

United Nations Third Power on Scene Of Uneasy Israel-Jordan Armistice

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Jerusalem—UPI—When the British quit Palestine in 1948, the Jews established the State of Israel in part of the territory and the Kingdom of Jordan annexed the rest.

But at the same time a third power came onto the scene—the United Nations. Although the physical area it controls extends for no more than a few hundred square yards, its authority affects both Israel and Jordan and its normal influence is perhaps greater than that of any other power in the world.

The world organization was the midwife of the 1947 decision to solve the Palestine problem by partition. When, in 1948 the Jews and Arabs tested this solution by force of arms, it was the UN which stepped in to try to restore peace.

Still on Scene
Now, 11 years later, the midwife is still on the scene, but in the guise of a guardian to watch over the uneasy armistice on the Arab-Israeli borders to see that, even if no official peace treaty has yet been signed, war does not flare into the open again.

The nerve center of the UN Truce Supervision Organization is a palatial building on the southern outskirts of Jerusalem which once was the residence of the High Commissioners in the days of the British mandate. Old traditions die hard in the Holy Land, and to this day it is still referred to as "Government House."

Sandwiched between the Israeli and Jordanian lines, the building is in neither country. The legend over the main gateway proclaims it to be the Headquarters of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine—probably the only spot in the whole country still officially designed as Palestine.

Location Pointed Out
Wags delight in pointing out that the geographic location of the headquarters is on the Hill of Evil Counsel—the name being derived from an ancient tradition that the High Priest Caiaphas had a country house on top of the hill and that it was there that the plot against Jesus was hatched. Christian legend also has it that the repentant Judas deliberately selected a tree in the high priest's garden on which to hang himself.

The headquarters staff are literally men of two worlds, and among the privileged few permitted to enter both worlds at will. One gateway out of Government House leads into Israel, the other into Jordan. The UN personnel, in white-painted jeeps bearing huge UN markings on the sides and roof, are a familiar sight in both halves of divided Jerusalem.

Altogether there are about 100 UN observers from 12 different countries, ranging from the U.S. to Ireland and from Belgium to New Zealand. But the majority of these are "in the field" and serve with the various Mixed Armistice Commissions on Israel's borders with Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, respectively.

At Government House itself is the headquarters staff of some 10 officers, headed by UN Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Carl von Horn, of Sweden. In addition to the UN observers, there are a number of personnel who serve in a purely administrative capacity as secretaries, drivers, telephoneists, etc.

Two-Year Duty
The observers serve for a two-year spell of duty, on loan from the armed forces of their own countries. They draw the same pay as they would in their own army, but get an additional UN allowance of \$10 a day. There is also the advantage of duty-free liquor and other goods provided by the UN commissary.

At present there are 32 UN observers attached to the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission (referred to as MAC for short). This is based in Jerusalem and holds its meetings, attended by Israeli and Jordanian representatives, in a shell-scarred building near the Mandelbaum Gate border, a few miles north of Government House. Biggest of the UN MAC staffs is on the Israeli-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission—45 observers based in Damas-

cut (Syria) and Tiberias (Israel). The size of the Israeli-Lebanese MAC, which has only three UN observers, is indicative of the peace and quiet on this border. The Israel-Egypt MAC has a mere seven UN members, but this is because its work is curtailed due to the fact that Israel decided to boycott it some years ago on the grounds that Egypt was continually violating the armistice agreement on which that MAC was based.

The 10 officers headed by

Maj. Gen. von Horn who are based at Government House in Jerusalem perform all the functions of a military headquarters. They keep in contact with the UN representatives on the Mixed Armistice Commissions and are also in close touch with the UN Secretariat in New York.

To assist them on the spot are a handful of civilian advisers and a press officer, Albert Grand, of Belgium—one of the very few men in Jerusalem who has two telephones on his desk linking

him with two mutually hostile countries. One phone connects him with the Jordan exchange and the other to the Israeli exchange. Grand, in his charmingly accented English, is equally adept at fending off awkward queries from newspapermen on either side of the "line."

Observers Unarmed
As men of peace whose job is to stop any fighting which might flare up, the UN observers are unarmed. They are familiar figures in Israel as well as in the neighboring

Arab countries, but especially in Jerusalem itself, site of the Israel-Jordan MAC as well as the UN Headquarters staff.

They have a choice as to which side of the line they will live on. If they choose the Israeli side of Jerusalem, they are assured of Western amenities and a varied social life—especially if they dare to drive the 50 miles down to Tel Aviv once in a while. If they live in Jordan-held Jerusalem, there will be fewer of these amenities, and less of a social life, but prices are

cheaper and their pay will go further. Since they are permitted to cross the border at will, many of them enjoy the best of both worlds with little inconvenience.

But if the UN staff can be seen most evenings in the local bars and nightspots, their job is not without an element of real danger. Last year a Jordanian patrol fired on a group of Israeli policemen guarding the Old Hebrew University-Hadassah Hospital buildings on Mount Scopus, an Israeli enclave on the out-

skirts of eastern Jerusalem. The chairman of the Israel-Jordan MAC, Col. George Flint, from Canada, went to the scene to try to arrange a cease fire. By the time the shooting had stopped, four Israeli policemen had been killed. Next to their bodies was found that of Col. Flint, shot dead by a Jordanian bullet. Similarly, on the Syrian-Jordan border, another trouble spot, UN observers, manning observation posts along both sides of the frontier, have often found themselves

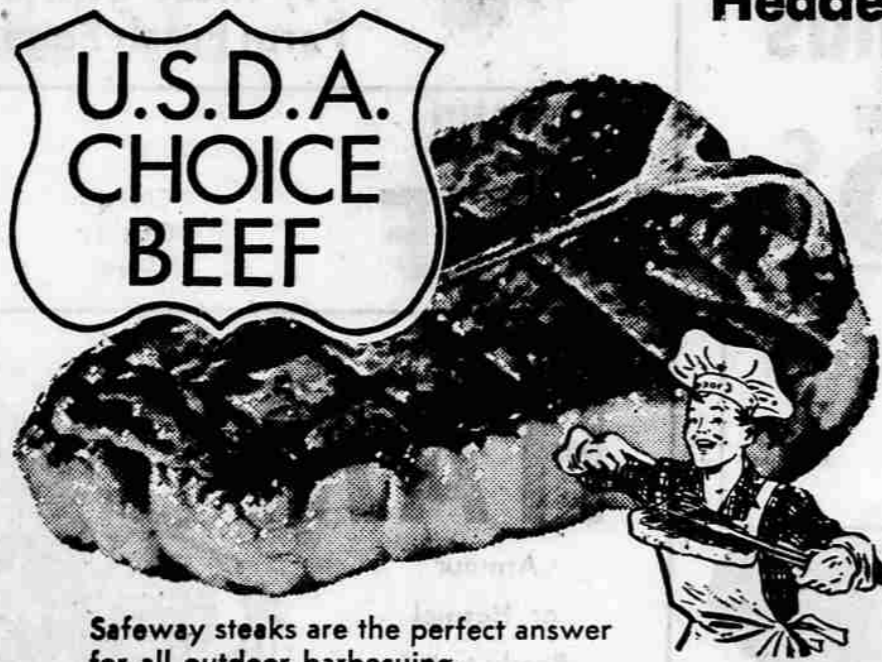
literally in the middle of the shooting, with little more than a white flag with which to protect themselves.

Today, more than 10 years after the end of the Palestine War, there is still no peace in the Holy Land and the shooting may blaze up along the frontier for almost any reason—or for no reason at all. But until a proper peace is concluded between Israel and her neighbors, the UN will be around, in strength and on the spot, to put down the flames.

BUDGETS DON'T WORK
Ithaca, N. Y.—UPI—"Average budgets made for average families don't work," says Dean Helen Canoyer of the New York State College of Home Economics.
"If there were a formula for budgeting family expenditures, and if we at the college had such a formula, we'd have a line at our door as long as the line of family budgets which have been tried and discarded," she said.
Dean Canoyer recommended that each family make its own individual plan for the use of its income.

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MORE HOME BUYERS
Chicago—UPI—More families plan to buy a house this year than in either 1958 or 1957, according to the United States Savings and Loan League. It cited a recent Federal Reserve Board study which showed that roughly 9.3 per cent of spending units surveyed planned the purchase of a home this year, compared with 7.5 per cent in 1958 and 6.7 per cent in 1957.



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