

**Middle East conflict -
Lebanon. Correspondence,
statements, resolutions:
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Dag Hammarskjöld's sand.

Middle East conflict 1958 - July 20

Memorandum (notes on talk with Sobolev (USSR))



SECRETARY-GENERAL

20 July 1958

MEMORANDUM

Mr. Sobolev called me around 11 a.m. on the telephone and said that he wanted to see me later in the day in order to hand over a letter, the content of which I already knew. Due to some technical difficulties he had not been in a position to deliver the letter first thing in the morning, but I should "as from now" regard myself as having received it (with the contents as noted from the New York Times) so that I could take action on it without having to wait.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Dag Hammarskjöld'.

Dag Hammarskjöld

STRATHMORE WHISTLEMARK
100% RAG U.S.A.

SECRET

(odds)

20 July 1958

Sobolev came to see me at 5.30 pm. He brought the letter of invitation to the summit meeting with its four annexes. He asked me if I had anything to say. I replied that I had to study the whole matter further before I could give an answer, but I could say this much already at this stage:

1. I felt that we had reached a stage in the Middle Eastern question where a radical approach was necessary.
2. I felt that the Soviet Union must be a party ^{to} such solution.
3. I felt that it would be easier to stage the necessary meeting under the UN umbrella than outside.
4. In view of 3), I welcomed the statement that whatever recommendations might come out of the negotiations, they should be submitted to the Security Council.
5. I felt that, although ^{it was} a border-line case, I might consider myself as authorised under the Charter to take part, provided that it was accepted by all the participants.

Sobolev said that the proposal that the recommendations should be submitted to the Security Council was the key to the whole approach.

Sobolev then turned to the Japanese resolution and asked me to explain it. I said that it did not interest me very much, because I would do very much the same whether the resolution was accepted or rejected. He said that he did ^{not} understand. I said that we might go further into the matter with the hope to clarify it.

He said that he understood the first part of operative paragraph two, but not its second part with reference to ["]independence and integrity.["] Could I explain that?

I replied that he had better ask Matsudaira. He said that he had asked Matsudaira and that he could not explain it. I then said that, after all, he should recognise that there are ^a few words necessary for the ritual of the conjurer, and ~~after all~~ ^{we all} what he ~~wanted~~ ^{could get} was to work in such a way that the Americans ~~get~~ ^{could} out.

He said that it might be so, but now he wanted to know how I interpreted it, because obviously the words were rather different from the terms of reference of Unogil. I replied that that was not my view, because I felt that it was a very good way to safeguard the integrity ~~and~~ of the country if one worked to stop infiltration. He said that he understood that, but that he wondered if I would not put an army of foreign troops in Lebanon which might not be exactly popular in Lebanon. I replied that I had not the slightest intention to do so. He said that that must be ~~against~~ the views of several Members of the Council, so how could I take this line. I said that I would take it, at any rate, and that it was possible, although not certain, that I might say so before the vote. He asked me what would then happen. I replied that I don't see that somebody who disagreed could do anything but to cut my head off.

He asked me if I had really no intention to put up a force in the UNEF sense. I said that I had no such intention, already for the simple reason that I felt that other countries, which wanted to protect their borders against smuggling of arms and infiltration, to my knowledge, never used an army for that purpose but organised a border police. Why should I act any differently? On the other hand I might feel that we need, so to say, a second chain, as a few people might try to get through our net and then might be caught at some interesting point within the country.

He expressed his worry, not at my stand in practice but at the stand in principle. If I felt that I could act in order to protect ~~against~~ infiltration and integrity, where could the SG get such authority if there was no decision? I said that if the SG acted with some wisdom and did not overplay his hand too badly, he might say that he had such authority under the Charter. I added that I might claim to have such authority. If I did, I could, however, assure him that I would not act too foolishly. He said that if it just was a question of going up to 200, he did not mind. I said that I could assure him that I would go much, much further.

He told me that he would have to vote against the resolution for two reasons:

1. because it implied that American presence in Lebanon was acceptable to the Security Council until we had created conditions for withdrawal, and
2. because of the sweeping reference to independence and ~~infiltration~~ integrity.

I said concerning 1) that I understood his viewpoint, as he had put ~~it~~ in ^a the draft resolution condemning their presence, but that the same

view point did not embarrass me, as I hoped ^{with} whatever tools I could manage to get ^{to} negotiate for a withdrawal, which neither implied nor did not imply acceptance of their presence. Sobolev said that in that respect he made a definite distinction between my activity and what the Security Council puts in writing.

Regarding the second point I said that I did not quite well understand it. Anyway, I had no intention to give to the two words any interpretation which would mix the UN up with the internal problems of Lebanon, and I had no intention to put up a UN force in the proper sense of the word: I had to leave it at that.

I later called Cook of the US mission and mentioned to him that the words "independence and integrity" seemed to be so touchy that I should avoid using them too often. I further said that I had the following concrete suggestion to make regarding a reply to Khrushchëv:

Starting from the fact that the Russians themselves suggest that the recommendations should go to the Security Council, I would suggest that it was proposed that the matter was at once put on the agenda of the Security Council, ^{and} that the Security Council would then note the plan to have the meeting, note that the recommendations coming out of the meetings ~~would~~ be submitted to the Security Council, and ~~decided~~ to suspend the consideration of the item until they received the recommendations.

I said that my reason for this proposal was that, on the one side, we could not have China and Iraq in on the discussions, and that on the other hand, we could not exclude India, while it remained highly desirable to keep the matter solidly within the framework of the Security Council. (I previously said both to Lloyd and Lodge that my view was that they, on the one hand, had to give Khrushchev a solid blow on the nose, and, on the other hand, had to accept his proposal).