

not only in the interest of peace but in the real interest of the parties, and it would be a most serious development if the already very difficult and dangerous conditions in which the Observers work were to deteriorate to such an extent that it would be no longer possible to station them in Observation Posts in the Suez Canal sector. It will be understood that the Secretary-General cannot be expected to ask United Nations Military Observers, whose function it is to observe and to try to maintain the cease-fire, to risk their lives unreasonably by being put in an even more disadvantageous and dangerous position than the combatants themselves.

6. It has been an invariable and imperative principle of all United Nations Observation Operations that United Nations Military Observers, their installations and vehicles, be clearly and unmistakably identified at all times. When there are breaches of the cease-fire, it is particularly essential to the protection of the Observers that they be identified as clearly as possible by night and by day. By day the United Nations flag and other insignia identify United Nations installations. At night the lighting of OPs is the only way of achieving this end. Although in the Suez Canal sector the cease-fire has been constantly breached since March 1969, the lighting of OPs has not previously been considered by either side to constitute an intolerable military risk, and it is hoped that in the present situation as well means will be found to reconcile the minimum essential security and identification of United Nations OPs with the military requirements of the parties. In this connexion it should be clearly understood that the shelters at United Nations OPs, on either side of the Canal, have not been designed for protection against aerial bombing and, in fact, it would have been, and is, impracticable so to design them. The only protection, therefore, that United Nations OPs can have at night against aerial bombing is in fact their clear identification as United Nations Observation Posts. Air raids and bombings by night have taken place recently in this sector.

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