exercise discretion as regards the appropriate time for reporting on them to the Security Council. Nearly all of the communications from the interested parties, apart from those dealing with my efforts toward mediation, were complaints respecting alleged breaches of the truce. These complaints originated in various ways:

- (a) From the governments concerned or from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States;
- (b) From liaison officers appointed by the governments concerned;
- (c) From local military commanders;
- (d) From local civilian inhabitants;
- (e) From the observers themselves.

12. Complaints from governments or from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States were usually made directly to me or to one of my personal representatives stationed in the various capitals. In each case they were referred to the Chief of Staff of the observers' organization for investigation and report. At the same time a communication was sent to the government allegedly at fault asking for its version of the incident. If the investigation by observers disclosed that there was any substance to the complaint, representations were immediately made with a view to rectifying the situation. These representations would be made, in the case of governments, either by myself in person during one of my frequent visits to the various capitals, or through one of my personal representatives. Representations to local military commanders would be made either by the Chief of Staff, Colonel Bode, or through one of his observers on the spot.



In those cases where it was found that the complaint was without substance, the matter was dropped. In a number of cases, the complaint proved to be of minor importance; and observers on the spot were instructed to endeavour to halt the continuance or recurrence of the incident.

13. Complaints from liaison officers, local military commanders and local civilians were made either to the Chief of Staff or to observers on the spot. Those made to the Chief of Staff were referred by him to one of the area headquarters for investigation and report. Those made to observers on the spot were immediately investigated by them and reported to the Chief of Staff in the daily reports received by him from each area headquarters. Serious cases or those involving matters of policy were referred by the Chief of Staff to me for decision or action. Less serious incidents were dealt with by the Chief of Staff, the commander of an area headquarters or by the observers themselves, depending on the nature and gravity of the complaint or breach.

14. In a number of cases the observers themselves, during their land, sea and air reconnaissance and patrols, discovered breaches of the terms of the truce. These cases were processed in the same manner and dealt with by the observers on the spot, by the area commanders, the Chief of Staff or by myself, as the case required.

15. Those cases that required negotiation with governments or representatives to them were relatively few in number. The great majority of cases were dealt with directly by the observers. The main purpose of the observers was to stop any breach of the truce, to remove the cause of the friction and to attempt to preserve the status quo as it existed at the commencement of the truce. In cases of a clearly unilateral breach, the observers would make representations to the party at fault in order to rectify the situation. In cases of disputes and altercations, the observers would obtain from the opposing parties their statement of the facts. These statements were invariably conflicting, and in most cases it proved impossible to assess definitively responsibility for the failure to observe the conditions of the truce. Rather than continue in the fruitless task of attempting to ascertain who was the guilty party, the observers were instructed to bring the parties together in an attempt to settle the matter. Where no agreement between the parties was possible, the observers were instructed to use their discretion to arrive at an equitable decision themselves, or in more serious cases to refer the matter to headquarters.

#### IV. DIFFICULTIES AND SHORTCOMINGS IN THE TRUCE OBSERVATION

16. It was evident, even before the commencement of the truce, that the observation would constitute an extremely difficult and far from perfect operation. The value of the operation was to be found mainly in the moral and psychological effect, and in the restraining influence that the mere presence of the observers in Palestine would have on the opposing parties. In order to achieve anything approaching complete supervision of the observance of the truce by the parties in Palestine and in the seven Arab States, a very large number of observers would have been necessary, with huge quantities of equipment and material. All that could be hoped for, with the limited personnel available, was that the operation would be effective in preventing a flare-up or renewal of fighting on a large scale during the four-week truce. By these standards, the effect of the shortage of personnel was that the truce supervision in the Arab States was somewhat inadequate, and in Palestine itself it was barely adequate.
17. A major difficulty that was encountered was the fact that the entire observers' organization had to be created and put into operation after the truce had begun. It was not known until 9 June 1948 whether or not there would in fact be any truce, and at that date only the five Swedish colonels were present in the Middle East. It was necessary to bring the observers from distant places, instruct them in their duties, and deploy them rapidly in a country that was completely unfamiliar to them. The last group of observers to arrive reached Palestine only three days before the end of the truce. The urgency of the necessity of fixing the commencement of the truce at as early a date as possible, the resulting shortness of time and lack of opportunity for making advance preparations, and the fact that there were no observers and no organization on the spot at the commencement of the truce, all served to aggravate the difficulties of observation.
18. The number of incidents and allegations of violations from both sides was particularly heavy during the first few days of the truce. Consequently, when the observers arrived in Palestine, they were immediately occupied, not only with the problem of orienting and establishing themselves, but also with processing and dealing with the accumulation of incidents and alleged violations. That fact, plus the conflicting statements of the two parties as to their respective positions on 11 June, made it impossible to determine and establish the battle-lines as they existed at the commencement of the truce. This inability to establish the nature of the status quo on 11 June proved to be a serious handicap to the observers in dealing with allegations

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from each side that the other side was engaged in attempts to improve its lines or position.

19. Another factor that handicapped the work of the truce supervision was the lack of communications. Commercial telecommunications facilities available for the Mission were practically non-existent, and full dependence had to be placed on used field equipment obtained from the United States Navy and from British forces in Haifa after the truce had started. The majority of the operating personnel provided with this equipment were slow-speed radio operators, and it was with great difficulty that limited facilities were maintained between the principal centres such as Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Gaza and Rhodes. Existing commercial communication facilities were used contacts between Rhodes, the various Arab States and Lake Success. This inadequacy in communications caused serious delays, and in many cases prevented the maintenance of the security of the operation. A slight improvement was made in this situation when the United Nations Rhodes static was established on 23 June; this station afforded contact via Athens for voice and written record transmission to Lake Success and Haifa.

Communications facilities within Palestine were inadequate or severely limited and did not permit the exercise of operational control of observer groups located along the various fronts. The situation was not improved as the truce progressed, since all equipment available was placed in service by 23 June and equipment to fill other essential needs was not available from local sources in the area. All aspects of the truce supervision were hampered by the lack of adequate and serviceable motor-transportation and airplanes. Motor-vehicles and airplanes were essential for patrolling and air reconnaissance. It was also necessary for observers to be moved to scene of incidents expeditiously. At the beginning of the truce, no means of transport was available. Motor-vehicles and airplanes were acquired slowly, and many of the fifty-seven motor-vehicles obtained were in a bad state of repair when received. At the end of the truce, approximately 50 per cent of all vehicles were inoperative because of lack of proper maintenance facilities and spare parts. Sufficient ground maintenance personnel were not available for either the motor-vehicles or airplanes. The general inadequacy of transport and telecommunications affected the speed and efficiency of the whole operation. Only in the field of air reconnaissance were the facilities adequate to the requirements, although facilities were not available until 24 June. Three United States navy destroyers and one French navy corvette were furnished for the purpose

patrolling the coastal waters of Palestine and neighbouring Arab States. From the time they reported for service, these functions were performed in a highly satisfactory manner.

20. In view of these various handicaps -- the shortage of observers, the impossibility of advance preparation, the inability to establish the battle-lines as of 11 June, and the lack of means of transport and telecommunications -- the surprising feature of the truce supervision is not that it had shortcomings but that it worked as well as it did in practice.

#### V. THE OPERATION OF THE CEASE-FIRE AND TRUCE

##### Major problems

21. There were a number of aspects of the truce supervision that posed major problems which required constant attention. The most difficult one unquestionably was the case of Jerusalem, where the Truce Commission was in charge of the truce supervision. The Jewish population, consisting of about 100,000 and the Israeli forces were in occupation of the greater part of the city. The Arab population, which prior to its flight from the city consisted of about 50,000 and troops of the Transjordan Arab Legion were in occupation of the Old City and a small part of the New City. The Arabs, however, were in control of all the main supply routes to the city, and the Jews were completely cut off, except for a very rough and tortuous route, referred to locally as the "Burma Road", which they had succeeded in opening as an emergency by-pass of the Latrun-Bab el Wad sector of the main Tel Aviv-Jerusalem road just a few days before the commencement of the truce.

As explained in my report of 12 July 1948 to the Security Council (S/988), I had decided and the parties had agreed that essential supplies should be sent to Jerusalem by way of relief to the civilian population, in such a manner as to ensure that reserves of stocks of essential supplies should be neither substantially greater nor less at the end of the truce than they were at the beginning. After considerable negotiation between the two parties carried on by the Truce Commission and the observers, it was finally agreed on 23 June that food supplies to the extent of 3,100 calories gross (2,800 calories net) per day per person could be sent to the Jews of Jerusalem by convoys escorted by the United Nations observers. These convoys were checked in Tel Aviv before starting, at Latrun and Bab el Wad en route, and at Jerusalem on arrival, to ensure that no excess food and no war material were being sent to Jerusalem. The convoy system worked well in practice and led to no difficulties or incidents. I was not, however, satisfied with the position taken by the Provisional Government of Israel that no check-post could be established

on the "Burma Road", as this road was under exclusive Israeli occupation at the commencement of the truce.

22. In the case of Jerusalem's water supply, no successful solution was achieved. Ras-el-Ain, the main source of Jerusalem's water supply, was in the hands of Iraqi troops while most of the water pipe-line and the pumping station at Latrun were controlled by the Arab Legion. The Arab population of Jerusalem had alternative sources of water supply, but the Jews had none. The Truce Commission and the United Nations observers made repeated representations to the Arab military commanders to permit the supply of water to Jerusalem, but all to no avail. The commander of the Arab Legion at first agreed, but later announced that the question had to be decided by his Government. I therefore raised the matter on a political level. Various evasive and procrastinating replies were received, but no water flowed to Jerusalem during the entire period of the truce. I could only conclude that there was a deliberate attempt to prevent water supplies from reaching the Jewish population of Jerusalem. I therefore informed the Prime Minister of Transjordan and the political sub-committee of the League of Arab States that I regarded their failure to implement the truce agreement in respect to the supply of water to Jerusalem as a violation of the truce, and that I must report the violation to the Security Council, as I did on 7 July.

23. At the commencement of the truce on 11 June 1948, the Arab Legion and the Israeli troops in Jerusalem were confronting each other across lines that were so close in places that they almost touched. In some places, the opposing forces held opposite sides of the same street. As feeling in Jerusalem was particularly tense, this was an obviously explosive situation that could not be permitted to continue. As it was, Jerusalem was plagued by frequent sniping, the firing of occasional shells, and attempts by each side to improve its lines or strengthen its position. As the result of successful negotiations by the Truce Commission and the United Nations observers, an agreement was reached on 16 June whereby each of the opposing parties withdrew its forces to an agreed line, and a no-man's land was established between the two lines, the houses and buildings in no-man's land being evacuated. This had the beneficial effect of reducing the possibilities of friction and incidents. Except for some incidents south of Jerusalem, at Ramat Rahel, where Egyptian troops disputed the lines and no-man's land as demarked on the Jerusalem map, the agreement was generally accepted and adhered to. The good sense displayed by the respective Arab Legion and Israeli military commanders in Jerusalem in respect to the

/agreement,

agreement, and the co-operation they gave to the United Nations organs and officials in this regard were a heartening development in the difficult task of supervising the truce in Jerusalem.

24. With respect to the question of free access to the Holy Places in Jerusalem, the results achieved were not marked by success. The most difficult problem involved was that of the access of Jews to their synagogues in the Old City and particularly to the Wailing Wall, all of which were under Arab Legion control. On one occasion, the Truce Commission had arranged for an escorted party of five Jews to visit the ruined synagogues in the Old City for the purpose of inspecting the damage and salvaging the remaining scrolls of the Torah, but when the party reached the Arab lines two Jewish laymen were refused admission. Regarding access to the Wailing Wall, the Arab Legion Commander agreed that Jews might have access for purposes of worship, but he pointed out that there was danger from snipers and that he could not accept responsibility for the safety of the worshippers along the road they wished to use. The Israeli Foreign Minister complained that this was no assurance of access and did not comply with the intention of the Security Council's resolution respecting access to sanctuaries and shrines. On the other hand, the French Consul in Jerusalem informed me that Christians living in the New City were refused permission by the Jewish authorities, on grounds of security, to proceed to the Old City for the purpose of worship, although the Arab Legion was prepared to admit them to the Old City. In the circumstances of the difficult situation prevailing in Jerusalem, it was not possible to find a way out of the impasse.

25. One of the most complicated questions in connexion with the supervision of the truce in Jerusalem was that of the security of Mount Scopus. This area was behind the Arab lines in the territory under occupation by the Arab Legion, but Israeli forces had held out in the Hebrew University and the Hadassah Hospital and controlled the Arab village of Issawiya. This island of Jewish occupation in the midst of an Arab area posed a special problem during the truce, and would inevitably have become the scene of violent battle in case the truce had expired or terminated. Negotiations were therefore commenced with a view to arriving at some special arrangement for assuring a cease-fire in this area. On 7 July, the Transjordan and Israeli military commanders in Jerusalem executed an agreement with the Truce Commission and the senior United Nations observer in Jerusalem for the demilitarization of the Mount Scopus area, which included the Hadassah Hospital, the Hebrew University, the Augusta Victoria Hospice and the Arab village of Issawiya. All military personnel and equipment were

/withdrawn

withdrawn by both sides, and the United Nations accepted responsibility for the security of the area and for providing food and water supplies. Armed Arab and Jewish civilian police, under the authority of the United Nations commander, were detailed to maintain law and order in their respective areas. This agreement for the demilitarization of the Mount Scopus area, although highly precarious because of the desperate shortage of United Nations personnel to enforce it, nevertheless was carried into effect and served the purpose of eliminating from the conflict one of the points of most serious difficulty. The agreement was observed even after the termination of the truce.

26. During the period of the four-week truce, well over 200 complaints concerning alleged breaches of the truce in Jerusalem were submitted to the observers. Many of these were communicated orally to the observers on the spot and were either settled or abandoned. A written record was kept, however, of 39 Arab complaints and 131 Jewish complaints. In addition the observers themselves noted, as a result of their routine reconnaissance, 27 incidents in which either Arabs or Jews were engaged in activity that was contrary to the terms of the truce. The great majority of all these complaints concerned cases of sniping and firing from rifles and occasionally from machine guns, mortars and artillery. In nearly all these cases of firing, it was impossible to locate the person or persons responsible or to determine who had initiated the firing, which inevitably led to counter-firing. It would have been a futile task to attempt to pursue these complaints and, since it was clear that there was no large-scale or organized attempt to violate the truce and that the firing represented sporadic and isolated individual acts, the observers contented themselves with repeated warnings to both sides to curb their men and order them to refrain from further acts of this nature. One fertile source of complaints was the fact that both sides attempted to improve their positions by strengthening and fortifying houses and strategic points, digging trenches, erecting sand-bags and other barriers. Activity of this nature was much easier to recognize and control, and whenever the existence of such illegal acts was confirmed, the persons responsible were ordered to remove or destroy the improvements and otherwise restore the status quo ante. Another large group of complaints dealt with charges of looting or stealing household effects, crops and fruit; but here again it was impossible to ascertain or verify the true facts. In general, it may be said that lack of sufficient time and the severe shortage of personnel made it impractical to carry out more than a superficial investigation, and only in the more serious cases was the investigation effectively pursued. But I am convinced that the mere presence of the  
dd /observers,

observers, few though they were, and the fact that an aggrieved party could lodge a complaint with the observers, had a salutary effect in maintaining the over-all effectiveness of the truce in Jerusalem.

27. One problem that caused some concern was the fact that the local military commanders, particularly on the Jewish side, often refused to grant free passage to the observers until after they had received orders to do so from higher authority. This had the effect of delaying the observers' investigations and impairing their efficacy. Another difficulty was the fact that, in many cases where some agreement had been reached by myself or by the Chief of Staff with the Governments concerned, the terms of these agreements were not communicated to the local military commanders, or were communicated after considerable delay. Both sides were at fault in this respect, but the most important case was that of Egyptian troops at Ramat Rahel, where the local commander refused to halt work on fortifications on the ground that he had no instructions to do so. These problems were never satisfactorily settled.

28. The evacuation of British forces from the Haifa enclave led to difficulties concerning the taking over of British military camps. In the case of a number of these camps, the British military authorities had agreed on 11 June to hand them over to local Arab villagers. Israeli troops, however, occupied one of the camps on 12 June, and the British Commanding Officer threatened to dislodge them by force. I accordingly entered into an agreement on 18 June with the British Commanding Officer whereby these camps would be handed over to me. At the same time I entered into an agreement with the Provisional Government of Israel whereby it agreed that I should provisionally take the camps into my custody for the duration of the truce, and that its troops should withdraw from the camp occupied by them until the British forces evacuated Haifa. As a result of these agreements, a potentially serious dispute was resolved, and all British forces were peacefully evacuated from Haifa by 30 June 1948.

29. Another problem that presented considerable difficulty was that concerning the harvesting of crops. In many cases, Arab fields with their ripening crops were located behind the Jewish lines or in no-man's land in various parts of Palestine. The same situation prevailed, though on a much smaller scale, regarding Jewish lands and crops. Numerous complaints were made to the observers that Jews were harvesting crops that did not belong to them, or were setting fire to them or preventing the Arabs from harvesting them. In many cases the villagers who owned the crops tried to pass through the opposing lines in order to harvest them, only to be stopped or be met with shooting. The Jews, on the other hand, complained that the Arabs  
dd /were



were infiltrating Israeli territory and warned they would be repulsed by force. This question of harvesting crops was so widespread throughout Palestine, and led to so many incidents, that on 16 June I issued a directive to both parties and to the observers establishing the following rules:

"It is not to be considered the prerogative of the Mediator to prescribe the method of harvesting crops in areas behind the lines of opposing forces as they were established at the beginning of the truce. In such areas the rules of land warfare apply.

"Between the lines of opposing forces as established at the beginning of the truce, each side is authorized to harvest crops up to a point midway between the opposing forces without regard to what part may be the better. In case of dispute, the nearest United Nations observer will be called to render a decision on the ground.

"Violation of the decision of a United Nations observer or intentional destruction of crops, whether or not they are ready for harvest, will be reported to the Mediator for decision as to whether it constitutes a breaking of the truce agreement."

Although the above rules helped to ameliorate the situation, since they made it possible for the observers to arrive at firm decisions in disputed cases, they did not entirely solve or eliminate the problem. The Arabs particularly persisted in attempts to harvest their crops beyond the midway point of no-man's land, and frequent complaints, counter-complaints and shooting incidents occurred which continued to harrass the observers throughout the period of the truce.

30. Another of the major problems that arose during the truce was that of irregular forces which considered themselves as not bound by the cease-fire or truce. On the Arab side these consisted of the remnants of the former "Arab Liberation Army" under the command of Fawzi el Kaoukji, who operated in Northern Palestine, and various local Palestinian Arabs who either regarded themselves as loyal followers of Haj Amin el Husseini, the former Grand Mufti and present Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee, or as independent partisans. These irregulars continued to attack the Jews and to carry on general guerrilla warfare. In northern Palestine, they gave rise to troublesome incidents in the areas around Birwa, El Tira, Nazareth and Jenin. In central Palestine, they were active in the Jerusalem area and around Latrun and Kafr Ana. In southern Palestine, they operated in the Gaza area and in attacking convoys to the Jewish settlements in the Negba. The regular forces of the Arab States would not accept responsibility for the

irregulars, but did not take police action against them. A large part of the problem was solved towards the end of the truce when the Government of Lebanon, on 4 July, accepted responsibility for Fawzi el Kaoukji and the forces under his command. On the Jewish side, the irregulars consisted of some elements of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and of the Stern Group. The scene of their operations was chiefly in Natanya, Tel Aviv and in the Jerusalem area. The Israeli Government accepted responsibility for all persons within the area occupied by its forces, and in the case of the "Altalena" incident it took strong police action against the Irgun Zvai Leumi. Nevertheless the threat of independent and irresponsible action by Jewish irregulars existed, and they were probably the authors of several incidents regarding which the Provisional Government disclaimed any knowledge. The only course of dealing with the problem of irregulars that was open to me was to insist that the respective Arab and Israeli forces and their governments accept full responsibility for all activities occurring in the areas occupied by them.

31. The question of immigration and of the introduction of fighting personnel and men of military age into Palestine and the seven Arab States, although important and difficult, did not present any insoluble problems. It is true that, with respect to the Arab States, the supervision by observers was not adequate, but no complaints were made by the Israeli authorities in this regard. In any event, the possibility of the introduction of fighting personnel or men of military age into the Arab States was not regarded as a serious problem, since the Arab States were abundantly supplied with manpower. With respect to Palestine, with the exception of the "Altalena" case, no evidence came to light that any fighting personnel entered the country. It is of course possible that some may have slipped through unnoticed by the observers, but their number would be very small. In several discussions I had with Arab Government leaders, they complained generally that the Jews were illegally bringing fighting personnel into Palestine. But apart from the "Altalena" case, the case of a ship named "Teti" (of which no trace whatsoever could be found), and the case of the "SS. Marine Carp" (which was found to be carrying no fighting personnel), no concrete or specific complaints in this regard were lodged by the Arabs during the period of the truce. The Jews complained of the introduction of fighting men from Transjordan into Palestine, but investigation by the observers did not confirm the charge.

32. The arrangements made by the observers' organization to prevent the introduction of fighting personnel into Palestine, were, except for the first

few days of the truce, quite thorough, as also was the check of men of military age. Observers were stationed at or near all the airfields and seaports in Palestine, and regular patrolling by motor-vehicles and planes on land, and by ships and planes by sea, constituted an adequately effective check on the arrival of all planes and ships in Palestine. It is of course true that if more observers, vehicles, ships and planes had been available, the surveillance by land, sea and air would have been still more thorough; but I am satisfied that this aspect of the truce supervision was carried out in a proper manner. With respect to the observation of air traffic in Palestine, in addition to visual reconnaissance the observers inspected the records of the airfields in Palestine showing the logs of the arrivals of planes, crews, passengers and cargo. With respect to sea traffic, the observers maintained both sea and air patrols and also obtained from each port authority a daily record of all ships arriving, departing or remaining in harbour. All incoming ships arriving in Palestine were boarded by observers before being permitted to discharge passengers or cargo; all immigrants were checked; and non-Palestinian men of military age were sent to camps for the duration of the truce. Observers were also sent to Cyprus from time to time to check Jewish emigration from there.

33. The observers were not concerned with immigrants other than men of military age -- that is, men aged 18 to 45 -- and their concern with respect to these was firstly, that they should not arrive in disproportionately large numbers, and secondly, that they should be placed in camps so that they would not be mobilized or submitted to military training. The observers were also not concerned with Arab men of military age who formed part of the Arab refugees who fled from Palestine to the surrounding Arab countries. The only known case of the introduction of men of military age into Palestine was in connexion with the "Altalena" incident. The number of these was never ascertained, but the Irgun Zvai Leumi claimed that some 800 men, women and children were involved. In all, during the period of the truce, between 260 and 265 Jewish men of military age were admitted into Israel and were placed in camps.

34. One aspect of Jewish immigration that resulted in repeated complaints from the Provisional Government of Israel was the decision of the United Kingdom authorities to prevent any Jewish men of military age who were interned in Cyprus from leaving for Palestine. I informed the Provisional Government that this was a unilateral decision of the United Kingdom for which I was not responsible, and that so far as I was concerned the same rules applied to Jewish immigrants coming from Cyprus as from any other

source. With respect to the Kenya detainees, numbering some 250 Jewish men of military age, I decided that, since these men were Palestinians who had been deported from Palestine, it would not contravene the conditions of the truce if they were repatriated. I was informed that the United Kingdom authorities would return these men to Palestine about 11 July 1948.

Violations of the truce reported to the Security Council

35. During the period of the truce, three violations occurred which I considered of such a serious nature as to warrant my reporting them to the Security Council. These violations arose in connection with the "Altalena" incident, the Negeb convoys, and the question of the water supply to Jerusalem.

36. One of the violations of the truce arose out of the attempt by Jewish irregulars of the Irgun Zvai Leumi to bring war materials and immigrants, including men of military age, into Palestine aboard the ship "Altalena" on 21 June. Although the Provisional Government of Israel took strong measures to prevent the landing and its forces set fire to the ship, it cannot be fully absolved from responsibility. It was apparent that some arms had been landed and had found their way to the Israeli forces, and that immigrants, including men of military age and perhaps fighting personnel, had also been landed. Moreover, one of the United Nations observation planes had been fired on by persons unknown, and observers had been prevented from proceeding to the scene of the incident to carry out their duties. I reported the matter to the Security Council in documents S/854, S/861 and S/861/Add.1. The Israeli Government was informed that its explanations were not satisfactory.

37. Another truce violation occurred through the refusal of Egyptian forces to permit the passage of relief convoys to Jewish settlements in the Negeb. Some of these settlements had practically been surrounded by Egyptian forces during the fighting prior to the commencement of the truce, and were effectively cut off from receiving relief or supplies except by air. On the grounds that, if relief columns of food and other essential supplies were not permitted to go to the Negeb it would constitute a military disadvantage to the Jews, it was decided that convoys under United Nations control and escort, and operating on a quota basis, should proceed to the beleaguered Jewish settlements. Despite negotiations conducted by United Nations observers, the Egyptian forces on 25 June turned back a convoy near Negba, and two Egyptian Spitfires fired on a United Nations observer in an Auster plane. I reported the incident to the Security Council in documents S/856, S/856/Add.1, S/856/Add.2 and S/862. The latter two documents indicated that the incident had been satisfactorily settled, and that the first

convoy had crossed the Egyptian lines on 1 July. On 5 July, however, a United Nations escorted convoy was stopped and turned back by Arab irregulars near Kfar Darom. These irregulars refused to obey the orders of the Egyptian officer who demanded them, and whose behaviour was co-operative and correct. On the same day, the Egyptian commander in the Gaza area notified the United Nations observer in command of the southern area that no further convoys would be permitted to proceed to the Jewish settlements in the Negeb until further instructions had been received from the Egyptian Government. The truce had come to an end before any further action was possible.

38. The third violation of the truce arose as a result of the failure of the Transjordan and Iraqi forces to permit the flow of water to Jerusalem. The matter is referred to in paragraph 22 above. I reported the violation to the Security Council on 7 July in document S/869. Despite persistent representations made by my staff and myself, no water flowed through the pipe-line to Jerusalem throughout the period of the truce.

Incidents not reported to the Security Council

39. Throughout the entire period of the truce, there was a constant stream of complaints by each side alleging that the other side was committing breaches of the truce. As was to be expected, the number of incidents was greatest during the first few days of the truce, before conditions had become stabilized, and again during the last few days of the truce, when considerable nervousness was apparent because of the expectation that the truce would not be renewed or prolonged. In a number of cases, the complaints proved to be entirely without substance, and in many cases the complaints from both sides were greatly exaggerated. In none of the cases, except those already referred to, were the breaches of the truce of sufficient importance to justify my reporting them to the Security Council.

40. As was the case in regard to Jerusalem, as described in paragraph 26 above, so too in the rest of Palestine, a number of complaints of a minor nature were dealt with by the observers on the spot and no record was kept concerning them. Records, however, were kept of 258 complaints, of which 147 were Arab complaints, 59 were Jewish complaints, and 52 were breaches of the truce (divided about evenly between Arabs and Jews) which were discovered and reported by the United Nations observers themselves.

41. Complaints relating to incidents arising out of harvesting operations were the most numerous. Arab sources accounted for 55 of these complaints, alleging that the Jews were preventing them from harvesting their crops, burning the crops, harvesting them illegally, or firing on the Arabs when the latter attempted to harvest the crops. Jewish complaints numbered only 6,

four of which alleged that Arabs were attempting to harvest crops beyond the midway point fixed by my ruling and were illegally crossing the Jewish lines. The observers also reported 4 cases, two involving Arabs and two involving Jews. The Arabs were not satisfied with my decision that they might harvest only up to the midway point between the opposing lines, and did not seem to understand that according to the rules of land warfare they were not entitled to go behind the Jewish lines to harvest their crops.

The problem was never satisfactorily solved, and the most that the observers could do was to try to pacify each situation as it arose, and to prevent small or local incidents from developing into larger or more serious affairs.

42. Another numerous group of complaints related to attacks by each side on villages held by the other side. Complaints in this category include the capturing of villages, attacks on villages, the occupation of hills and strategic road junctions and attempts by each side to advance its lines to an improved position. Incidents of this kind were, as a rule, of a serious nature. They involved 50 Arab complaints, 12 Jewish complaints, and 2 complaints by the United Nations observers involving Arab attacks on Jewish settlements. Most of the cases occurred during the first and the last days of the truce. Those occurring early in the truce were particularly difficult since each side claimed, and was supported by probative evidence, that it was in possession or occupation of a disputed village or strategic point at the commencement of the truce, at 0600 hours Greenwich Mean Time on 11 June 1948. In nearly every such case, it was impossible to determine who was in the right, and the observers were compelled to establish the status quo as they had found it on their arrival, although this sometimes resulted in subsequent attacks by the dissatisfied party on the village or point in question.

Complaints in this category arose in connexion with Birwa, Mishmar Ha Yarden, Bir Asluj, Kafr Ana, Yehudia and other places, and were the subject of careful investigation by the observers. Full reports were made wherever possible, and examples of the most complete reports are attached hereto as annexes B, C and D. In a number of cases, the complaints were found to be exaggerated and to constitute cases of sniping rather than of real attacks on villages. And in most cases where attacks or sniping had occurred, it was found to be the work of irregulars or villagers and not of the regular Arab or Israeli forces.

43. Cases of illegal fire were the subject of 19 Arab complaints, 8 Jewish complaints and 12 complaints from observers. These varied from isolated complaints of sniping to firing of automatic weapons, mortars and artillery, and in some cases to a lengthy exchange of fire from both sides. In those cases where firing proceeded from only one side, representations were made to

the guilty party and warnings were made against a recurrence of the breach. As a rule, however, where firing came from both sides it was impossible to determine who had initiated the breach, and the observers' efforts were directed towards stopping the fire and calming the situation.

44. The easiest types of complaint to deal with were those relating to attempts by each side to improve or strengthen its position. They involved such activities as the erection of fortifications and road blocks, the digging of trenches, the emplacement of guns, and the laying of mines and barbed wire. The Arabs made 10 complaints, the Jews 13 complaints and the observers 19 complaints (divided about equally between Arabs and Jews) of this category. Most of the breaches occurred during the last few days of the truce when tension was increasing. Attached hereto as annex E is an example of a report dealing with occurrences of this kind. These breaches were readily ascertainable and relatively easy to keep under surveillance and check. Whenever their existence was confirmed, the observers ordered the improvements removed or destroyed.

45. Another type of prohibited activity involved the movement of troops, military supplies and vehicles. There were 3 Arab complaints, 14 Jewish complaints, and 5 complaints by observers in this regard. The complaints were chiefly concerned with the movement of men and supplies to forward areas, but were seldom subject to verification. In addition, the Arabs lodged 10 complaints and the observers 6 complaints against the flight of Jewish planes over Arab lines, either for purposes of observation or to drop supplies to remote settlements. In those cases where the planes were properly identified, representations were made to the Provisional Government of Israel to halt the illegal flights and prevent their recurrence.

46. With respect to the importation of war materials into the truce area, very few complaints were made. In oral discussions, Arab leaders complained in general that the Jews were continuing to receive war materials, but only two specific written complaints were lodged. One was a complaint made by the Arab League on 20 June that two Flying Fortresses with nineteen aviators had left the United States for Palestine, and that five planes weekly were being dispatched to Europe whence they were sent on to Palestine. The observers were alerted to watch for these planes, but no evidence supporting the charge was discovered. The other complaint made on the same day was that the "Marine Carp" had left the United States for Haifa on 12 June with a quantity of suspected cases. Inspection of the cargo failed to disclose the presence of any war materials. On two occasions, the United States Government warned that it had obtained information indicating that planes might be proceeding to Palestine destined for the Israeli forces, but no  
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/evidence

evidence was found that any arrived in Palestine during the truce. Following the fighting at Birwa on 25 June, inquiries were made by the governments of two Arab States concerning a report that Birwa had been shelled by a United States warship from Acre Bay, but the report proved to be entirely unfounded. On 29 June, the British military authorities complained of the theft of two tanks from Haifa and, although it was assumed that these tanks found their way to the Israeli forces, neither the British nor the United Nations observers could find any trace of the missing tanks. The Jews made five complaints regarding the receipt of war materials by the Arabs. They charged that, on 15 June, two British ships, the "Bardestan" and the "Derryham" landed at Basra, Iraq, with cargoes addressed to the Iraqi Minister of War, and that the ship "Diana" of the Adriatica Company had sailed from Venice with arms shipments for Beirut and Alexandria. The Jews also complained that on 16 June artillery had been transferred from Transjordan to Palestine, and that on 19 June an attempt had been made to smuggle arms from Syria to Palestine across the Jordan River. No evidence was found to support any of these complaints. On 27 June, the Provisional Government of Israel alleged that British military planes had landed at Beirut en route to Amman for the Transjordan force. Investigation by United Nations observers disclosed that on 29 June four Proctor aircraft landed in Amman destined for the "Arab Airways". Although these planes were obviously commercial ones, the observer noted that this type of aircraft had been used as a trainer and could conceivably be used as a light bomber, and that the observers' organization had not been given notification of their arrival. The observer was instructed to keep a close check on the utilization or conversion of the planes in question. On the whole, I am satisfied that the provision of the truce concerning traffic in war materials, within the limitations of personnel and equipment available, was substantially implemented and supervised. If either of the two opposing forces did in fact manage to obtain war materials by clandestine methods, the amount obtained would of necessity have been so limited as to have made no substantial difference in the relative strength of the two sides.

The end of the truce and the withdrawal of the observers

47. During the last few days of the truce and cease-fire, tension and nervousness in Palestine increased rapidly, as did the number of incidents and breaches of the truce. It was doubtful whether the truce would be prolonged or renewed, and each side was determined to be fully prepared in the event of the resumption of hostilities. It was particularly apparent that both sides were engaged in breaches of the truce arising from efforts to strengthen and improve their tactical positions. Troops on both sides



showed an increasing disposition to fire their weapons with or without provocation. At the same time, confidence in the authority of the observers deteriorated, and their prestige and security diminished. The observers were unarmed and had no power to enforce either their rights or their decisions, and it became increasingly less possible for them to discharge their responsibilities either in investigating complaints or in supervising the observance of the conditions of the truce. Moreover, I regarded it as imperative that the observers and their technical staff should be evacuated safely and should not become the objects of attack from either side, and that equipment, particularly because of its military value to the belligerents, should not be stolen or fall into the hands of either side, if hostilities were resumed on the expiration of the truce. It was accordingly decided that all observer personnel should be clear of Palestine by the hour of the truce expiration. Orders were issued to the outlying observer posts to despatch all personnel and vehicles not urgently needed to Haifa on 7 July. On 8 July, when it was definitely known that there would be no extension of the truce, the remaining personnel and equipment were withdrawn to Haifa and Beirut, whence they were evacuated by plane and ship without incident. As a result of the necessity for evacuating the observers from Palestine, it was not possible to investigate all complaints received during the last two or three days of the truce. Those received on 8 July and up to 0600 hours GMT on 9 July were recorded but not submitted to investigation.

48. A Swedish colonel who was my personal representative, and a senior member of the Secretariat remained on duty in Jerusalem after the end of the truce, to work with the Truce Commission and control the demilitarized Mount Scopus area. Secretariat personnel also remained at their posts in Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, and Tel Aviv. The United Nations guards, with the exception of eight who remained in Jerusalem for duty, were evacuated from Palestine at the same time as the observers.

49. I desire at this point to express my thanks to the observers for the conscientious and impartial manner in which they discharged a most difficult and dangerous task. It is with deep regret that I must record the casualties that were suffered during the observation operation. On 3 July, Captain R.J. Dons of the Belgian Army was wounded while on duty near Gaza, and on the same day Pfc. Edward Brodeur of the United States Marine Corps was wounded while on duty in Jerusalem. Commandant Rene de Labarriere of the French Army was killed while on duty at Afula on 6 July, and on the same mission Chef d'Escadron du Moustier de Canchy of the French Army was wounded. A United Nations guard, O.E. Bakke, who had remained in Jerusalem  
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on duty after the expiration of the truce, was killed while driving on a mission on 13 July. All these men were casualties while serving the cause of the international community. I commend their gallantry and devotion to duty, and express my sincerest sympathy to their families.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

50. As I have indicated previously, the truce supervision was a most difficult, and in many respects, novel operation. The urgency was great and time was short. The observation organization had to be created in its entirety. The area to be covered was immense, and the personnel and equipment available were never sufficient. Matters of logistics were never completely satisfactory, and communications facilities were very limited and inadequate. As a result, the operation was not always as efficient or as thorough as I would have desired it to be. But with all its difficulties and shortcomings, the truce supervision in my opinion achieved its purpose.

51. It is true, as indicated in my report to the Security Council on 12 July 1948 (S/888), that the mere effluxion of time during the cessation of hostilities would favour the Jews. It is inherent in any truce that the preservation of the status quo prevents the attackers from attaining their objective and enables the defenders to consolidate their position. On the other hand, it is of course also true that each side is prevented from defeating the other -- a consideration that affects the attacked as well as the attacker. Taking all factors into account, I adhere fully to my previous statement that: "I am convinced that no substantial military advantage was gained by either side as a result of the operation of the truce supervision". The observation organization dealt with some 500 incidents and alleged breaches of the truce, and only three violations of the truce had to be reported to the Security Council. The great majority of complaints arose as the result of isolated incidents and the activities of irregular troops and local villagers; and in many cases the alleged breaches were found to be greatly exaggerated. During the entire four-week period, there was not one case of major fighting or large-scale military operations in Palestine.

52. On 5 July 1948, before the end of the truce, in my cabled report to the President of the Security Council (S/865), I stated as follows:

"On the whole, the truce as worked well. There have been complaints from both sides as to the alleged violations of the terms of the truce agreement. There have been instances of violation, but all fighting on a major scale has been stopped, and it can be said quite confidently that the truce has worked well, and by 9 July 1948, neither State will have gained any significant military advantage from its application. In the meantime,

through the operation of the truce, much bloodshed and destruction have been avoided and many lives spared."

After the end of the truce, with the benefit of a more detailed examination of the record and the opportunity for further assessment of the operation, I stand fully by that statement.

## ANNEX A

### Instructions to observers

In order to apply the truce in such a manner as to ensure that no military advantage will accrue to either side, the United Nations Mediator on Palestine instructs the appointed observers as follows:

1. Each observer will receive copies of:-

1. The resolution adopted by the Security Council at its 310th meeting on 29 May 1948;
2. The truce proposals of the Mediator on Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte, accepted by the parties concerned on 9 June 1948;
3. Interpretation of the term "war material";
4. Instructions for observers;
5. Identity card with text in English, Arabic, and Hebrew.

The observers should make themselves fully acquainted with the contents of these documents.

2. The observer is acting as representative for the Mediator in his specific area and shall report regularly as instructed to his seniors or directly to the Mediator as to how the truce conditions are carried out in the area assigned to him.

3. Any warlike acts, whether on land, on the sea, or in the air, or serious failures to follow the conditions of the truce by either party, shall immediately be reported by the observer, and the responsibility for the failure to observe the conditions of the truce must be clearly fixed and fully explained.

4. The observer shall, in the case of doubt arising in connexion with the interpretation of the truce, or the manner in which in special cases it should be supervised, consult with his seniors or directly with the Mediator.

5. The observer has no executive power to prevent violation of the truce, but to the fullest extent possible, consultation should be sought with the parties concerned in order to ascertain that the violating party is fully acquainted with the conditions and interpretations of the truce. The observer should make it quite clear to both parties that they will have to take full responsibility for any action violating the truce. The observer should in this respect exercise his discretion to the fullest extent in order to avoid unnecessary and regrettable incidents.

6. The observer is entitled to the right of access, upon request, to all military positions as well as the right to inspect transports if he deems it necessary in order to ascertain that no military advantage will accrue to either side during the period of the truce, and that no movement of troops  
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/or war

or war material will alter the status quo as of 11 June 1948, 6 a.m. GMT.

7. The observer is also entitled to the right, through the proper authorities, to request admission to buildings or places not under military control if he has reason to suspect that these places are being used in connexion with the violation of the conditions set forth for the truce.

8. Both parties shall, upon request from the observer, supply armed protection for him, his staff and material, and safe-conduct whenever necessary in the discharge of his duties.

9. The observer is authorized to employ local persons for services deemed necessary to be paid in the local currency and at local rates.

10. If complaints of alleged violations of the truce are presented to the observer he should, using his own discretion as far as practical, deal with these and make his investigations; matters of serious concern should be referred to his superior officer.

11. Observers assigned to coastal areas where landing of immigrants and war material can be expected shall work out an effective control system, securing the fullest possible information about any violation, suspected or alleged, of the truce conditions. All fighting personnel, as defined in sub-paragraph one of paragraph six of the truce proposals, shall be denied entry. Men of military age - i.e. in the age group 18 to 45 - among immigrants shall be refused entry except when arriving in numbers limited to such extent as to ensure that no military advantage accrues to one side or the other, and provided they be kept in camps for the period of the truce.

The camps for such purposes are to be provided and maintained by the country into which such men of military age are introduced and must be kept under the strict surveillance of observers who shall ensure that men of military age are not mobilized in the armed forces or given military or para-military training.

12. The observers will be responsible for control over that part of sub-paragraph eight in the accepted truce proposals relating to relief to municipal areas which have suffered severely from the conflict, which states that "the reserve stocks of essential supplies shall not be substantially greater or less at the end of the truce than they are at its beginning.

13. In case the truce is being violated to the extent that it is seriously endangering the safety of the observer and his staff, the observer has the right to withdraw to any place he may choose outside the danger zone.

The definition of "war material" was as follows:

"What should be considered as war material must, to a large extent, be left to the discretion of the observers. When deciding what should be considered as war material, the observers should bear in mind the

purposes of the truce, which are to ensure that no military advantage shall accrue to either of the interested parties.

The list below is intended only as a guide. The items included in the list are such as undoubtedly should be considered as war material.

Category I - Small arms and machine guns.

Rifles, carbines, revolvers, pistols, and machine guns (using ammunition of calibre 22 or over); barrels, mounts, breech mechanism and stocks therefor.

Category II - Artillery and projectors

Guns, howitzers, cannon, mortars, and rocket launchers (of all calibres), military flame-throwers, military smoke, gas, or pyrotechnic projectors.

Category III - Ammunition

Ammunition of calibre 22 or over for the arms enumerated under categories I and II above; cartridge cases, powder bags, bullets, jackets, cores, shells (excluding shotgun); projectiles and other missiles; percussion caps, fuses, primers and other detonating devices for such ammunition.

Category IV - Bombs, torpedoes and rockets

Bombs, torpedoes, grenades, rockets, mines, guided missiles, depth charges, and components thereof; apparatus and devices for the handling, control, discharge, detonation or detection thereof.

Category V - Fire control equipment and range finders

Fire control equipment, range, position and height finders, spotting instruments, aiming devices (gyroscopic, optic, acoustic, atmospheric or flash), bombsights, gun sights and periscopes for the arms, ammunition and implements of war enumerated herein.

Category VI - Tanks and ordnance vehicles

Tanks, armed or armoured vehicles, armoured trains, artillery and small arms repair trucks, military half trucks, tank-recovery vehicles, tank destroyers, armour plate, turrets tank engines, tank tread shoes, tank bogie wheels and idlers therefor.

Category VII - Poison gas and toxicological agents

All military toxicological and lethal agents and gases; military equipment for the dissemination and detection thereof and defence therefrom.

Category VIII - Propellants and explosives

Propellants for the article enumerated in categories III, IV, and VII; military high explosives.

/Category IX

Category IX - Vessels of War

Vessels of war of all kinds, including amphibious craft, landing craft, naval tenders, naval transports and naval patrol craft, armour plate and turrets therefor; submarine batteries and nets, and equipment for the laying detection, and detonation of mines.

Category X - Aircraft

Military aircraft; components, parts, and accessories therefor.

Category XI - Miscellaneous equipment

(a) Military radar equipment, including components therefor, radar countermeasures and radar jamming equipment; (b) military stereoscopic plotting and photo-interpretation equipment; (c) military photo theodolites, telemetering and Doppler equipment; (d) military super-high speed ballistic cameras; (e) military radiosondes; (f) military interference suppression equipment; (g) military electronic computing devices; (h) military miniature and sub-miniature vacuum tubes and photoemissive tubes; (i) military armour plates; (j) military steel helmets; (k) military pyrotechnics; (l) synthetic training devices for military equipment; (m) military ultra-sonic generators; (n) bayonets, swords and lances, and component parts thereof; (o) all other material used in warfare which is classified from the standpoint of military security.

ANNEX B

15 June 1948

To Colonel Bonde  
Chief of Staff of Count Bernadotte  
Cairo

Referring to my radiogram of yesterday and today, I have the honour to give the following report concerning the fixing of a truce line between Jewish and Syrian forces at Mishmar Ha Yarden, south of Lake Hula.

The case rose because of a Jewish complaint forwarded to my headquarters through a cable received by me on 13 June at 1100 GMT from Captain Eddy, Haifa, who proposed a meeting the same day on the road 3 km. SW of Mishmar, with Jewish and Syrian representatives. As I had to dispatch a note from the Syrian Foreign Office to Count Bernadotte and several reports, I sent my aide, Major Fuller, to represent me at the meeting. The American military attache in Syria, Colonel McGrath, was kind enough also to go there as interpreter. Major Fuller's report is herewith appended as Enclosure A\*.

As the meeting of 13 June had brought no agreement, I went today to a second meeting which was held at 0800 at the same place under my presidium. Present were following persons:

1. As Jewish representatives: Major Ginsberg from the Jewish High Command, and a captain (local commander) of Haganah.
2. As Syrian representatives: Major Nasser, Acting Chief of the Brigade at Mishmar and Major Buayane, Battalion Commander in the Mishmar sector.
3. From the United Nations present were besides myself: The American officers, Captain Eddy (observer on Jewish side), Lieutenant Colonel Hollister and Commander Huxley (observer on the Jewish side), and Major Fuller.

I endeavoured to have the real situation at the truce hour fixed, and to determine the line that the two parties, therefore, had the right to keep. Accordingly, I asked the representative of each side to give me without connexion with the other side, a narrative of that situation:

1. Major Ginsberg: "At truce hour, 11 June 1600, fighting was still going on in the village of Mishmar Ha Yarden. This was proved by radio communication with the village until 0800, 11 June and also by reports from three refugees who arrived from that village at 1700 to the Jewish lines. At 0830, Jewish troops withdrew from the village and fighting  
/ceased for

\* Not included in this document.



ceased for a while. At about 1000, the Syrians renewed the attack with infantry and tanks and drove the Haganah troops from the crest at p. 243. The attack continued westward until about 1130, when it was stopped by Jewish counter-attack.

As the foremost Syrian troops thus were in the village of Mishmar at truce hour, he requested that they now should go back to that point for the rest of the truce.

2. Major Nasser: "Early on the 10 June, Syrians crossed Jordan River at two fords, surrounded the village, kept by about 100 men, and pushed security troops further to the west; 72 prisoners were taken and appeared at the brigade headquarters at 0900. On 11 June at 0100, infantry and tanks continued attack against crest p.243, with artillery assistance. Resistance weak. The crest was seized and secured at 0550. Because of Jewish counter-attack after that time, the Syrians continued their attack pushing forward about 1 km. During this attack they overran the farm Kh. Yarda (now held by the Jews). Fighting ceased about 1100, whereupon the Syrians went back to crest p.243 upon the orders of the Minister of War. They now hold the line that they took on truce day at 0550."

He proposed that the small Jewish detachment now holding the farm at Kh. Yarda should go back to the Jewish main position in order to create a well-defined No Man's Land of about 2 km. for the time of the truce.

3. My consideration and decision:

I did not find the Jewish assertion that the Syrians had not reached their present lines on the crest at truce line built on such strong proofs that it warranted a request that the Syrians now should go back from this line. On the other side, it was obvious that the Jews on 11 June at 0600 held the farm Kh. Yarda.

I therefore told both parties that each side had the right to maintain the lines now kept by them but that fortifications and mines emplaced after 11 June at 0600 had to be destroyed and that further shooting or advance from their lines would be reported by me as a violation of the conditions of the truce.

I also told them that I was going to send a report about the whole case to Count Bernadotte.

Major Ginsberg made a formal protest against my decision.

(Signed) Erik DE LAVAL

Note: All times in this report are GMT

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/ANNEX C

## ANNEX C

5 July 1948

FROM: Captain D.T. Eddy, USN, Senior Member, United Nations  
Military Observers Group - Haifa area

TO: Colonel Thorde Bonde, Chief of Staff for the Mediator on Palestine

SUBJECT: El Birwa, incidents relating to:

On the morning of 25 June, advice was received at the United Nations headquarters in Haifa from the military liaison officer of the Provisional Government of Israel that fighting was then in progress between the Arab and Jewish forces in and about the community of El Birwa, which is east of Acre.

According to the Jewish version, the community had been held by the Jews prior to 0600 GMT on 11 June 1948, and the attack had been commenced by the Arabs the evening before the report was submitted.

An observer was dispatched and arrived at El Birwa in company with the Jewish liaison officer at approximately 1000. At that time there was heavy fighting in the streets and on the hills immediately before and to the right and left of the community. A conference was called which was participated in by a local Arab, who could not be clearly identified as the leader of the forces present, the Jewish representative, and the United Nations observer, and as a result firing temporarily diminished. It was agreed that until a determination had been made, the situation would remain in status quo.

The United Nations observer proceeded to Shaf'amir, where he met with other United Nations observers and Arab representatives for further conferences. It was found that there was no local Arab representative of the military forces in the area who was competent to issue an order to cease-fire and withdraw to the positions held prior to the commencing of the battle. An observer was therefore sent to the headquarters of Mahdi Bey at Tarshika.

According to the Arab version, Mahdi Bey issued an order as a result of which the Arabs withdrew from El Birwa with the understanding that it would remain unoccupied by either forces. On 26 June, the Jews stated that the Arabs had not voluntarily withdrawn but had been expelled by the Jewish forces on the night of the withdrawal; the Jewish forces were in possession of the village when it was again observed on 26 June. A conference was arranged at a meeting place between the Jewish and Arab lines for 26 June to determine a temporary harvest line, and the line described as the Eddy Line, running from El Birwa through Tell Keisan to Hill 163.4 at 247.4.

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/Both

Both sides were advised that military and civilian personnel would not be permitted to cross such a line and that a permanent line would be established later when investigations had been completed as to the respective positions of the Jews and the Arabs at the time of the inauguration of the truce.

As a result of that investigation, a permanent line was established and the opposing forces so advised in a letter dated 2 July 1948 signed by yourself, copy of which is attached.

Establishment of the line was presented to both sides in a meeting on 3 July, and at that time both indicated a protest would be filed with the Mediator.

It was the Jewish contention that Tell Keisan Hill was held by the Jews, but that it had been occupied by Arab forces on 27 June while the patrol holding it had temporarily evacuated to request Arab civilians to return to the appropriate side of the harvest line.

The Arab contention was that El Birwa had been held by them at 0600 GMT on 11 June and that they had been dislodged from the position by virtue of military action on the part of the Jews. (This was the subject of two earlier Arab complaints.)

There was no disagreement as to the possession of Hill 93, on which the southern extremity of the line was predicated. On 4 July the line was marked by ploughing a furrow throughout most of its length and both sides advised that crossing it would be considered a breach of the truce. Since that time, there have been a few reported incidents of desultory firing by both sides with Arab activity in that respect confined to rifle and machine-gun fire directed at Jewish combines, and Jewish rifle-fire directed at civilians who were said to be in Jewish areas marked by the line.

At the time of this writing, the front is quiet; significant extensions and improvements of military positions have not been noted, but an intense nervousness is apparent on the part of not only the Arab civilians but the Arab military personnel in the area.

In summary, it is the opinion of the United Nations observers that, the attack of El Birwa was instigated by the Arabs and that a breach of the truce was committed by them.

ANNEX D

TO: Mr. Ralph Bunche, Rhodes  
FROM: Colonel T. Bonde

Haifa, 5 July 1948

With your letter of 1 July, I received a copy of a complaint from the Egyptian Government concerning the conditions in the Egyptian zone of occupation. You requested that I put you in a position to reply to the said Government.

The Egyptian Government claims that several points of great strategic importance have been occupied by the Jews after the beginning of the truce, and wants us to have their forces retire to their respective positions as of 11 June.

The Jews claim that these positions were taken before the truce. As no observers were then stationed at the points, it has been impossible to prove what the positions should be. The strategic importance of these villages seems vastly exaggerated. For these reasons I have left the forces in the positions they occupied when the observers first arrived.

Other violations by the Jews have been checked by the United Nations observers. These are mainly:

Flying supply planes over Egyptian lines,  
Disturbing the Arab harvest work,  
Fortifying positions.

The United Nations observers have inquired into these violations and protests have been made by me to the Jewish government. Local fighting has been stopped and agreements made on the harvesting.

I may mention that we receive about the same amount of complaints from the Jews as to the behaviour of the Egyptians in this same area. The observers have reported, for instance, shelling of the village of Kfar Darom and firing by Egyptians in several places. The breaking of a water pipe at Beerot Yits-Haq is being investigated at present.

A summary of this in my opinion gives the general impression that a number of minor violations have been made by both parties, and that the situation at present is fairly well in hand. I need not add that a number of observers are constantly working on the control of this area.

(Signed) T. BONDE  
Colonel  
Chief of Staff

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/ANNEX E

ANNEX E

TO: Colonel T. Bende  
Haifa

Damascus, Syria 6 July 1948

Referring to my report of 5 July, I have the honour to report as follows concerning the inspections made on that same day.

1. At the front south of Lake Hula

Inspection made by Colonel Hollister and Lieutenant Jenaer. They met two Belgian military observers from Safad at Rosh Pinna and made part of the inspection together with them. It was requested that the Jewish Commander Ginsburg from Tel Aviv be flown to Rosh Pinna but no plane arrived, so there was no high Jewish representative present, only the local commander.

a. At Mansurat el Kheit, 7 km east of Rosh Pinna

The Jews were very busy digging trenches and machine-gun nests and putting up barbed wire, thus transforming the vacated (Arab) village into a stronghold. About 150 people, men and women, were working on arrival of the observers. At their request, the local commander, after some delay, temporarily stopped the work and promised to ask for instructions from his chief.

b. East of Mahanayim, 4 km north-east of Rosh Pinna

The Jews were digging an anti-tank ditch, direction south-east. About 100 m. were completed, but tracing for 300 meters more was in evidence. Work (temporarily) stopped by the local commander upon the observers' request.

c. On the road Rosh Pinna-Mishmar Hay Yarden, many roadblocks were newly built or old ones strengthened.

d. At Yerud ha Ma'ala, west of Lake Hula

The Syrians complained that the Jews had put fire to the fields south-west of Yerud and Hulata in order to move them out of their north flank positions. The wind later changed direction, no harm to the Syrians, and the Jews were forced to put out their own fire. The burned area could still be observed.

e. On the Syrian side, within the bridgehead of Mishmar Hay Yarden, fortifications still going on as earlier reported, although they now seemed to be almost completed, partly camouflaged

and covered with grass.

2. At the front north of Hula Area

Observer Lieutenant Colonel Crossman

- a. Construction of fortifications were under way in many points on the Baniass-Ain Rania road.
- b. The Jewish forces have constructed a small airplane landing ground (strip) Khos Samman 211-287.
- c. One small plane flew from behind the Jewish lines and flew over the Baniass front from the south to the north. This occurred at 0130 GMT and was seen by the observers as well as all members of the Syrian army in the area. The plane flew at approximately 2,500 feet altitude out of M.G. range.
- d. The Jews at Tell el Qadi report that shepherds are coming within 200 to 300 yards of their positions, and that effective 6 July they intend to shoot at all Arabs advancing within 500 yards of positions.
- e. Syrians are very busy constructing a road on the high ridge line from Baniass south. There were about sixty Arabs working in one group. This road runs parallel to the front. A trench was under construction 2 km. east of Dan.

3. Conclusions

Both sides have during the last four to five days freely violated the truce conditions and are still busy making all preparations for the re-opening of hostilities. All truce regulations, except shooting from the front lines, seem to have been violated.

(Signed) Erik DE LAVAL