

Middle East conflict - Jordan. Amman files: Middle East conflict - Jordan. ...

HS L 179:106b



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Amman, Middle East conflicts, Jan-May
1959

Correspondence

from DH (Secretary-Gen) —

to Mahmoud Fawzi

(Minister for Foreign Affairs
Egypt)

L 179: 106b

17 January 1959

PERSONAL

I need not tell you how much I appreciated the arrangements made for me in Cairo. I know too well how difficult it may be to organise the time and the work for people in the position of the President or of yourself when many conflicting duties call for attention at the same time. I therefore know how to value fully all the time the President and you gave to our discussions.

Our talks, which covered such a wide range of subjects, were as always most helpful. Regarding the specific points which we had to straighten out I think we did our duty and arrived at satisfactory arrangements.

On the basis of the Cairo contact I sent the instructions to General von Horn which I showed to you. I also communicated with Jordan in line with my draft on the question referring to their problems. Regarding the UNEF questions I hope to get matters settled in the Advisory Committee on Monday.

In spite of the results of our talks I find to my regret that in some respects our difficulties continue. Here I have to raise with you urgently one point regarding which, in fact, you asked me to keep you fully informed. I refer to the transit of oil trucks to Jordan. An official statement of mine to the effect that you had conveyed to me the information that all the difficulties had been overcome, was, as you will remember, sent to Amman on 6 January with your approval. In subsequent telephonic contacts that the Jordan authorities and the United Petrol Company have had during the last ten days with Damascus officials, the answer given by these officials has always been that "the matter is under consideration". They have given no indication as to when it may be settled. A similar stand seems to have been taken by the Syrian member of the United Arab Republic Delegation to the Economic Council of the Arab League in Cairo, when he admitted that there was a delay, but stated that this delay was due to the fact that the matter still needed practical consideration by the Syrian authorities.

His Excellency
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the United Arab Republic,
Cairo, Egypt.

./.

In the light of our discussions, also with the President, you understand that I am disappointed. The later developments seem to point beyond the "busy-body" reactions of officials down the line and indicate the continued existence of real difficulties, contrary to the information conveyed to you. More than two months have now passed after the promise was given by Cairo that there would not be any obstacles to oil transit, but still the matter is said, by the Syrian authorities, to be under consideration. I may guess what the trouble may be, but I find very difficult to explain to others what has the outer appearance of a failure to follow through on a clear commitment. I feel sure that you would like to look into the matter again, so as to avoid the atmosphere so irritatingly being disturbed by the buzzing of this small fly.

One smaller matter to which I may have to revert later is the drastic increase of the fee charged for transit of phosphate trucks which has raised the cost of delivery to Beirut by one dollar per ton. I have mentioned this problem before and, although not so urgent, it is a part of the picture which I continue to find awkward.

Please present my respectful thanks to the President and give my warm personal regards to Madame Fawzi.

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OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TO: SPINELLI AMMAN

FROM: SECCEN

DATE: 17 January 1958

NUMBER:

Following three paragraphs are quotes from my message cabled today to Fawzi:

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You may refer to this demarche as you see fit.

14 February 1959

It gave me great pleasure to receive your letter of 10 February with its soft winds from Gizeh and its atmosphere of calm and kindly diplomatic self-exercises on stubborn but blessedly silent trees. This pleasure, however, was somewhat disturbed by the message of 11 February to which I have already given you my reaction, but I trust that the disturbances, as so often in the past, will drift away as the shadow of one of those rare clouds which you may see occasionally from your house.

You give me the good news that the items I referred to in my letter of 5 February and the preceding letter and message, are all taken care of as far as Cairo is concerned, and you add, as an example, that the question of transit, which recently has not given us any worries, now, in the next few weeks, will be the subject of talks aiming at a final and fair arrangement.

Do I understand you correctly in your general statement, if I take it that it covers also my instruction to the Chief-of-Staff to undertake a full study of the local situation in the border area between the Syrian Region and Israel? That would leave us only with the question of to what extent your people can give General von Horn the assistance that he will need. I hope that you will find it possible to go all the way, so that finally we will have a solid basis for measures in order to get this specific local infection out of the body politic; it is also about time that the world at large should get a balanced picture of what the real situation is (I take for granted that we will not run into any further complications regarding the marking of the agreed part of the line).

In your letter you do not mention anything about the Hassouna visit to Amman or other Arab capitals. I hope that it will come about and that I will soon have news on his plans which I could use in supporting efforts.

His Excellency
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Cairo
United Arab Republic

Although, intrapolated by the usual series of temporary shocks and bumps, our drive has recently on the whole been fairly smooth - which partly is explained by the fact that the Berlin question so far runs entirely outside the UN framework.

I have given some time to thinking over the UNRWA question and hope soon to be able to send to Cairo Mr. Sherwood Moe - who was for some years with UNRWA but is now working on the 38th floor - with a first draft of my report in his pocket for consultation. In April - after getting preliminary comments from the Host Governments - I will try to give a final shape to the report. I am reasonably satisfied with our approach although I know that anybody who writes about refugees is bound to stir up noises and to consume part of whatever personal capital he may still have in the Middle Eastern world.

A complication is that the only promising approach to the presentation of the refugee problem is one which emphasizes its economic aspects. I know that, in the minds of suspicious people, this may be used for attempts to torpedo the economic development efforts and that, therefore, the presentation must be made with the utmost care. But it is absurd to argue as if what renders an integration of the refugees in the life of the area in accordance with previous decisions impossible at present - and at the best very time-consuming - is only the political aspects of the matter while we know that even if there were no political complications, UNRWA would still have to continue for years.

Whenever you find a possibility to enlighten me more on the economic development efforts, I would be most grateful to you for some lines. You know that I attach just as much importance to that part of Middle-Eastern policies as you do, and that I look with just as much hope to its possible results. I am sure that your continued hibernation will give you all the spring energy necessary for an effective contribution, both to the success of the economic policy and to the further development of what you call a sane and common sense atmosphere of brotherhood in the Arab part of the world.

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19 May 1959

Under file

Dear Dr. Fawzi,

Referring to our conversation in Lausanne, I would like you to confirm our agreement that the United Nations may establish a Communications Office in Damascus with the rights and facilities necessary for the exercise of its functions in support of the mission stationed in Amman. As you know, I consider that, under present circumstances, such an agreement in general terms is sufficient and that we can dispense with the more elaborate exchange of letters for the same purpose which has previously been discussed between us.

I will, on receipt of your reply, approach the Government of Lebanon along the same lines.

You will recall that, in my view, practical considerations should determine whether, how and when arrangements on the basis of the agreement should actually be made.

Dag Hammarskjöld

His Excellency
Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of
the United Arab Republic,
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