

eration would have to be given in due course as to whether and how the North Atlantic Council might be informed of our initiative. It would also have to be recognized that considerable pressures would have to be exerted on the Moslem countries, once France showed signs of making concessions, to prevent their pushing their demands beyond the bounds of mutual interest. Should the French eventually reject the *démarche*, we would then have to advise them that in the circumstances, we should feel free to follow an independent policy vis-à-vis Morocco and Tunisia, including the granting of increased financial and military assistance. We would, also, have to say that there would be grave doubts as to our ability to continue to support the French position on Algeria in the United Nations.

The difficulties to be anticipated in getting the FLN to accept a ceasefire cannot be minimized.

Faced with the increasing danger of disaster in North Africa, however, I feel that these risks should be taken.*

* These recommendations were reiterated in a March 3 report to Dulles by the working group on North Africa (Department of State, Central Files, 7515 00/3-358). Murphy reported on March 10 that Beeley had indicated the United Kingdom would welcome a peaceful solution in Algeria, but feared a British initiative would damage Anglo-French relations (Telegram 4151 from Paris, *ibid.*, 7515 00/3-1058). Murphy advised on March 16 that the Foreign Office had reacted negatively to the proposal (telegram 1183 from Tunis, *ibid.*, 7515 00/3-1658), on March 19, he reported that Macmillan had approved this reaction (Telegram 4316 from Paris, *ibid.*, 7515 00/3-1958).

270. Editorial Note

In a March 7 address before the French National Assembly, French Prime Minister Gaillard proposed establishment of a "Western Mediterranean Commonwealth" comprising France, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and possibly Italy and Spain. For an excerpt from his statement, see *American Foreign Policy Current Documents, 1958*, page 1090. Reporters at Secretary Dulles' March 13 press conference in Manila asked him about Gaillard's plan. Dulles, who was in Manila to attend the fourth meeting of the SEATO Council, replied: "I feel that the broad concept of unity, both military and economic, between Western Europe and North Africa is a sound concept. It is a concept which has been in the minds of many of us for a long time. There is really a very close mutuality of interest between Western Europe and North Africa, and the development of that concept in a manner which