

UN Files of the Sec.-Gen.: Dag Hammarskjöld
Investigation of US Citizens Employed by the UN Secretariat -
Press Articles on the SG's Report on Personnel Policy

17/11/1951 - 17/05/1953

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U. N. Head Indicates Staff Policy

By Arch Parsons Jr.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12.—U. N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold asserted in his first press conference today that U. N. employees should steer clear of "undue" political activities and "engagements," but avoided a direct statement of policy toward hiring or dismissing American Communists.

Mr. Hammarskjold appeared to serve notice that his personnel policy in connection with the recent allegations of disloyalty among Americans on his staff will differ considerably from that of his predecessor, Trygve Lie.

Not Specifically Barred

U. N. observers expressed the belief that by "undue" activities, Mr. Hammarskjold meant he does not want on his staff a person of any political affiliation who engages in activity that would reflect on the U. N.'s hands-off attitude toward the national politics of any country. It was deemed significant, however, that he did not bar American Communists as such from U. N. jobs. Mr. Lie did bar them.

Showing considerable skill and wit in handling a forty-five minute barrage of questions from nearly one hundred correspondents, the new Secretary General also made these observations:

1. The recent Communist proposal for a truce in Korea represents a "rather considerable step forward," but "we could not for a moment forget that there is still a very long way to go" for an armistice. The Panmunjom truce talks are "more hopeful" than two weeks ago "so far as there has been progress de facto achieved by the presentation of the Communist proposal."

2. His general world outlook in the light of the recent so-called Soviet "peace offensive" is the same as it was when he arrived in New York last month—"rather guarded optimism."

3. He agreed with Mr. Lie that opening U. N. membership to all nations should be a U. N. aim "to apply to all the extent that circumstances permit," but he withheld comment on his views toward the admission to the U. N. of Communist China—a move that Mr. Lie supported.

4. He will leave New York tomorrow for a trip to Geneva, London, Paris and his home in Stockholm. He scotched all rumors that the trip includes a "secret mission" or a visit to Moscow and said he has, at present, no plans for trips to other areas of the world. He plans to be away four to five weeks.

pleasant, but he refused to discuss its substance. Neither would he comment on the suggestion by Sir Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, for an immediate high level East-West conference.

6. He believes it is within his power to bring the Indo-Chinese situation before the U. N. Security Council personally, but that does not mean he will do so.

Discards "Jurist's Report"

The U. N.'s new administrative chief indicated he has discarded the so-called "jurist's report" that formed the basis of Mr. Lie's personnel policy. That report advised Mr. Lie that there should be no active American Communists in U. N. employ and that he had the right to dismiss any employee if he had "reasonable grounds" for believing the employee is, has been, or is "likely to be" engaged in activities regarded as subversive by the "host coun-

try." In those cases, the U. S. Mr. Hammarskjold characterized the report as "an advice given to my predecessor" and said it "belongs to the previous stage in the development of this whole problem." He pointed out that a statement by Mr. Lie himself before the recent U. N. General Assembly session superseded and partly by-passed the report and he added, "I have to find guidance primarily in what has taken place since the presentation of that report."

Asked if he believed the United States has the right to demand the removal of American Communists from the Secretariat, Mr. Hammarskjold answered that any government has "full freedom to express its wishes and its viewpoints," but that "the decision of the Secretary General must necessarily be one entirely independent of any pressure from any member government."

[New York Herald Tribune
MAY 13, 1953]

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CURB ON AMERICANS

Hammarskjold Sees Difficulty Over McCarran Bill Calling for Check on His Staff

By THOMAS J. HAMILTON
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12—Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold said today that at first glance "I see considerable difficulties" in reconciling the United Nations Charter with a bill introduced by Senator Pat McCarran of Nevada, which would require a security certification by the Attorney General of all Americans employed by the United Nations.

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"Thirdly, I need not tell you that it is the obvious wish of every Secretary General and of everybody responsible for this organization to pursue such a personnel policy as not to give rise to any criticism with regard to undue political activities and undue political engagement."

personnel question had been "superse-eded" and that he would be guided by Mr. Lie's subsequent statement on the question and by the debate in the General Assembly.

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Mr. Hammarskjold declined to disclose the nature of the first group of reports on investigations of American employes that have been submitted by the United States, or the progress of the negotiations between the United Nations and the United States on the recent refusal of the United States to grant visas to representatives of non-governmental organizations to come to the headquarters.

He added that he would "wind them up" upon his return from a four-or-five-week trip to Europe, on which he will start tomorrow. Mr. Hammarskjold is flying to Stockholm to wind up his personal affairs and then will go to Geneva for a meeting of the Administrative Coordinating Committee, on

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Mr. Hammarskjold also will visit Bern, Paris and London and will attend the Coronation on June 2.

Asked if he would continue Mr. Lie's policy of dismissing American employes who are members of the Communist party in the United States, as well as persons who had been or were considered likely to be subversive, Mr. Hammarskjold replied.

"I have very strong feelings about the necessity for every member of the staff to keep entirely free from any political engagement which is not in harmony with our position here in this house."

Later Mr. Hammarskjold said that, while "the material we have in this house," meaning the United Nations headquarters, did not involve security, quite a few questions required "the usual diplomatic discretion," so that every delegate could feel that what he said and did would be "treated as strictly confidential." This obligation, he said, applies especially to "a group of highly responsible officials."

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He said his policy and that of the correspondents should be one of collaboration, frankness and free criticism, declaring that "we all have an allegiance to the aims which are those of the United Nations." He added that, to recall two titles of novels by Jane Austen, "it is our duty to work without false pride and prejudice, for sense and sensibility, and, ladies and gentlemen, working for common ideals, although through different media, may that not well be called 'collaboration'?"

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More than 100 correspondents present at Mr. Hammarskjold's

first press conference asked the new Secretary General his views on almost every subject connected with the United Nations. He often avoided direct answers; on the other hand, he showed a wide knowledge of the United Nations and never turned to his aides for help.

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Newark News
13 day

Hammar skjold's Policy

New UN Chief Shares Lie's View on Taking Initiative—Leaves Today for Europe

BY FREDUS A. WHITE
Staff Correspondent.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y. — Secretary General Hammar skjold leaves today for a several weeks' visit in Europe that will include United Nations business in Geneva, settlement of personal affairs in Stockholm and attendance on the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in London June 2.

On the eve of his departure, the new UN executive held his first conference with the press corps here, in which he revealed that he had gained a real grasp on his job in the little more than a month since he was sworn into office. He indicated that, while benefiting from the pioneering done by his predecessor in office, Trygve Lie, he intends to pursue an independent course and to exercise the full authority the office will allow.

How much initiative is vested in the secretary general has been a disputed question ever since the UN was formed. Lie was sometimes criticized because he essayed to assume initiative on critical issues. To questioners yesterday, Hammar skjold implied that he shares Lie's views on the importance of his office, and may even go beyond that.

Right Under Charter

"Under the Charter," he said, "the secretary general has a fairly well defined right of initiative, and I feel deeply that when the situation demands, he should use it. I think that his right of initiative in a certain sense, informally, goes far beyond that is described in the charter, provided that he observes the proper forms, chooses his approaches with tact and avoids acting in a such a way as to counteract his own purpose. I recognize the responsibility going even beyond the charter, but obviously with very many reservations, especially the one I just tried to express—that

is, that it has to be done with considerable tact and judgement."

As to independence, Hammar skjold said he would be fully as independent as Lie in respect of the handling of personnel problems in which relations with the United States Government are concerned. Admitting the full right of the Washington government to express its views on UN policy, he insisted nevertheless on the right of the secretary general "necessarily" to act entirely independent of any pressure from a member government.

Asked for his attitude on the jurists' report on which relied in formulating his policy on personnel, Hammar skjold said this had been superseded by Lie's own report and by the debate in the General Assembly on the personnel issue.

He declared, however, that he had very strong feelings about the necessity for every member of the UN staff to keep entirely free from any political engagement or activity that was not in harmony with duty to the UN.

The secretary general said he did not think the security of the United States, as usually understood, was involved here, "because the material we have in this house and the questions we are studying here are not of such a nature as to involve security questions." He held that "the usual diplomatic discretion" was required to maintain such confidences as might be exchanged in UN discussions.

Asked for comment on the McCarran Bill that would make it an offense for an American citizen to take a position at the UN without clearance by the attorney general, Hammar skjold said this was a matter that would require study by legal experts. Though he considered that, as a rule, he should never comment on internal legislation of any member country. In this instance he foresaw difficulty in reconciling the proposed requirement with the provisions of the UN charter.

Hammar skjold bespoke a desire for frank and cordial relations with the press.

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J. N. Details Social Welfare Aid

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12.—A progress report released today on United Nations assistance in the social welfare field during 1952 showed that twenty-seven countries received the services of international experts and that 280 fellowships and scholarships in social subjects were awarded.

UP

HAMMARSKJOLD,
UNITED NATIONS -- DAG HAMMARSKJOLD, NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
U.N., SAID HE BELIEVES "THERE IS A VERY LONG WAY TO GO" BEFORE A KOREAN
ARMISTICE IS REACHED.

THE SWEDISH DIPLOMAT TOLD HIS FIRST PRESS CONFERENCE SINCE
ASSUMING OFFICE THAT THE COMMUNIST PROPOSAL NOW UNDER DISCUSSION AT
PANMUNJOM "REPRESENTS AN OBVIOUS STEP FORWARD BUT THERE IS A VERY
LONG WAY TO GO."

HE SAID IT WOULD BE "INAPPROPRIATE AND UNJUSTIFIED" FOR HIM TO
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BY LT.-GEN. WILLIAM K. HARRISON AND THE UNIFIED COMMAND.

HAMMARSKJOLD ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE KOREAN ARMISTICE SITUA-
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HAMMARSKJOLD SERVED NOTICE THAT HE WOULD NOT TOLERATE POLITICAL
ACTIVITY BY ANY MEMBER OF THE SECRETARIAT THAT IS NOT IN KEEPING WITH
U.N. POLICIES.

UNDER A BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE PURGING OF SUSPECTED
AMERICAN SUBVERSIVES STARTED BY HIS PREDECESSORS, TRYGVE LIE, IN
COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, HE INDICATED GENERAL AGREEMENT
THAT SUBVERSIVES SHOULD BE WEEDED OUT OF THE STAFF.

HE SAID THE U.S. AND ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS
ITS WISHES CONCERNING MEMBERS OF THE SECRETARIAT, BUT THAT THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL MUST ACT ENTIRELY INDEPENDENTLY FROM PRESSURE
FROM ANY GOVERNMENT.

THE NEW U.N. CHIEF SAID THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, HE DID NOT
BELIEVE A SECURITY PROBLEM FOR THE U.S. EXISTED AT THE U.N., "IN
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"THE QUESTIONS STUDIED HERE ARE NOT OF SUCH NATURE INVOLVING
SECURITY RISKS," HE SAID. "THERE ARE A FEW QUESTIONS WHICH MUST BE
TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY. BUT THAT APPLIES TO A SMALL GROUP OF HIGHLY
RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS."

5/12--GD230P

Gen. Coulter Gets U. N. Korea Relief Post; Former 8th Army Aide Succeeds Kingsley

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12—Licut. Gen. John B. Coulter has been appointed head of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency, it was announced here today by Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld. He succeeds J. Donald Kingsley whose two-year term as agent general expired earlier this month.

General Coulter has been head of the agency's Washington office for the past year. In his new post as agent general, he will have the rank of an Assistant Secretary General, a \$23,000-a-year post.

Before his retirement from the Army in March, 1952, General Coulter was deputy commander of the Eighth Army in Korea and assisted in the initial establishment of the relief agency to provide emergency help to Korea and to repair war damage.

As agent general, General Coulter will be responsible to the General Assembly, which created the agency in December, 1950 and authorized a \$250,000,000 budget for the first year of full operations. Because of the continuation of hostilities, only limited projects were

undertaken during the first months of work.

General Coulter, a Texan, was commissioned in the Army in 1912. During World War II he served in North Africa and in Italy, commanding one of the first divisions to see action.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union told a United Nations Commission today that while Korean armistice negotiations were in progress at Panmunjom, it would be unwise to talk about relief programs for South Korea alone.

The Soviet objections were made by Vasily M. Zonov, who urged the eighteen-member Social Commission to delay its detailed review of the relief plans of the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency. The agency's activities are mentioned in a chapter of a 291-page report to the commission.

Mr. Zonov also objected that the chapter seemed to imply that United States military forces intended to remain in Korea, instead of being withdrawn. Since there were no other suggestions, the commission agreed to drop the Korean relief question for the present and go on to another phase of the report.

EGYPT BACKS SOVIET ON ADMISSIONS TO U. N.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12—Egypt told a nineteen-nation committee studying the problem of membership in the United Nations today that the best available solution was the Soviet-backed proposal for mass admission of fourtee countries.

The proposal, submitted in 1951 by Poland, calls for the admission of nine Western-sponsored countries and five Communist nations. It received 22 votes in the General Assembly in February, 1952, with twenty-one countries voting "no" and sixteen abstaining. It was defeated because it did not receive the necessary two-thirds majority.

The committee on membership was set up by the Assembly to make a detailed study of the long-deadlocked membership issue. The United States has taken the position that each applicant for membership must be judged separately. Washington has announced its determination to fight the applications of the Communist satellites and has opposed "horse trades."

Egypt's delegate on the committee, A. K. Fahmy, said that the Polish proposal was not ideal, but was the best under the circumstances. He said that the permanent members of the Security Council that have the right to veto could vote for the mass admission idea, reserving the right to ask for a roll-call on each applicant in the General Assembly.

James J. Wadsworth of the United States told the committee that this country was "anxious for a solution" of the membership problem. He suggested that the committee, in its report, keep as many doors open as possible rather than focusing on a specific solution.

HAMMARSKJÖLD SEES GAIN

Calls Offer of Enemy in Korea A 'Considerable Step Forward'

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12—Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld said today that the Communist proposals regarding Korea nprisoners of war obviously represented "a rather considerable step forward" but added that "we could not for a moment forget that there is still a very long way to go."

Mr. Hammarskjöld said the Communist offer "came fairly close" to the Indian resolution that was adopted last December by the General Assembly but rejected by Communist China and North Korea. He declined to comment on the conduct of the negotiations by the United States, which represents the United Nations forces.

Mr. Hammarskjöld declined also to comment on the statement of Sir Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister yesterday suggesting high-level negotiations regarding East-West issues. Asked if his talk last week with President Eisenhower had been satisfactory, he replied that it had been "very pleasant."

U. N. CHIEF QUERIES U. S. CURB ON STAFF

Hammaraskjold Sees Difficulty Over McCarran Bill Calling for Check on Americans

By THOMAS J. HAMILTON
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Dag Upholds U.S. in Its Battle on Reds in U.N.

By PIERRE J. HUSS

(International News Service Correspondent)

Secretary General Dag Hammaraskjold yesterday said he will not tolerate political activities among the 3,000-member secretariat which are "not in harmony" with the United Nations.

AT HIS FIRST news conference since he was elected head of the 60-nation organization, Hammaraskjold said the United States was fully within its rights to demand the removal of American Communists and subversives from the U.N. payroll.

"On the other hand," he declared, "the decision of the Secretary General on this matter must be entirely independent of pressure by any government."

Hammaraskjold said the new Communist proposals in Korea represent a "rather considerable step forward." However, he warned, there is "still a rather long way to go."

He said the Korean negotiations "are more hopeful as there has been progress in the presentation of the new proposals."

The Secretary General stressed that he has "very strong feelings" that every U.N. staff member should



Dag Hammaraskjold

He underlined that there is no problem of security in the U.N. He said the questions raised by the bill are not of a nature which involve security risk.

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house". Commenting on the McCarran bill proposals to subject to security work at the U.N. to rigid loyalty procedures, he said there would have to be studied by UN legal experts. He added that he saw "considerable difficulties in the proposal."

~~SECRET~~

A Stuttering start

UNITED NATIONS BOSS Dag Hammarskjold (hereinafter mercifully referred to as Dag) held his first press conference Tuesday and we wish he could have come off better. He seems to be an amiable enough sort of a guy. What he did was leave us in doubt. Is he going to fire American members of the U. N. staff who turn out to be Communists or security risks? He doesn't quite say. Dag also sees "difficulty" in reconciling the U. N. Charter with a bill introduced by Senator Pat McCarran which would require the Attorney General to certify the character and loyalty of all Americans employed in the world organization. **Our advice to Boss Dag is not to belabor the pretense that the U. N. is superior to the U. S. A. That pretense is a galling sore spot to Americans. We will control our own citizens in the pool, and we will eventually make U. N. princelings obey our own laws—or we will show Boss Dag and the U. N. who really is the boss.**



HAMMARSKJOLD

by Mirror —
+ K...

'Easy to Make Mess'

How Hammarskjold Views His U. N. Job

By Arch Parsons Jr.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y. The first phase of Dag Hammarskjold's term as U. N. Secretary-General ended last week on the note that has dominated the entire five-week period: independence and collaboration, to use his favorite words.

Specifically, what he seems to have been aiming at is to draw a careful but strict line between the U. N.'s administrative matters, in which he has stressed that he must have full independence of action, and the world organization's political problems, which he considers the concern of the U. N.'s sixty member nations.

Mr. Hammarskjold has repeated this concept of his job over and over again since he took office on April 10, but it emerged most clearly from his first formal press conference at U. N. Headquarters last Tuesday, on the eve of his departure to Europe for a month.

The Disloyalty Issue

The largest batch of questions concerned Mr. Hammarskjold's personnel policies in relation to the United States government's continuing investigation of alleged disloyalty among Americans on the U. N. staff—an issue that has upset the U. N. internally for more than a year, hurt U. N. staff morale, and fanned anti-U. N. sentiment throughout the country.

Did Mr. Hammarskjold believe that the United States has the right to demand the dismissal of American Communists? Would he maintain the theory of his predecessor, Trygve Lie, and discharge employees who have been, are, or are "likely to be" subversive?

His answer was in three parts. To the U. N.'s member nations: "Any government of course has full freedom to express its wishes and its viewpoints on the policy of the United Nations." Of his own role: "It must be kept in mind that the decision of the Secretary-General must necessarily be one entirely independent of any pressure from any member government." To his staff: "I have very strong feelings about the necessity for every member of the staff to keep entirely free from any political engagement which is not in harmony with our position here in this house."

The same division between his functions and those of the U. N.'s members was apparent

again when he was questioned about the situation in Indo-China and about French-Tunisian relations.

Did he consider these issues the type he could bring before the U. N. Security Council personally, as the U. N. Charter permits when, in his opinion, international peace and security is threatened?

As "a question of quality," he said, yes, he could do so—but that does not mean that it is a situation in which I necessarily would find that such action should be taken, because that is a political consideration."

On the purely political questions, his position was equally clear. Would he comment on Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill's suggestion for a high level East-West conference? "I will willingly do so if and when I feel that such comments would be useful for the public debate, or for the activities of the United Nations. I think that that is not the case today . . ."

Would he comment on his recent talk with President Eisenhower? "I do not think it would be in any way appropriate. . . ."

Knows What He Wants

Probably no one knows better than Mr. Hammarskjold what a difficult task he faces. At one point in his news conference he said frankly of his job: "It is very easy to make a mess of it." But the consensus of some of his closest advisers and of the correspondents who shot questions at him for nearly an hour was that he knows what he wants and that he has started in that direction.

There are signs that he is getting a kick out of his work, too. He has completed a personal tour of every department in the U. N. Secretariat, and his staff appears to be taken with him. Every now and then he drops down from his office on the thirty-eighth floor to the fourth-floor cafeteria, picks up his tray and stands in line for lunch with the messengers, clerks and typists who form the bulk of his organization.

During the press conference, he puffed on a thin cigar and joked comfortably with the photographers and reporters who filled the tiny conference room to overflowing. At the end, he confided to an assistant that he was sorry it was over—that he was just beginning to enjoy himself.

N. Y. Post
13 May.

New UN Chief Silent On U.S. Anti-Red Bill

Secretary General Hammarskjold today awaited the findings of United Nations legal experts on the Senate bill which would require prior security clearance of Americans seeking to join the UN staff.

Hammarskjold, in his first press conference yesterday, indicated that the McCarran measure — which has been approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee — might be at variance with the UN Charter.

The bill would make any American who obtained a UN job without certification by the Attorney General liable to a five-year jail sentence and a \$10,000 fine.

When asked whether he felt the U. S. had the right to ask dismissal of American Communists from the Secretariat, Hammarskjold replied that "the decision of the Secretary General must necessarily be one entirely independent of any pressure from any member government."

He added, however, that UN staff members should avoid "undue" political activities and "engagements."

Daily Mirror
13 May

~~Dag Upholds U.S. in U.N.~~ Battle on Reds in U.N.

By **PIERRE J. HUSS**
(International News Service Correspondent)

Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold yesterday said he will not tolerate political activities among the 3,000-member secretariat which are "not in harmony" with the United Nations.

AT HIS FIRST news conference since he was elected head of the 60-nation organization, Hammarskjold said the United States was fully within its rights to demand the removal of American Communists and subversives from the U.N. payroll.

"On the other hand," he declared, "the decision of the Secretary-General on this matter must be entirely independent of pressure by any government."

Hammarskjold said the new Communist proposals in Korea represent a "rather considerable step forward." However, he warned, there is "still a rather long way to go."

He said the Korean negotiations "are more hopeful as there has been progress in the presentation of the new proposals."

The Secretary General stressed that he has "very strong feelings" that every U.N. staff member should re-



Dag
Hammarskjold

frain from any activities that are "not in harmony with this house."

Hammarskjold will leave shortly for Europe where he will visit Geneva, Paris, London and his home in Stockholm.

Daily News
13 May

Keep Firing U. S. Reds In UN? Dag Won't Say

By JOHN BAIRD

Dag Hammarskjold, UN Secretary General, declared yesterday that staff members must keep out of national politics. He refused, however, to say whether he would follow the lead of his predecessor, Trygve Lie, and fire any American accused of subversion.

In his first press conference, Hammarskjold apparently invited a dispute with U. S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., who has

During Lie's tenure, about 40 American employes were fired from the UN following their appearance before a federal grand jury and the McCarran committee. Lie had also agreed to Lodge's insistence that the remaining U. S. employes (close to 2,500) must undergo FBI and Civil Service investigation for clearance as a condition for working.

"I have very strong feelings about the necessity for every member of the staff to keep free from any political engagement which is not in harmony with our position here in this house (the UN)," Hammarskjold said.



(NEWS photo by Al Fucci)

Dag Hammarskjold

said that the UN would be rid of domestic Communists by the end of Summer.

Lodge based his assertion on his experience with Hammarskjold's predecessor, Trygve Lie, who had announced that any "potentially subversive Americans" would be summarily fired upon presentation of evidence by the U. S.

HAMMARSKJOLD SAYS Calls Offer of Enemy in Korea 'Considerable Step Forward'

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., May 12—Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold said today that the Communist proposals regarding Korean prisoners of war obviously represented "a rather considerable step forward" but added that "we could not for a moment forget that there is still a very long way to go."

Mr. Hammarskjold said the Communist offer "came fairly close" to the Indian resolution that was adopted last December by the General Assembly but rejected by Communist China and North Korea. He declined to comment on the conduct of the negotiations by the United States, which represents the United Nations forces.

Mr. Hammarskjold declined also to comment on the statement of Sir Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister, yesterday suggesting high-level negotiations regarding East-West issues. Asked if his talk last week with President Eisenhower had been satisfactory, he replied that it had been "very pleasant."