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LETTER DATED 28 JULY 1968 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter addressed to you by the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of Jordan on 18 July 1968 (A/7139, S/8685).

Of the "thirty-five new Jewish settlements" to which the letter refers, only fourteen are in areas that have come under Israeli control since the cease-fire of June 1967 and nearly all of them have been in existence for some time. Indeed some were the subject of previous letters addressed by me to the President of the Security Council on 24 April 1968 (S/8558) and to the Secretary-General on 27 June 1968 (A/7115, S/8654).

In these letters the character of the "Nahal" corps of the Israel Defence Forces and the nature of outposts established by them was fully explained. It was stressed in particular that their activities are designed to assist in ensuring the security of the area and in maintaining the cease-fire.

The sharp increase in recent days of armed attacks and incursions from Jordanian territory, the mining of roads and other acts of sabotage by raiders operating from the East Bank of the Jordan underline the importance of these outposts.

With regard to the situation of Arab inhabitants in areas under Israeli control I should like to submit that it is reflected not in the propaganda phraseology contained in the Jordanian letter but in the normal course of life and development characterized for instance by the abolition of curfew regulations in these areas. During the current summer months thousands of Arab students from Arab countries have visited their families in the areas under Israeli control. This could hardly be considered as "continuous harassment". In Bethlehem the foundation stone for a commercial centre to be constructed with the financial assistance of the Israel

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authorities was laid on 22 July 1968. In a ceremony attended by Arab and Israeli officials, the Arab Mayor of Bethlehem declared that the town has waited for thirty years for such a centre. It is doubtful whether this indicates "economic strangulation", as alleged by the Jordanian representative. The hundreds of trucks with agricultural produce which cross daily from the West Bank into Jordanian territory cannot be described, even by the wildest stretch of imagination, as evidence of "semi-starvation" in Israeli-controlled areas.

I have the honour to request that this letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Please accept, etc.

(Signed) Yosef TEKOAH
Permanent Representative of Israel
to the United Nations
