

**Middle East conflict - Jordan.
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HS L 179:106b



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Amman, Middle East conflicts, Feb 1959

Memorandum in 4 copies

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Memorandum

I have received your message of 11 February with your reaction to news which you say has reached you about "recent feelers for the increase of the present number of UNEF". I note that in view of what you recognise as weighty and unoverlookable realities and considerations, a proposal for such an increase would not meet with Cairo's consent.

Your message worries me very much. Certainly, there must be some misunderstanding. We have never intended to increase the number of UNEF, but, as you will remember, we have for several months discussed with you the way in which we could compensate for the loss of the Colombian contingent so as to overcome the present weakness of the Force, characterized by too thin lines and too long watch duties, but without getting back to its original strength.

Our discussion in Cairo in January was caused by your continued reluctance to include a new contingent. In our talk the President reiterated his stand against this way to maintain the necessary numbers but he did not go beyond that or make any comments on the other way to maintain the force which this left open to us.

My response to your stand on a new contingent was that we had in the first place to see whether we could compensate for the loss by an increase of the old contingents, but never did I or Burns indicate that we would give up our effort to maintain the strength necessary for it to carry out its function. In fact, in our last meeting I reserved my right to revert to the question of a new contingent were our efforts to compensate for the loss of personnel by an increase of other contingents to prove unsuccessful. We may have said that if we

did not get anywhere, either through an increase of old contingents or through an additional new one, we would have to make an effort to do with present numbers "as they are", but that did not imply any acceptance of a refusal on your side to give your consent to an addition to the old contingents; the possibility of any such refusal was, as I have mentioned, never even hinted at, and the whole discussion was concerned with the question of your stand regarding a new contingent.

If you now wish to state that you would not agree to an increase of present numbers of older contingents in order partially to compensate for the loss of personnel we have suffered, that, from our point of view, would therefore represent a new stand. This new stand would give rise to a most serious discussion were it to mean that the Force could not operate on a level necessary for its proper functioning. The President stated that if he felt that the UNEF had no function to fulfill, he would go straight for a request that it be withdrawn and not aim at the same result by any kind of undercutting of its possibilities to function properly. This statement certainly applies to the present situation. You are also aware of the legal and political implications of the question of consent when it refers to a technical matter, like the present one, within a framework to which you have already given your approval.

In these circumstances, I hope that your reaction is caused by the fear that we might envisage some kind of building up of the Force. If your reaction is against steps taken in order to maintain it at a proper level, lower than the original but somewhat higher than the present one, I hope that you will reconsider your attitude in view of the considerations I have presented here. I should add that we have already the consent of the three Scandinavian countries to a limited increase in their contingents.

I attach such importance to this issue that, were we not to reach an understanding as indicated, I would ask Dr. Bunche to discuss it personally in Cairo.

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