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(personal)

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Fawzi, Mahmoud (Minister for Foreign
Affairs, Egypt)

- 1 letter from D.H.

4 August 1961

PERSONAL

Dear Mahmoud,

Thank you for your kind and much appreciated message of 24 July. I need not repeat to you how much I regret missing also this chance to see you and the President; as events came to prove, however, another trip of mine served the purposes we both believe in much better. My repeated bad luck does in no way stop me from continuing to play with the possibility to come for a couple of days to Cairo; in that respect I shall show the same tenacious tenacity which has proved to be as necessary as patience and a long suffering constitution if anything is to be achieved in this job. Whether I can realize my plan or not, I do not know. Things are still a bit too messy, and I have the somewhat worrying introduction to the report to the General Assembly to write. But I hope that you are not so fed up with my changes of plans that you would misunderstand or mind it if I were to turn up again with my plan.

Yesterday brought news from the Congo which it is a bit difficult to evaluate as yet, but which definitely means a major step forward in our efforts to achieve integration of the country on a legal basis and with due respect for the will of the people. If the solution chosen by the unanimous Parliament, as I sincerely hope, proves reasonably stable, it would from my point of view be a signal for the beginning of the liquidation of the U.N. operation: what can be achieved more with the limited task that has been ours, than to give the Congolese a possibility to settle their own affairs in their way, but in democratic and peaceful forms? We have been holding out toughly against Katanga for over one full year by now, and I fail to see how the separatist movement can survive very much longer, once Leopoldville and Stanleyville unite. Of course, the key to the whole situation is that whatever differences there have been among member countries in the General Assembly, all have at least paid lip service -- and are thereby committed -- to the integrity of the Congo and to legality implemented in democratic forms, and, with this background, to Parliament as the supreme organ which has to lay down the law. I would be deeply disappointed if in this situation either ideological considerations or involvements with any special group in the country were to lead member countries again to back Mr. X or Mr. Y or Mr. Z against the solution established by Parliament, thus undoing what has been done and negating the very principles to which they have said that they adhere. However, I am not free from fears -- either as regards the West or

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H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Cairo, Egypt

as regards the East -- but if we have brought the development this far, we are in a better position than ever to fight down also any such new attempts. Anyway, from now on it will be the duty of the U.N., in case of need, to keep a clear record on who is going against legality and why.

Bizerte has given us a new Port Said, and forced me into a very exposed position. To you I need not explain why I did what I did, or why I did it in the way I did it. You know my philosophy too well and you know how I interpret it in action, from our shared experiences during the Suez crisis. The French are pleased to say that I side with the Tunisians. As in the Suez case, I retorted to the press that I side with the principles of the U.N. And if that displeases any big power, this is their business and not mine. However, it is sad to see men, whom I would like to be able to respect, believing that you are great if you are conceited and that you are strong if you isolate yourself.

Going to Bizerte, I did something I never tried in the case of Port Said, but the morale problem was such that I felt that I might make a real contribution by taking the risk. I believe that it was a useful move in a sense which will never reach the press, as it gave both the people in Tunis and in particular the poor devils in Bizerte a badly needed booster. The main risk which I had to weigh was of course that the French would be as smart as Tshombe and turn up as a welcoming party, but their sense of grandeur saved me, as you know, and inspired them to the very opposite kind of reaction.

Of course, as in the case of Suez and as in the case of the Belgians in the Congo, the final outcome is given. But why, why -- to repeat what I had to say on the two previous occasions -- that being so, why can not the result be reached in dignity and with the preservation of a minimum of good human relations?

I need not go into the substance of the matter nor into the fact that, tactically, mistakes have been made in varying degrees on various levels on both sides. The human and political tragedy is there, and the way out must be found quickly. For that purpose all means must be used, taking into account the peculiar psychology which has brought such a dangerous element into the present problem. I shall continue to see what I can do, but I fear that I have played my cards now. Let us hope that the parties directly concerned will in their wisdom succeed and save us from a big show here, dragging out for long without adding anything in the direction of a solution.

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I apologise for rambling on in this way, but sending you a letter I have given in to the temptation to talk a little about our problems. I hope you will bear with me.

You must now be preparing for the Belgrade meeting, over and above everything else you have to do, but I hope that that does not stop you from getting some time off either at your lovely house in Gizeh or in Alexandria.

Please present my respectful and friendly greetings to the President, and my warmest regards to Madama Fawzi. To you, as always, goes my most sincere friendship.

Dag Hammarskjöld