

Letter to my parents after the first Egypt-Israel
disengagement agreement, included here as an example of
the personal price of engagement in

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Dear Folks,

This work,

I am just beginning to feel as if I am catching up with myself. I never really felt as if I'd arrived home after the Christmas holidays.

First of all, I have never even written you thanking you properly for your long stint during my last trip or for our very happy Christmas together. All of our gifts are gradually settling into their niches here--my calculator is already well used; my umbrella went out with us this afternoon, not for the first time; and this is the inaugural for my paper. We bought wood for putting up the chinning bar in the cellar today, and Cathy and Mark already have the tumbling mat spread out there. So bit by bit I'm beginning to consolidate, but naturally I'm way behind.

The trip this time was extremely satisfying, but each one of these things is more exhausting than the last. Three things make it possible to keep going. One is the intellectual stimulation and the unbelievably high quality of the work that is done. Second is the ease with which Joe, Roy, and I work together with Henry and the fact that the others with us are fully supportive and pleasant. Third is the excitement of seeing progress. A little success can make addicts to a process like this. Of course, underlying all this and the fundamental thing that makes any of it possible for me is the confidence I have that the home front is being well cared for.

One measure of the exhaustion that creeps up on us is the fact that as the process intensifies we find ourselves assuming that 3:00 a.m. or later is bedtime, no matter what. Even on nights when you have some hope that things will be normal meetings and work crowd on top of each other. But it is all justified, and it becomes a kind of game after while to do the impossible every day. Of course it's not surprising, but it was interesting the day I stayed in Aswan when the K. party returned to Jerusalem to see the extent to which the E. government was ready to stand back and let us manage every last detail, including preparation of some of their documents.

We have gradually settled back to normal at home. This morning, I took the children shopping before going to the office. Then in the early afternoon, Mrs. Jackson dropped them off at my office on her way home, and we went to a play at the Smithsonian and after that to see the space exhibit there. Then home for dinner and story by the fire. And tomorrow looks like a nice day together, too. Maybe we can have a few weeks like this now before the next round. After two weeks away before Christmas, two weeks apart over Christmas off and on, and another week and a half away I need some normal time at home with Cathy and Mark.

I'm enclosing the newspaper photos which you naturally have not had a chance to catch up with. I've asked the UN photographer who was taking these pictures for a complete set, so maybe by the next time you come you can see the whole affair in detail. I think TIME has a picture of the outside of the tent where the agreement was signed so that will give you a notion of the overall setting, which as the name indicated was at the Kilometer 101 point out of Cairo on the road to Suez City. This is the point on the road where the ceasefire line fell, but of course that day everyone was on his good behavior.

As you may have seen in the papers, Joe Sisco's staying on in the new job at S tate has been announced, but to my knowledge Henry still hasn't decided what to do with Joe's old job. Until that is settled, of course, there is nothing new on my future.

I am still not caught up on my sleep, so I will try to turn in now. The dark mornings make it too tempting to stay in bed! Again, thank you for all of your help and your generosity.

Love from all,

Hal