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TEXT OF LETTER FROM MR. BYRON PRICE, UN ACTING SECRETARY-
GENERAL TO THE U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE

The following letter was sent yesterday, 26 July 1949, by Mr. Byron Price, Acting Secretary-General of the United Nations, to Mr. Dean Acheson, US Secretary of State:

"I have the honour to direct your attention to a news release issued on 23 July 1949 by a Sub-Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the United States Senate reproducing certain proceedings of the Sub-Committee, including the questioning of a witness regarding the personnel practices and internal organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations.

"You will note that the Sub-Committee, furthermore, chose to take, and to make public, testimony which included irresponsible and unfounded attacks on the integrity of the Secretary-General and of certain members of the Secretariat.

"From this it would appear that the Sub-Committee has misunderstood the basic principles on which the United Nations was founded, which principles were explicitly accepted by each member government when it acceded to the Charter.

"I need hardly point out that great pains were taken by the founders of the United Nations to insure that it should be a truly international organization, having in its staff nationals from all members. The Secretary-General was designated by the Charter as the Chief Administrative Officer of the organization answerable for his acts to the General Assembly in which each member nation has a voice. To this end, Article 100 of the Charter provided:

1. In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

2. Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

"In view of the plain responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the Charter, I am compelled to point out that the internal administration of the Secretariat is the responsibility of the Secretary-General and the General Assembly.

"All of the official acts and policies of the Secretary-General are under constant and thorough review by competent committees of the General Assembly;

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and through these committees, member governments have opportunity to inquire as fully as they desire into the efficiency and impartiality of the administration of the Secretariat.

"If the Secretary-General were to be answerable in addition to Committees of national legislatures, all possibility of the successful existence of the United Nations as an international organization would be destroyed. This was foreseen clearly when the Charter was written and submitted to member nations for their acceptance or rejection. It would be tragic if it were forgotten now.

"I would greatly appreciate it if, in view of our deep concern, you would be good enough to inform me of the views of your government on this subject.

Byron Price
Acting Secretary-General."

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