17 December 1948

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MEMORANDUM FOR: MESSRS.

OFFIE

SUBJECT: Conversation with Mr. Forrestal

This is a brief resume of certain aspects of the very satisfactory conversation which I had with Mr. Forrestal at lunch today. It will be observed that further action is indicated with regard to a number of the points which were covered.

1. New York Committee. Mr. Forrestal and Mr. Blum have brought this matter to General Eisenhower's attention, indicating Mr. Forrestal's full support of the project and of General Eisenhower's participation in the manner contemplated. Will Mr. Offie please ascertain from Mr. Humelsine whether Mr. Lovett has spoken to General Eisenhower? If it develops that Mr. Lovett has done this, I believe that the time has arrived for us to notify Mr. Spofford to go into action and I suggest that Mr. Offie do this by a telephone call.

2. Availability of support by NME for OPC requirements. The discussion on this point was very general and Mr. Forrestal indicated his willingess to do all that he could to help us. More specifically, in the matter of obtaining the appropriate degree of push for our personnel requests and for the use of military aircraft for the transportation of OPC bodies, Mr. Blum is designated as the person who will help us put through these requests. In particular Mr. Blum believes that it will be very simple to obtain the transportation

on a very broad scale and all we have to do is to ask him to arrange this for us. Mr. Forrestal was interested to know how much money has been allotted for our activities

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- 4. Western Union. I asked Mr. Forrestal for some general information concerning Western Union developments and he told me something of the recent and current negotiations, stressing the fact that for the present the United States is not participating directly. He further stated that he did not believe that the participation of our activities in the Western Union Clandestine Committee could "outrun" our official participation in Western Union activities on the next higher level. He also said that if we desire further particulars in regard to the Western Union developments, we should discuss these matters with General Gruenther and he encouraged us to do so.
- 5. General Maras. Mr. Forrestal is not familiar with what took place between Maras and our military officials at the time of Maras! recent visit to this country. More specifically, he does not know whether we gave Maras any kind of commitments. He commented in this connection that there is a sharp division of opinion as between the British and the French concerning Italian participation in the Western Union at this time, the French favoring and the British opposing. According to Mr. Forrestal the British opposition is based upon traditional and historical feelings of contempt for Italian ineptitude. General Slim in a recent argument about Italian participation quoted Napoleon's statement to the following effect: If Italy is an enemy, assign two divisions to defeat her; if she is neutral, assign four divisions to watch her; and if she is an ally, assign eight divisions to rescue her. Mr. Forrestal does not share the British view since he recognizes the strategic importance of Italy's geographic position in Western Europe.
- 6. Mr. Forrestal asked for a report of our activities and progress and I outlined to him in some detail where we stand and certain of the difficulties which we are meeting. I can develop upon this further orally for the benefit of any of you who are interested.

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