

States, General Burns had to wait several days. Eventually we moved into Gaza on the night of March 6 to 7.

"But that's the essence of peacekeeping. A peacekeeping force has no authority to exert military pressure. It is a supervisory force which sees to the implementation of an agreed upon political settlement. Until the Israelis decided to withdraw under the terms of the agreement, General Burns, commander of the United Nations Emergency Force, had to wait. I have never seen a man as frustrated and annoyed. That means he was just a little bit quieter than he was normally! He was always very quiet and very orderly. His meetings were a model of what staff meetings should be. He knew [the] issues [that] had to be decided. He had his own ideas of how they were to be settled. He was perfectly prepared to modify them, if someone else suggested a change. But these staff meetings, which I attended, started at 8:30 every morning and were always finished by 9 o'clock.

"You might think there would be a lot of difficulties because of working with troops of so many nationalities. You could not imagine a wider geographical, cultural or ideological range among the 6 000 UNEF troops. Well, he had perhaps to allow a bit more latitude than with a single national contingent. But the remarkable thing was that they worked together in a perfectly satisfactory way, with no kind of tension at all. They were all military people who had been trained in a specific approach to a situation. A number of the senior officers had attended the same staff colleges, whether Indonesians or Swedes or Pakistanis or Indians or Colombians. There was a common recognition of the way things are done. I was amazed to see how little the nationality of a particular unit or commander interfered with a sense of unity.

"For example, the Canadians—after we got to Gaza—shared with the Yugoslav armoured reconnaissance unit the patrolling of the Israeli-Egyptian line from Rafah on the Mediterranean right down to the Gulf of Aqaba; they worked perfectly well together. The Yugoslavs had their base camp among the palm trees of El 'Arish and the Canadians were not far away in Rafah; and they saw a lot of each other, and were very friendly.

"Above all this, Burns was a highly professional military man and he carried enormous respect. He happened to know the situation inside out; he had great intelligence and also great curiosity, and he made a point of discovering the political situation behind everything. He was not simply the military commander; he was also a political figure, representative of the UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld.

"I remember, in the early days of the operation, when he got instructions from Hammarskjöld to move some troops across the Canal, because he had just heard that the Israelis had decided to pull back 50 km. He went (I was with him) to see the Yugoslav commander, because they were the only troops available. They were just making camp at El Ballah, having arrived by ship at Port Said the previous day. Burns knew that, unless you had a very important military reason, you left a unit to settle in before giving them a major task; but he had these instructions of top priority from the Secretary-General.

"So he met the Yugoslav commander, Colonel Radosevic, and they greeted each other; and we had a glass of slivovitz, and Burns explained the