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*Note du chef de la Direction de l'Afrique et du Moyen-Orient
pour le sous-secrétaire d'État adjoint aux Affaires extérieures*
*Memorandum from Head, African and Middle Eastern Division,
to Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

SECRET. CANADIAN EYES ONLY.

[Ottawa], January 11, 1963

Reference: D.L. (1) Division Memorandum of January 8 and U.N. Division Memo of January 9.

UNITED NATIONS ACTION IN KATANGA

According to our information the occupation of Jadotville by U.N. troops was carried out at the initiative of the Indian Commander on the spot with the reluctant concurrence of Leopoldville and against the orders of New York.

2. It seems that after U.N. troops had put two battalions across the Lufira River, New York ordered them not only not to advance on Jadotville but to withdraw back across the River. The Indian Commander pointed out to the Force Commander at Leopoldville that compliance with this order would jeopardize the security of his forces and have a serious effect on morale, and insisted that the momentum of the troops must be maintained. The Force Commander (presumably after consultation with Gardiner) replied that he did not have enough information to judge either of these factors and he must therefore leave the decision to the local commander. The latter not encountering any further resistance at this point moved into Jadotville.

3. New York's motives for ordering a halt at the Lufira River are not entirely clear, but presumably the U.N. was subject to pressure from the British and Belgians (U Thant is reported to have assured Mr. Spaak that U.N. troops would not take Jadotville) and they may genuinely have feared that a continued advance would have met with heavy resistance (and casualties) from the gendarmerie and would have provoked widespread sabotage of the mining installations at Jadotville. Neither of these fears were realized (some sabotage apparently did take place at the cobalt plant in Jadotville but not on the scale feared). It is quite evident that the Secretariat is not entirely unhappy at what happened, although they seem to appreciate the long-term disadvantage to the U.N. of the apparent civilian loss of control over the military. (We should imagine that the Indian Government is also not unhappy at the military kudos their troops have gained through the advance on Jadotville.)

4. Perhaps one lesson to be learned from the Congo experience is that once hostilities begin (or the enemy is engaged as it were) U.N. troops, being made up of national contingents with national military traditions, cannot be expected to act much differently from other soldiers in similar conditions. Thus when serious fighting is involved the civilian authority must in the interest of morale and the efficient conduct of operations be prepared to allow the military commanders a certain amount of discretion.

5. We have some doubts about the advisability of approaching the State Department at this time for an account of the facts.⁶ For one thing, it might seem strange that Canada, who is a member of the Congo Advisory Committee and has a contingent of over three hundred men

⁶ Note marginale :/Marginal note:
I agree. R. C[ampbell]