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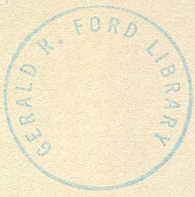
Supreme Headquarters
Allied Powers Europe
10 March 1952

Dear Congressman Ford:

Since my return from an inspection trip to Turkey and Greece, I have read and reread the letter from you and your associates that awaited me on my desk. Naturally, I am deeply impressed by the earnestness and compelling sincerity of your message. Beyond that, I am personally touched and moved by the honor you do me in your words; by the importance of the services in the political field you believe I could render to America's present and future. That being so, whatever my own personal opinion may be of my present assignment or of any future duty, I must weigh heedfully and carefully the arguments advanced by you and my other friends. I assure you that to every consideration you advance I am attempting to give my earnest thought and study.

Under most circumstances, I would concede immediately the complete validity of your argument. However, as I am now situated, assigned to a duty that I firmly believe is of the utmost consequence to the peace and prosperity of America and the world, I am confronted by one dominant personal conviction - during the next few months, no other job or mission that I can discharge seems more important than the one in which I am now engaged. My own personal inclinations, the advice of loyal associates and warm friends, the possibilities that lie ahead - none of these can be permitted to outweigh an inescapable and present duty.

Of course, I am not indispensable to the success of NATO and SHAPE - even if at one time many may have thought me so. If I were, then I should actually be to some extent a failure, for one of my primary objectives here has been the development of an



organization that can carry on despite any loss in personnel - from the Supreme Commander through all the levels of the staff. With the help of devoted and able associates, that sort of organization has been perfected. I firmly believe that, should I walk out of this headquarters tomorrow, the mission would be carried on by competent hands - carried on successfully.

Nevertheless, each day is marked by some new problem, often one without precedent. To the solution of each, I can contribute at least a little. Of course, I must admit that, as the climate of cooperation and mutual understanding increases from the highest to the lowest levels of the Allied Forces, my contribution to these solutions may cease to be important, much less essential. But that, if anything, intensifies my problem.

There is no question in my mind concerning the propriety of answering a clear-cut call to another and higher duty, a call that is traditionally and universally recognized as the voice of the American people speaking through a national convention. Such a call imposes an obligation of citizenship on the man so honored.


It seems to me, however, that it is an entirely different thing to leave a critical assignment for the purpose of increasing the possibility or probability of such a summons. My friends, I know, will not expect me to act against my conscience. But, in the absence of a compelling call or relief by higher authority, I cannot see in any personal or political circumstances a sufficient warrant for me to leave this assignment during the immediate future.

No matter how others might interpret that action, for me it would be based on personal grounds and personal reasons. On the other hand, I assure you that I shall regularly reexamine my position, bearing in mind your message. World peace and human freedom; American solvency, prosperity, and unity - these things dwarf

every American citizen's personal preferences and his personal decisions on his duty as an individual.

My thanks for your inspiring words and my best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Dwight D. Eisenhower". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

P.S. This letter is identical to those I have sent to others who signed with you the original message.

The Honorable Gerald R. Ford, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.