

Item Strictly Confidential 16/04/09 SM

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FILE 07

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cc/ Dr. Linner (2) ✓
Mr. McDiarmid (2)
Conf. File (1)
J. Grün (1)

Kivu

File

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

12 November 1960

To: 1. Dr. Sture Linner *St*
Chief Civilian Operations, ONUC Leopoldville
2. Mr. J. McDiarmid
Executive Assistant to the Special Representative

From: J. Grün
Chief ONUC Civilian Officer for the Kivu, Bukavu

Subject: Report No. 8 *J. Grün*

1. First of all, many, many thanks for the tape recorder and for the tape. Both arrived in perfect condition and quite apart from the information provided by the tape it was good to hear your voice again (and Norma's, too, of course). It is good, too, to know that you understand and appreciate the difficulties we have at this end and I can assure you that we here fully understand yours.

2. You will have read Robin Miller's excellent note on the Government crisis sent to you last Thursday. This is, indeed, an unwelcome - and a sad - development. Tschomba and Birere were two of the best in the Cabinet and particularly the former was known and respected everywhere for his general attitude of tolerance and moderation. If the President regrets particularly the departure of Birere it is perhaps he felt more at home with him, Birere being less polished than Tschomba and because Birere shared the unusual quality of physical courage which is so remarkable in the President.

It is the concensus of opinion that the three were sacrificed in order to pacify the Provincial Assembly, at least for the time being. Tschomba himself feels that he was dismissed unanimously because he was too pro-white. And he may be right. Apart from the President who is not anti-European but who will veer with most winds that threaten his position, the influential members of the cabinet are Kisanga, Agriculture, and Mutambala, Interior. Both are ill tempered, hard headed and basically anti-European. They are also anti-U.N., except in so far as Kisanga hopes for assistance. Kahindo, Social Affairs, is for the present the only one that is "reasonable", but he is weak.

The President told us that there are eighty nominations for the three vacancies. Other, later, reports have it that the number has risen to two hundred. I understand that votes will be taken next Monday, 14th.

3. Naturally just now no one thinks of much else except the provincial political crisis. There is much activity behind the scenes and I can only hope that the President will not give in to the temptation to try and solve it by dictatorial force.

4. Miller and I took the opportunity of presenting Grenville Fletcher to re-open the question of his "adviser". The President made the somewhat surprising remark that he did not want any adviser for the present because he still had "difficulties" and there were still a few people he had to get rid of! Then he added that he did not at any time want a "technical adviser" from U.N.! He wanted an adviser appointed and paid by the Central Government and had in fact asked for one. He reminded us also that he had asked the first U.N. Commission for one but without result.

5. If I venture to point out that this is one of those questions on which we, U.N., seem to have missed an opportunity I do this not to criticise the past but in the hope that it may help us to avoid repetitions of this kind of thing in the future. If in the early days I stressed the need for emergency action in the economic field I now venture to stress emergency measures in the "political" field. If I put political in quotes it is because it is only nominally so. If we are to create or strengthen, as the case may be, our influence with the Provincial Government, if we are to get their full and frank cooperation, if we are to be allowed to fully develop technical assistance programmes we must take the opportunities which yet exist for winning their friendship and confidence. The most obvious way to do this and a way which would seem virtually fool proof is to provide emergency financial assistance. Take the case of the Public Works money. There is yet time to make a good and favourable impression with this assistance. But pressure and criticism mount daily and before long we may well find that when the money does at least become available the Government will feel that it is as a result of their pressure, and that they have forced us to it. Thus the important psychological value of this assistance would be completely lost. If we were to find a way, for example, to assume the provincial budget cost of paying police and gendarmerie we would most certainly create good will. I am not seeking to "buy" the government's favours, but the fact remains that the need for a "financial injection" is to them the most pressing and the only clear one.

6. To return to the "adviser" question: I do not think that this is a time to press very hard for a clear cut solution. Miller and I will watch it and we will eventually come up with a solution, or a suggestion for one.

7. There is no need here to reflect on the tragedy that befell the Irish platoon near Niemba. The effect upon the Irish contingent here was, understandably, serious. I would not have wished or, indeed, dared to mention the agonized question that lived in the minds of the men and of some of their officers: "Why? What for?", were it not for a matter to which I feel in conscience I must draw attention. But I would underline that I do so impartially, objectively, and in an all overriding desire to contribute to the UN's effort in the Congo.

8. There can be no doubt that the bitter criticism, sometimes amounting to abuse, levelled at the UN's military and civilian effort by the local and the world press, and by individuals, Congolese and European alike, is trying hard the faith in UN of many involved in the UN operation itself. That the incident at Niemba shook this sincere faith even more is perhaps not reasonable. But what is harder to explain is the manner in which the hand-over of duties from the Irish to the Nigerian Forces is being carried out.

9. Speaking of A Company 32nd battallion under Commandant T. Tracy stationed in Bukavu I can only have profound admiration for the way in which, in three months' time, and by courageous, tireless and devoted work, excellent relations were built up with the ANC and with the local authorities, and that under conditions which were difficult and delicate and ^{which} frequently called for decisions and judgments not normally considered to fall within the military province. In these three months a valuable amount of good will was built up and an extremely important body of knowledge and experience of local conditions collected. There is no need to stress the importance of this experience, knowledge and

good will in relation to the effectiveness of the Force - or its immediate bearing upon the possibility of success of the Civilian Operation.

10. On Tuesday 8 November the first batch of Irishmen left for Goma. On Thursday night the first contingent of Nigerians arrived, 20 men and two subalterns of which one a signals officer. That same night Commandant Tracy received orders to move with remainder of his Company to Goma leaving behind only one officer and some twenty men. The Nigerians arrived without UN berets, helmets or any UN insignia. They could not mount a patrol without permission from Goma. They were understandably, but none the less clearly, almost completely at a loss. Commandant Tracy left on the Friday morning by which time nine of the twenty Nigerians had been recalled to Goma.

11. If I have gone into this in some detail it is certainly not to make the situation appear ridiculous, or to criticise the Irish Commandant and even less to criticise the Nigerians. It is simply to draw attention to the start fact that on that Friday morning three months' experience, the excellent results of three months' devoted work, went virtually down the drain. The departing Commandant did leave a typewritten brief but this can hardly be considered an adequate substitute for an overlap. The Nigerians, new to the Congo, brandnew to the particularly complex problems of the UN in the Congo, start, at least here in Bukavu - the provincial capital - virtually from scratch. The two consequences must be clear: the loss to the UN effort of valuable experience and the effect of it on the minds and the faith of men who with unswerving loyalty and often great personal sacrifice have given their all to make the UN "presence" in the Congo effective.

12. If one accepts all this as simply inevitable, simply a result of the enormous complexitus facing the UN effort in the Congo, should one also unquestionably accept the fact that all this was done, all these changes made without the Provincial Government being, in the least, informed? The departing Commandant did not even have the opportunity personally to take his leave of the Provincial President, a minimum courtesy, a very minor requirement in this life dictated by hyper sensibilities. Even less could he present his successor and thus provide a minimum of continuity.

13. I protest that these remarks have been made, not in the least in a spirit of destructive criticism but with a profoundly sincere desire to provide information which may help to avoid a recurrence of such happenings in the future.

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14. I attach some notes on more specific points but do so on separate sheets to facilitate distribution.

12 November 1960

Flour

We had this week the visit of Mr. T. Berouti, the Food Coordinator and of Mr. Oertle, his assistant. The outstanding aspects of the flour problem were discussed with him.

The most important aspect is that there is apparently a possibility of shipping the flour - originally a Russian contribution - up. / If this can be done fast enough and in sufficient quantities we may be successful in closing the present dangerous gap between the stocks and what is to arrive in January.

/from Leo.

I permit myself to confirm that it is still urgent to ship a quantity of, say, some 20 tons into Goma by plane, whence it can be transported by road.

In addition to that I confirm my cable BULE 68 stating that it is possible to truck supplies up from Stanleyville and that further supplies can therefore be shipped by inland vessel to Stanleyville and thence by truck. This operation would take some two weeks which, provided action is taken immediately and the initial lot is shipped in by air, is good enough.

For the future supply line it is imperative to ensure continuity of approval of import licences (and the provision of currency). Could we be informed whether this continues to be in Central hands or whether effective authority has been delegated to the provinces?

Finally, it should be borne in mind that the total consumption of Bukavu and its rural surroundings is approx. 90 tons per month, including some five tons for the UN Forces.

We have received a copy of a letter dated 22.10.60 from Redalco to Procurement and Supply in which 17 tons of UN flour, presumably for the UN Force, are announced for shipment from ex Halifax or Montreal 20 November. Is this the parcel which was supposed to be arriving originally by end October and of which we are so far without further news?