

invite him have existed for years but consistently have been frustrated by unfavorable conditions. That we shall ever find a "good time" to invite Nasser seems doubtful; hence our belief we should issue the invitation under the something less than ideal circumstances existing now. The policy adopted just a year ago of seeking to improve relations with the United Arab Republic gives added weight to the justification for doing so.

We believe it desirable that you have an opportunity to meet Nasser face-to-face, that Nasser gain a first-hand impression of the power of the United States, and that he be exposed to the American economic system. By talking with him you would be enabled to expose our policies, our interests and our concerns, both global and Near Eastern. You would be able to gauge what to expect from Nasser in the pursuit of our current policy, and by personal contact you would increase immensely the value and effectiveness of future correspondence with him. We do not view your meeting with Nasser as an occasion for seeking great commitments. Rather, we see it as an opportunity to impress him, to encourage further moderation in United Arab Republic policies, and to strengthen his confidence in the intentions of the United States toward the United Arab Republic.

Widespread hostility toward the visit is to be expected, particularly from a number of the Arab countries, from Israel, and from a good many American citizens and groups. We do not consider that the hostility in the Near East will be such as to do real damage to our interests, and we plan to take such diplomatic action as may be available to allay in part the concerns of Nasser's enemies in the area. As for the domestic aspect, certain quiet preparatory work can be undertaken to reduce the opposition to manageable proportions. We believe it desirable at the time the invitation is issued to Nasser to inform the Government of Israel that either President Ben Tzvi or Prime Minister Ben-Gurion will be invited to make a comparable visit to the United States later in 1963 at a time to be agreed.

We further recommend that you order extraordinary precautions to be taken to avoid a leak prior to issuance of a press release.

Dean Rusk²

² Printed from a copy that indicates Rusk signed the original.

116. Editorial Note

On December 18, 1962, the Yemen Arab Republic released an official communiqué that embodied the statement proposed by the United