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LETTER DATED 2 APRIL 1961 FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, with reference to the letter and attached Explanatory Memorandum, dated 1 April 1961 (S/4777), addressed by the Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the President of the Security Council, to submit the following preliminary observations.

1. The suggestion that the Israel parade to be held in Jerusalem on 20 April 1961, may endanger international peace and security is without a vestige of foundation. This appears clearly from the circumstances set out below.
2. Israel will be celebrating the Thirteenth Anniversary of its independence on 20 April 1961. The celebration of this Anniversary has been marked every year since the establishment of the State by a military parade. The venue of the parade has varied from year to year.
3. In 1958, on the occasion of the celebration of Israel's Tenth Anniversary, the annual parade was held in Jerusalem. A complaint was thereupon made by the Jordan authorities to the Jordan-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission, similar to that submitted by them to the Mixed Armistice Commission on 20 March 1961, in connexion with the parade to be held this month. The United Nations Chairman abstained on the resolution then submitted by the Jordanian delegation. In the course of a statement at the meeting, he referred to Israel's action as a "formal breach" of the General Armistice Agreement, and said:

"The stated purpose of Israel, in bringing prohibited equipment into the Jerusalem area, is to have such equipment in a military parade, in which the troops, tanks and guns are without ammunition. There is no reason to doubt that this represents the intention of the Israeli authorities."

At the same time, in order to allay any anxieties and in agreement with the parties, he posted a number of Observers at specified points near the border. The present instance is no different from the previous one and as on that occasion, no single weapon in the parade will be equipped with ammunition.

4. The Jordan Government has likewise on a number of special occasions brought to Jerusalem for parade purposes on their side of the line military equipment other than that specified for that area under the provisions of the General Armistice Agreement. Thus since the beginning of last year alone, the Jordanians have brought military equipment including armour and planes to Jerusalem in excess of that allowed for in the General Armistice Agreement on at least four occasions, as follows:

21 January 1960	Armoured vehicles to celebrate the festival of that date.
29 January 1960	Armour and jet planes in honour of the visit to the Old City of Jerusalem of the late King of Morocco.
6 July 1960	Armoured vehicles on the occasion of the visit of King Hussein.
13 and 14 January 1961	A display of jet fighter planes on the occasion of the visit of King Hussein.

It should be stated that by contrast with some of these Jordanian parades above mentioned, no air display is intended with the forthcoming Israel parade in Jerusalem.

5. The Israel Government, recognizing the purely ceremonial nature of these occasions, has not complained of the actions set out in the preceding paragraph.

6. The Jordanian Government is fully aware that there is not the slightest intention on the part of the Israel Government to undertake anything more than a peaceful celebration of a national holiday in Israel; and in fact details of the parade, accompanied by full assurances regarding its purely ceremonial character, were officially conveyed to the Jordanian representatives as long ago as

7 March 1961.

7. The Jordanian complaint is specious and all the more surprising in view of the fact that Jordan has not only itself conducted such parades on a number of occasions but persists in fundamental violation of the Armistice Agreement.

8. In the light of the circumstances set out above, the submission of a complaint by Jordan to the Security Council and a request to convene the Council is to distort and to inflate the significance of the whole matter, and is calculated without any justification to stir up tension at a time when the Israel-Jordan border has for long been relatively quiet. It is submitted accordingly that this is a matter with which the Security Council should not be called upon to concern itself.

9. I am instructed by my Government to reiterate its fullest assurances of the peaceful nature and purposes of the parade and its readiness to co-operate with all appropriate measures designed to relieve Jordanian apprehensions, however ill-founded they may be.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated to the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Arthur Lourie
Acting Permanent Representative
