

New Iraqi Chief of General Staff, General Arif, who is vigorous, able and impressive officer, expressed same hope in conversation with Military Attaché October 5 (see ARMA RN413N53, 8 October<sup>3</sup>). General Arif promised full cooperation in providing necessary information expedite a decision.

Embassy recalls that Daspit, when at August 28 Recne meeting Cairo and later in Baghdad, emphasized necessary implementing draft military aid programs promptly in order that funds currently appropriated be obligated before they expire next June 30. Also that at Recne meeting it was recommended Syria and Iraq received major share \$30 million currently available.

Recently I discussed with Maffit from Naples importance I attached to plugging gap in free world defenses between Turkey and Persian Gulf. I suggest both CINCSOUTH [and] ourselves should be doing some thinking about means to close this gap.

Embassy believes establishment of grant military aid program here, with likely effect of generating spirit confidence and will to resist in Iraq Army, would be logical first step. I further believe it will materially strengthen political position of West, including both United States and United Kingdom, if we do something new and distinctively American for Iraq in such a way as to leave no doubt that what we are doing is for Iraqis and not for purpose of perpetuating monopolistic British influence here.

In view long period of time which has already elapsed since Iraq initially submitted request and in view shortness of time remaining in which to obligate funds, Embassy would appreciate earliest possible indication Department's views and, if favorable, test of draft bilateral agreement to present to Iraq Government.

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<sup>3</sup> Not found in Department of State files.

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*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

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302. Brit Emb informs that they shortly expect instructions from London to discuss with Dept general question of proposed US military assistance Iraq. Department now expects receive views of Defense on ME programs next week, and understands informally

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<sup>1</sup> Drafted by Daspit and cleared by NE.