

203. Message From Foreign Secretary Macmillan to Secretary of State Dulles<sup>1</sup>

DEAR FOSTER: Many thanks for your message about Alpha.<sup>2</sup> I am sorry that you do not see your way to giving more time for the preparatory work which we have agreed should be done. I am recalling our Ambassador at Bagdad from his leave and instructing him to return to his post forthwith. He will have to do his best to prevent an adverse reaction in Iraq to your statement.

We had hoped that a substantial offer of tanks would soften the blow. So the Prime Minister and I are disappointed that you can only promise ten, but we are glad to see that you regard this as a start. In the circumstances we shall be happy to provide the two to match your gift. I think that both our Ambassadors in Bagdad should now tell Nuri in confidence that we have agreed that the Iraqi forces should be equipped with British tanks and that we are providing twelve to begin with. If you agree, I will give appropriate instructions to Sir Michael Wright.

As regards the text of your statement<sup>3</sup>, may I make some suggestions. I am glad that you have decided to avoid detail, and my proposal is that you should be even less specific. I am sure you will agree that we should not give the contestants an excuse for taking up an extreme position against some particular part of what you say and so make any subsequent confidential negotiations more difficult. With this in mind, I hope you will feel able to omit the phrase in the passage dealing with refugees which limits the compensation to land and buildings.<sup>4</sup> I entirely agree with this limitation, but I fear

<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, S/S-NEA Files: Lot 61 D 417, Alpha Volume 7. Top Secret. The source text is undated. Enclosed with an August 20 note from Scott to Dulles, which bears the notation that it was seen by the Secretary.

<sup>2</sup> Document 201.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably the August 19 draft cited in footnote 2, *supra*. No record that the text was cabled to London has been found in Department of State files; it was apparently provided to the British Embassy.

<sup>4</sup> The relevant sentences in the August 19 draft read as follows:

"All of this requires money. In part it should come from Israel as compensation due for land and buildings taken from the refugees. However, it may be that Israel cannot, unaided, now make full compensation."