

37. Editorial Note

The August 1 record of meeting of the National Security Council Planning Board indicates the following decisions on Middle East policies:

"a. Agreed that the Board Assistants should prepare for Planning Board consideration on August 5 a list of the contingency situations that might arise in the Near East in the immediate future.

"b. Requested the CIA to prepare an estimate on the possible consequences of taking or not taking certain actions with respect to radical Pan-Arab nationalism.

"c. Noted that the Chairman would prepare for Planning Board discussion on August 5 a draft discussion paper on possible courses of action in the Near East." (Department of State, S/P-NSC Files: Lot 62 D 1, Records of Planning Board Meetings)

According to an August 5 memorandum from Boggs to the members of the Planning Board, the Board was scheduled to discuss at its August 5 meeting an attached draft paper, entitled "The Near East." The draft paper suggested that the United States had to decide "whether we 'must deal' with Nasser" and suggested that the United States deal with Nasser "in a proper and correct manner" as head of the UAR, but "not as self-appointed leader of the Arab world." The U.S. should refrain from a policy of overt and frontal opposition to Nasser, nor should it attempt to compete for his favor with the Soviet Union. In addition, the paper suggested that the United States accept the goals of Arab nationalism, even when they were consistent with Nasser's objectives. These goals were described as independence, self-determination, the right to choose neutralism, social and economic reform, and equitable arrangements of oil resources. The U.S. task was to convince the Arabs that these goals were not synonymous with Nasser's domination of the Arab world. (*Ibid.*, Near East, U.S. Policy Toward NSC 5820)