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January 13, 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of Special Committee on Iraq

Participants: Assistant Secretary of State G. Lewis Jones,
 Chairman
 Ambassador Raymond A. Hare, Deputy Under
 Secretary of State for Political Affairs
 (part of meeting)
 Mr. Parker T. Hart, Deputy Assistant Secretary
 of State, Near Eastern Affairs
 Mr. Armin H. Meyer, Director of the Office of
 Near Eastern Affairs
 Mr. Nicholas Thacher, Deputy Director of the
 Office of Near Eastern Affairs
 Mr. William Lakeland, Officer in Charge, Iraq-
 Jordan Affairs
 Mr. Evan Will Policy Planning Staff, Department
 of State
 Mr. Robert Knight, Deputy Assistant Secretary
 of Defense
 Rear Admiral E. B. Cranham, Jr., USN, ISA/CSD
 Brig. Gen. M. C. Young, JCS (Special Projects)
 Colonel Edward G. Butler, USAF, JCS
 Mr. Norman Paul, CIA

Mr. Philip J. Halla, NSC Staff

The Special Committee on Iraq met on January 12 at 2:30 p.m. in the offices of Assistant Secretary Jones. Mr. Jones asked if a report from the Iraq Committee was scheduled for Council consideration. Mr. Halla informed the group that the report was scheduled as the fifth item on the agenda for January 14. Mr. Jones then said that he had invited former Ambassador Hare to join the meeting shortly for a discussion of Nasser's interests and capabilities with regard to Iraq.

Mr. Jones next noted that a reply had been received on January 11 from Ambassador Jernegan in response to the message sent to him as a result of the last meeting. Ambassador Jernegan agreed that the situation in Iraq is now such that, while there were risks involved, the possibilities of developments adverse to US interest are such as to justify a more active

program within Iraq,

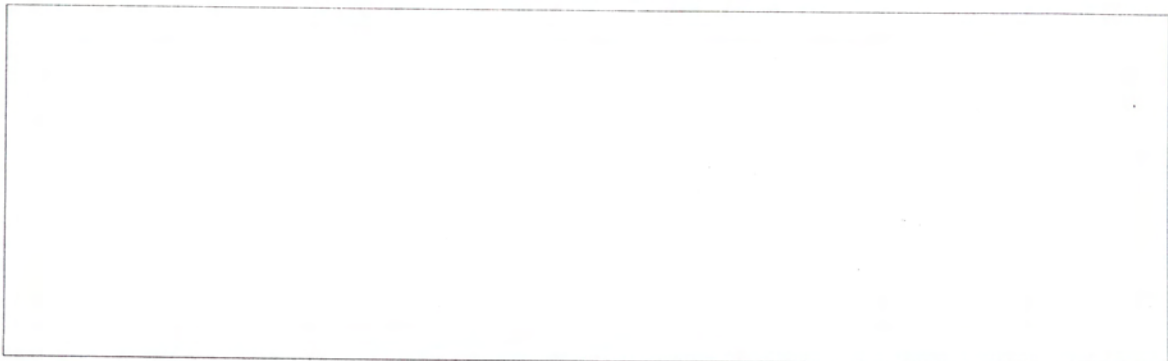
Mr. Hare, who joined the meeting at this point, spoke about Nasser's views at Mr. Jones' request. He said Nasser is confused about Iraq. He feels he has a stake there both because of his position as a leader in the Arab world and secondly because he fears the repercussions in Syria from developments in Iraq. Mr. Hare felt that Nasser does not want to dominate the Arab world, but does wish to be regarded as a fountain head of knowledge and wisdom who will be consulted by other Arabs. He agreed that Nasser's split with the Baath party in Syria might complicate his situation there. Continuing, Mr. Hare felt that fundamentally relations were no worse between Nasser and Kasseem than they had formerly been between Nasser and King Saud. In other words, there was no fundamental difference between them and they might make up at any point.

Mr. Hare said Nasser had agreed with him during their last meeting of the desirability of a non-intervention policy, but it was obvious that Nasser had ideas of his own about Iraq. Unfortunately Egyptian estimates had proved wrong several times, first, in their belief that propaganda from radio Cario would rectify the situation in Iraq and, again,

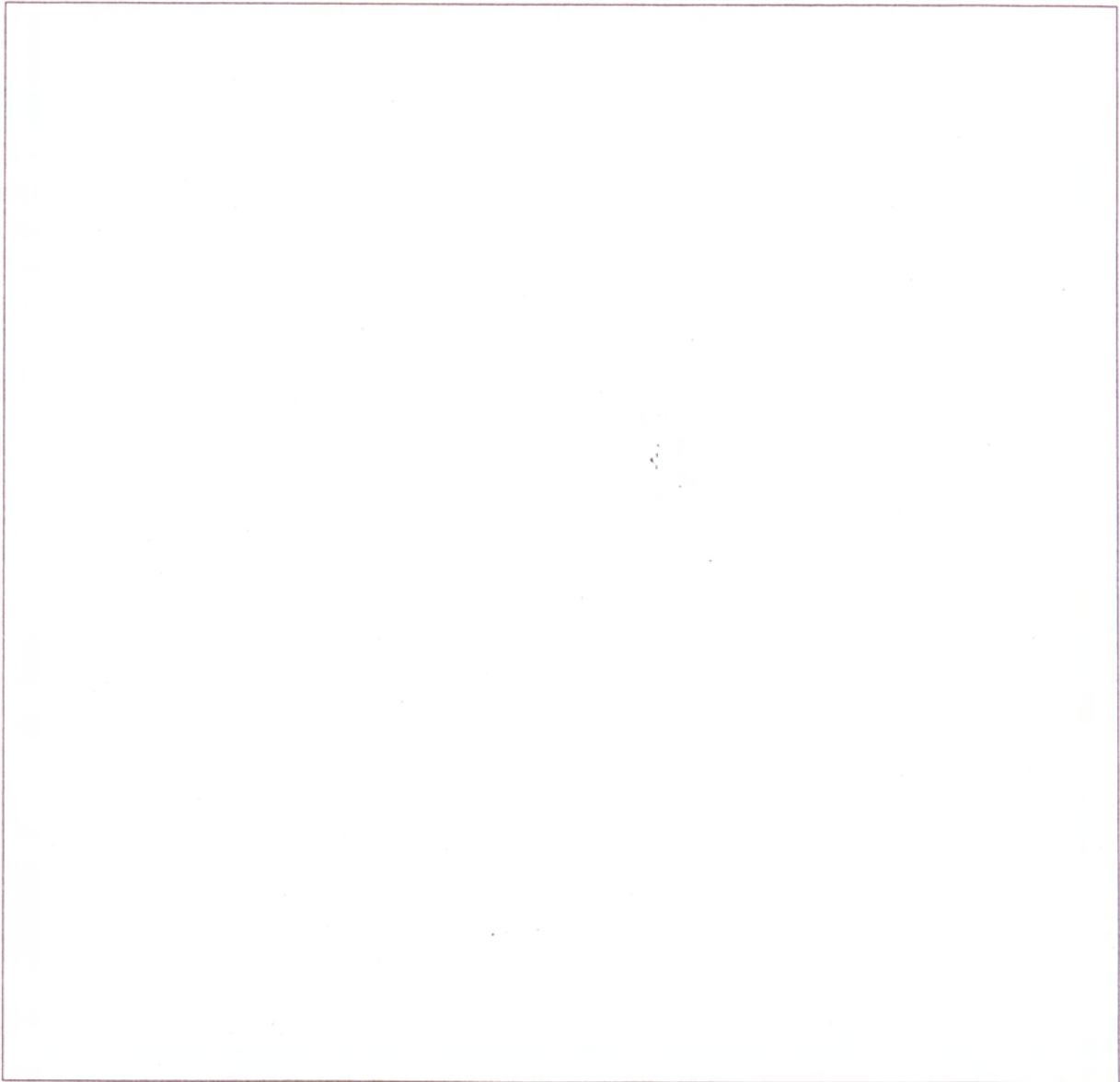
on the strength of nationalists elements in Iraq. The Egyptians felt frustrated since their plans had gone awry, and they were now playing the game more carefully. Mr. Hare found them within a state of "frustrated, temporary inanition". Subjectively, Nasser was being hurt by Baghdad's radio attacks. Mr. Hare noted that Nasser personally was relatively thin-skinned and sensitive to criticism. He had a daily compendium made of criticisms from all over the world. Remarks that he feels unfair in an obscure journal will send him into as great a rage as criticism, for example, by the BBC or the New York Times. Mr. Hare was strongly of the opinion that the most hopeful thing was to leave the situation alone. The US has had more success by withholding its hand in similar situations than by taking action. As it stands now, the Iraqis would probably rally to oppose outside intervention.

In further comment on other questions, Mr. Hare noted that Nasser's resources inside Iraq had been cut down. He was taking care of some Iraqi refugees and was thus in contact with them.

Mr. Jones then noted for Ambassador Hare's information that the group had been considering the idea of sounding out the UAR, the Jordanians, and the Iranians so as to avoid possible uncoordinated actions with regard to Iraq. Mr. Hare stated: (1) What is needed is an Iraqi solution to the Iraq problem. (2) He could not imagine Iran or Jordan doing anything useful in Iraq. He admitted that others did not agree with him. Azzam Pasha, for instance, felt that a new source of strength like Kuri was needed to stabilize Iraq. (3) The UAR was the only country which could do anything. If action were to be taken, obviously, the UAR and Jordan should act together, but Mr. Hare could not imagine such a move being constructive.



Mr. Knight asked Ambassador Hare how far gone he thought Iraq was. Mr. Hare replied that there are some built-in brakes. The situation is serious, of course, but the licensing of political parties may bring in some new factors. We can't say, however, that Kasseem or the country is now or is going to be communist at any set date. In other words, we don't have a good case. We need a target. Nothing clear has happened as yet which can be pinpointed in this regard.



Mr. Knight, following up a suggestion of General Young, felt that the best possible estimate of the situation should be worked out on the basis of the new information which we hoped to obtain. He stressed the view, which he said was backed by JCS and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, that we need a great deal more information in order to appraise the various Iraqi groups





Mr. Jones then read a draft report which he proposed to have the Acting Secretary make to the Council along the above lines. This was accepted with minimum modifications which State will incorporate. The meeting adjourned at about 8:10 p.m.

PHILIP J. HALLA

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