

COUNT FOLKE BERNADOTTE

U. N. Representative in Palestine

By NAT A. BARROWS

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LAKE SUCCESS, N. Y., May 21 —If any one man can find the secret for mediation in Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte is that man.

He has behind him a truly impressive record as a pro-Allied mediator with the Nazis, as the savior of perhaps 100,000 concentration camp victims, including 10,000 Jews, and as a Red Cross official.

The job handed him by the United Nations Security Council is the toughest international task facing a single individual anywhere today.

The 53-year-old president of the Swedish Red Cross is directed to accomplish what thus far has been utterly impossible—conciliation between Arabs and Jews.

If he can succeed in the present atmosphere of fanatical, all-out fighting war in the Holy Land, it will be little less than a miracle.

But those who know Count Bernadotte realize he will devote himself to the terrific job with all his strength and all his heart.

I remember in Stockholm, during the war, the lifelong devotion he won from interned American and British airmen.

As an army officer and a Red Cross executive, he was selected to oversee the welfare of the airmen who crash-landed into neutral Sweden. Exceedingly pro-Allied in his sentiments, Berna-

dotte extended every possible courtesy and comfort—and more—to the Allied crews.

He was very correct in his handling of the few Luftwaffe men, mostly fighter pilots, who landed in Sweden, but I can testify from personal observation that they got only what was required by the Geneva Convention.

The Americans lived in a kind of country-club heaven, thanks to Bernadotte, until, finally, it was necessary to meet the indignant protests of Nazi Minister Hans Thomsen and balance off the treatment.

But even when the Americans moved away from their hotels into internment camps, late in the war, Bernadotte made certain they were in the hands of friendly, pro-Allied members of the Swedish air force.

His work in the concentration camps of Germany is one of the noblest and most inspiring stories of the war.

Representing the Swedish Red Cross, Bernadotte constantly inspected prison camps and internment centers in Germany.

Bernadotte's talks with Himmler concerning relief of internment camps led to maneuvers that ultimately saved the lives of many thousands who otherwise would have died.

At least, 10,000 Jews are alive today because of Bernadotte's skill and energy.

These talks with Himmler broadened into an episode during

the peace-feeler stage of 1945 in which Bernadotte, acting for the Allies, played an important part.

Bernadotte, as I have seen him, has one quality that will be most helpful in Palestine. He has an extreme sense of responsibility.

He bears a great name in Sweden as the nephew of King Gustav V and a descendant of the first Bernadotte, Napoleon's famous marshal who left France in 1811 to be adopted by Sweden and later to become its famous ruler as Charles XIV.

He is an idealist who still keeps in touch with realism. He has a charming manner; he speaks English, French and German fluently, and he is tall, blond and handsome.

His wife is an American, the former Estelle Manville.

Bernadotte's task as U. N. mediator in Palestine is made additionally difficult by the cleavage between Britain and United States in Palestine policies.

As a result, it is feared that he will face a big-power tendency to shove everything into his hands.

Unless events take a more hopeful turn in the Security Council, Bernadotte will be the only United Nations force in Palestine.

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