

French Air Officer Dies With Count

By the United Press

JERUSALEM, Sept. 17—Count Folke Bernadotte, 53, United Nations mediator for Palestine, was assassinated today by gunmen in the Jewish-controlled area of Jerusalem.

French Air Force Colonel Andre Serot, 53, chief U. N. truce observer for Jerusalem, also was killed as he sat beside Bernadotte in the third car of a U. N. truce convoy.

Bernadotte, nephew of King Gustav of Sweden and husband of American-born Estelle R. Manville of New York, was shot through the heart and died instantly. Serot died on the way to hospital.

BELIEVED STERNISTS

The assassins were believed to be members of the Jewish extremist Stern gang, wearing Israeli army uniforms. The Sternists had denounced Bernadotte bitterly and demanded that he leave Palestine.

Bernadotte's assassination followed by only a few hours some of the fiercest Jewish-Arab fighting in Jerusalem since he arranged a second truce July 18.

Tension was electric here and elsewhere in Palestine. There was grave fear that Bernadotte's murder might be a spark which would set off an explosion of hatred and shatter all hope of early, firm peace in the Holy Land.

Bernadotte arrived by plane this morning from Amman, Transjordan, on a final inspection tour before leaving for Paris to report to the U. N. Assembly next week.

Hardly had he left the airport when a sniper's bullet hit the rear tire of his car.

He took this incident calmly and continued on his inspection tour.

Bernadotte lunched at the YMCA, then in the last car of a three-car convoy went on an inspection tour of the front lines of the Arabs and Jews facing each other in the city.

CONVOY STOPPED

The car had gone up and come down the grimly named Hill of Evil Council. As it reached the bottom a white-painted jeep of Jewish army type stopped the convoy.

Two uniformed men got out of the jeep and approached the three U. N. cars, two carrying the U. N. flag and the third the Red Cross flag.

One of the gunmen looked inside Bernadotte's car. Bernadotte, Colonel Serot and Commander William R. Cox, United States Navy and truce observer, were in the back seat. Colonel Frank Begley, American security officer of the U. N., and Swedish Colonel Lundstrom, truce observer, were in the front seat.

The gunman unlocked the safety catch of a Bren gun. Poking it through a ventilator window of the car he passed it over Commander Cox's shoulder and opened fire on Bernadotte and Serot. He and his companion fled back to the jeep and the assassination party escaped.

Begley, burned by powder, tried to grapple with the gunmen. He and Lundstrom suffered slight injuries.

Begley drove Bernadotte and Serot to the Jewish Hadassah Hospital.

AMERICAN IN CHARGE

U. N. headquarters in Paris wirelessly Dr. Ralph Bunche, American Negro descendant of a slave, who has been Bernadotte's right hand man in Palestine to take charge of the truce temporarily.

Bunche, who was in Haifa when Bernadotte was killed, reported officially to the U. N. that the four men in the assassination party wore Jewish army uniforms. He said he also intended to take urgent measures to guarantee the safety of his observers in Jerusalem, "who are in danger."

(An official report to the State Department from John J. Macdonald, American Consul General in Jerusalem, said it was "presumed" that Bernadotte was assassinated by the Jewish extremist Stern gang.)

As soon as he learned of the assassination, Bernard Joseph, Military Governor of the Jewish-controlled part of Jerusalem, called it a "dastardly act."

SEARCH FOR KILLERS

"Everything is being done to apprehend the killers," he said.

(A United Press Tel Aviv dispatch reported that Israeli police had started mass arrests of suspects in Jerusalem and said it was believed Israeli army intelligence agents planned similar arrests.)

(The Israeli Cabinet in Tel Aviv was at once called into emergency session, the dispatch said.)

(Referring to the reports that Bernadotte was murdered by the

SEARCH FOR KILLERS

"Everything is being done to apprehend the killers," he said.

(A United Press Tel Aviv dispatch reported that Israeli police had started mass arrests of suspects in Jerusalem and said it was believed Israeli army intelligence agents planned similar arrests.

(The Israeli Cabinet in Tel Aviv was at once called into emergency session, the dispatch said.

(Referring to the reports that Bernadotte was murdered by the Stern group, Eliav Simon, United Press Tel Aviv correspondent, quoted a Sternist spokesman there that only members of the organization in Jerusalem were in a position to know.

(Members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, another militant Jewish faction, said they had nothing to do with the "murderous attack" on Bernadotte, Simon reported.
