

March 25, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
March 24, 1960 -- 8:45 AM

Others present: Secretary Herter
Mr. Allen Dulles
General Goodpaster

The President spoke for a moment to Mr. Herter alone. He asked Mr. Herter to look into a report that the World Bank is moving into a project in Mauritania, over the objection of the Moroccans. There may be serious political questions involved in this, and the President would like Mr. Herter to bring them to the attention of Mr. Black.



The President then discussed with Mr. Herter and Mr. Dulles questions raised by a recent memorandum to him from Ed Clark. Mr. Dulles said that he considers Mr. Clark to be an intelligent man whose advice to Mr. Dulles has been valuable in times past and has led to successful results. Mr. Dulles said that Mr. Pawley has just returned from a visit to the Dominican Republic, and has changed his evaluation of the situation there. There have apparently been serious atrocities by the Trujillo regime in recent days. The people around Trujillo are turning against him. Trujillo's family has taken large sums of money out of the country in recent days. In Mr. Pawley's opinion, that regime may last as little as three weeks. He is fearful that Castro or someone committed to Castro will come into power soon thereafter. We have no moderate substitute for Trujillo available. He saw considerable merit in getting Trujillo out of the country and trying to make a transition to some other government.

Mr. Herter also thought that on the whole the course of events favored by Mr. Clark seemed worth trying. He said we should not offer Trujillo asylum in the U.S.

The President said that if Clark takes a part in this, he should not say that he has any authority from the President, or has even seen the President lately. Mr. Dulles thought the project was worth a try, and that Clark should go down and see what he could do. He thought


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there was no point in an appearance by Trujillo before the OAS. The President said the project might go ahead. It should be kept secret, and that Clark would be acting on his own. At this point Mr. Dulles left the meeting.

The President said he had seen in the newspapers a statement from the State Department deploring actions in South Africa, and asked about this. Mr. Herter said he had not heard about this until after the statement had been made to the press. He is furious about it, regarding it as a breach of courtesy between nations. It occurred through internal failure within the State Department whereby a bureau chief proposed a statement and the press office released it without checking at the top policy level, and without investigating the facts of the matter. The President said the fat is in the fire. All he could see to do would be to call in the South African Ambassador and tell him that, although we are much distressed by events in South Africa, we do not regard it as our business to make public statements about this, and officially regret having done so. This action should be kept secret. In further discussion, the President agreed that this action might be taken through our Ambassador in South Africa if Mr. Herter wishes. The President said that, if it were his decision, he would find another post for the bureau chief involved.

The President commented that Mr. Hagerty would like to put out the statement concerning Macmillan's visit at noon today, rather than tomorrow. He asked me to contact the Prime Minister's office and see if this would be agreeable. (I later did so and the Prime Minister was agreeable; I so notified Mr. Hagerty who released a statement, using an edited and agreed version of the text sent to me by Ambassador Caccia.)

Mr. Herter next reported yesterday's session of the "committee of principals" on the latest Soviet proposal regarding nuclear test negotiations. Defense is prepared to go along with a line of action such as the President had discussed with Mr. Herter yesterday. Mr. McCone is violently opposed. He thought perhaps the President should see the principals, or possibly Mr. McCone alone. The President said he is willing to accept the proposal for a moratorium on tests below the threshold, but it must be limited to an agreed period and made subject to the decision of his successor. As regards Mr. McCone's opposition, this is a policy question, and Mr. McCone will have to accept the President's policy determination.


A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA