

pacts but preferred those with a definite time limit which might be extended as necessary.

2. The Secretary was inclined to believe that the British would take entire credit for the provision of Centurion tanks for Iraq in spite of the fact that the letter provided that no intimation be given to the Iraqis by either the British or ourselves before the United States made its formal approach.

3. The Secretary raised the question of the United States selling the ten Centurions to the Iraqis which had been obtained from Britain by offshore procurement. He wondered whether this were possible and checked with Mr. Nolting, who stated that it had been done in one or two isolated cases but was not generally the practice. The Secretary wondered whether it should not be stated in the proposed draft letter to Sir Roger Makins that the Centurion tanks would be supplied by the United States to Iraq on a grant basis in the United States program.

4. The Secretary wondered whether the Iraqis wanted British tanks or would prefer American tanks. The proposed telegram was discussed and wording was added cautioning the American Ambassador regarding any queries he might put to the Iraqis regarding tanks.

Mr. Russell observed that any discussion with Nuri concerning the supply of Centurions to Iraq would probably leak and would prove an unfortunate backdrop for the Alpha statement. It would appear that the United States had abandoned its objective position, giving tanks to Iraq unconditionally but making the security treaty for Israel conditional on cooperation in Alpha. The Secretary said it might be better, if we decided to have the British tell Nuri that they were informed the prospects were good and withhold any U.S. statement until later.

The Secretary concluded that he felt that it would be sufficient for the moment to send the telegram to the American Embassy in Baghdad. Following the reply as to whether the Iraqis wanted Centurion tanks, further consideration could be given to the proposed letter to Sir Roger Makins.<sup>4</sup> He supposed that it could be held up another day or two.

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<sup>4</sup> See Document 191.

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## 188. Editorial Note

At 9:15 a.m. on August 11, Secretary Dulles met with President Eisenhower to review a number of policy matters, one of which was