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12 July 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with General Eisenhower, 11 July 1967

1. I met with General Eisenhower for two hours in the late afternoon, 11 July 1967, at Walter Reed Hospital. He was at the hospital for a periodic checkup and to have some dental surgery done.
2. Referring first to Vietnam, I reported that the pattern of operations remains very much the same as in recent weeks. Several hard engagements have occurred with North Vietnam forces just south of the DMZ and in Kontum Province in the highlands. In these battles, the ratio of our own to enemy men lost continues to run normally between 1 to 5 and 1 to 10. The question of further reinforcement will undoubtedly be addressed on Mr. McNamara's return.
3. I next reported on the situation in the Middle East. I showed him a copy of the exchange of messages between the President and Kosygin furnished to me for the purpose by the White House staff. (I had previously mentioned these to him, and arranged to show them to him at a convenient time.) He was keenly interested. I highlighted a number of features, including the firm but courteous tone, the impression that the Soviet government was working on this problem as a matter of top priority, and using this channel as the principal means of keeping it from spreading, our use of the channel to prevent over-reaction when the Liberty was attacked and our planes were scrambled, our request that Kosygin make clear the falsehood of the charge that U. S. planes participated in the Israeli air attacks on the Arabs, and the point made to Kosygin that General Eisenhower's declaration concerning free passage through the Gulf of Aquaba was taken to obtain withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai, which was earnestly desired by Egypt.
4. As to the current situation, the eight Soviet ships now in Port Said seem to be serving principally a propaganda purpose for them with the Arabs, although their presence of course raises the possibility of an incident at any time. Since mid-June about 100 tanks,

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80 anti-tank guns and 30 anti-aircraft guns have been delivered to Alexandria by the communists. The Arab inventory is now in the order of 600 tanks, and probably about 100 MIGs; however, there is a significant report that while the government is still in Nasser's hands, he controls it less firmly, and that the Army is flatly "demoralized". The Soviet arms shipments are assessed as sizeable, but not enough for starting the war again.

5. A development which appears promising is the acceptance in principle of having United Nations observers on both sides of the canal. The specifics are still to be defined, but our information is that both the Israelis and the Arabs have now accepted. While this is a small step, it could be the beginning of more rational attitudes toward a settlement. General Eisenhower indicated he thought the development was a valuable one. King Hussein continues to show himself basically moderate, but is being pushed very hard regarding the West Bank and Jerusalem. General Eisenhower said he had met with Hussein, and feels a great deal of sympathy for his position, which is dangerous and almost impossibly difficult. He commented that he thought that the Israelis had made a serious error in taking over Jerusalem. With regard to oil, the situation for the West seems to be manageable but tight. Tankers are in short supply, because of the longer voyage around the Cape of Good Hope. Britain is feeling the economic impact, and several of the European nations have had to raise the price of oil products.

6. Finally, with regard to U. S. longer range policy and the position we will take, this has not yet been settled but is still the subject of discussion.

7. At this point, General Eisenhower expressed again his great interest and strong support for a project outlined to him by his friends for a massive desalinization project for the Middle East utilizing nuclear power. He had spoken to me of this twice before in telephone conversations and is highly enthusiastic over its possibilities. The project would be approached in phases. The first phase, using a power source about twice the size of the ^{one} now being installed in California would provide some 400 million gallons of water per day, which is an amount equal to the total flow of the Jordan and its three tributary streams. The next phase would triple or quadruple this amount. The basic economics of the project are sound. He said he is told that of the new power plants now under construction in the United States, more than 50% are now nuclear sources. Costs have dropped considerably below the 6 mill figure which was formerly the

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standard for an efficient coal-steam plant. Also the costs of water from desalinization are becoming competitive, and will drop considerable further with larger plants such as those proposed. The project could utilize the labor of the refugees in the Middle East for a long time both for the construction of the plants and for the construction of the water distribution network. In addition it should open up fertile lands for resettlement of refugees and a vast improvement of the economies of the area, particularly those of Jordan and Iraq, Syria and Egypt, as well as Israel, to which the water would be supplied. Out of such a project could come a common interest in stability in the area. It is his feeling that, if this offer were sufficiently strongly publicized the Arab regimes would be obliged to accede to the desires of the people rather than refusing on the basis that Israel also would benefit. Finally, he thought that, if this proposal were made by the President, the effect would be electrifying and constructive, and might clear the air for rational approaches to a settlement in the area.

8. I next talked about the U. S. action providing 3-C130s to the Congo. The situation had become acute by last weekend, with clear possibilities that racial massacres might occur at any moment. These aircraft were sent in for logistic use as a measure of support and reassurance to Mobutu which would counterbalance rising racist feelings. There are indications that the action has indeed been effective, that attitudes toward the whites have considerably improved, and that there is an improvement of security throughout the country. Broadcasts no longer take an anti-white theme. However, the mercenaries hold Kisangani. It appears the first attempt to use the C-130s to remove threatened people was unsuccessful. Secretary Rusk is meeting with the Congress to put the full story before them and explain the action taken. Also it is being stressed to all concerned that there is no combat commitment involved in the dispatch of this force. I told General Eisenhower our diplomatic people had been urgently and effectively in touch with the Congo government to obtain restraint on their part. I told him I had asked if we had any understanding with them regarding the matter of Tshombe, whose seizure in Algeria touched this off. Thus far, so far as I could ascertain, there has been no understanding on this score.

9. Finally I told General Eisenhower I had been interested to see, in the intelligence, what may be first inklings of the opening of better communications between Greece and Turkey. There are reports that Greek military officers representing the military regime now in authority may be talking with Turkish counterparts, and some

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speculation that Cyprus may be among the topics under discussion. If such is in fact true, the discussions might lead toward possible resolution of some of the difficulty.

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A. J. GOODPASTER
Lieutenant General, USA

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