

Middle East conflict - Middle East Development Funds: Middle East conflict ...

HS L 179:103c



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Middle East

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L 179 : 103c

Dag Hammar skjölds samling
3 Jan. 1958

Letter to Selwyn Lloyd

L 179 : 103C

3 January 1958

ME-124
Dear Selwyn,

May I in this way renew my sincere wishes for a good new year to you.

I considered for a while the possibility of staying over in London on my way from Cairo/Paris to New York, but decided against it for various reasons, among them that I did not want to feed speculation about political moves as might easily have been the case if, from Cairo and on my way to a meeting with Dulles, I had visited both Paris and London.

I was very tempted, however, to stop over as I need badly to have an opportunity to talk to you personally about some recent important developments of which you may have heard a little, but which do require a very full exposition in order to be properly understood and evaluated. What I have in mind is our plan in the Secretariat to produce a blue-print on the necessary set-up for coordinated economic development plans in the Middle East as a lever among other things for a constructive approach to the refugee problem.

It was later my intention to put down in an informal aide memoire for you the main points of my thinking which I have been in a position to discuss both with Pineau and Dulles. However, when I came to the point of dictating such a memorandum, I gave up, partly because in writing the various ideas would give an impression of too great finality, and partly because the related political considerations into which my ideas ramified, just are not of the kind that can usefully be put in writing.

H.E. the Rt. Hon. Selwyn Lloyd,
C.B.E., T.D., Q.C., M.P.
Principal Secretary of State for
Foreign Affairs
Foreign Office
London, England

Regretting therefore that, in spite of all, I did not stop over in London, I have given some thought to other possibilities of giving you a full picture of my thinking. One way would be that I went to London for a couple of days within the near future. I am quite willing to do so personally, but there still remains a question of the publicity angle of which you are a better judge than I am. In the second place a way might be that Bob Dixon went back to London on the basis of full discussions here (in fact, I have already told him "my story"). However, I think that it would be preferable if you had somebody at your disposal in London all the time who is fully inside. Therefore it seems to me that the best alternative to my going to London would be that you send somebody over here for a few days, in order to get him fully briefed and to give him an opportunity of discussing the various angles of the problems which we are facing. I have talked to Bob Dixon about this and I understand that he will supplement this letter by some notes of his own on the situation.

You may feel that I am making too much fuss about this story and that the matter after all could be handled in writing. Of course it can, but - as indicated - I fear that, if so, you would not have the matter in the right perspective as it is very difficult to handle these ideas in any other way than by open discussion as my experiences with Dulles and Pineau go to show. I hope, therefore, that you will give serious consideration to the possibilities to establish a personal contact as suggested above. I have a feeling that these new ideas - for which I have to assume full responsibility - although they may come to nothing, represent the best opening we have had so far during my time at the UN to get something established in the Middle East which gives hope for the future. You can see what my evaluation of the situation is from the very fact that - if you would not see any objection from the point of view of public reactions - I would be prepared to go back to Europe myself for a couple of days in London.

Pineau asked me if I agreed to his discussing my ideas with you and I said in reply that, of course, I had no objections, but that I wanted, if possible, to brief you personally first.

In fact, I am a little bit afraid that discussions might get started about this matter on the basis of an incomplete understanding of its main elements. I also feel that at the present stage, discussions should be limited to contacts directly between you, a couple of your colleagues, and myself as the questions are definitely not ripe for any kind of intergovernmental discussions which might get off on the wrong track and tend to freeze positions prematurely. For the time being this work must be concentrated entirely within the Secretariat and conducted on our personal responsibility. I would not like to get anybody committed at this early, exploratory stage.

I would appreciate as early a reaction to my question as possible in view of the fact that, quite frivolously, I play with the idea of getting off for one weeks holidays in the early part of January.

3 January 1958

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