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Place: The President's Office - The White House  
Date: April 1, 1969  
Time: 3:15 p. m.

Present: The President  
Ambassador Mossbacher  
Mr. Root  
Harold Saunders  
Maj. Gen. Vernon Walters

President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia  
Foreign Minister Habib Bourguiba Jr.  
Ambassador

President Bourguiba opened the conversation recalling the President's visit to Tunisia in 1953. The President said he and his wife had the warmest memories of their visit to Tunis at that time. He recalled the widespread public acclaim and said he had told the President the cheers were for him and the President had said they were for him.

Since that time said the President, President Bourguiba's wise courageous positions had been noted. He must often have felt very lonely in his part of the world. "Lonely," replied the Pres. "but with my people." The President then asked if the activities of Tunisian extremists abroad gave him much trouble. Pres. Bourguiba replied that by working closely with his people, doing the right thing, and keeping an eye on these people he had not had too much trouble.

The President then noted that the greater stability in the area was due in part to Pres. Bourguiba's courageous attitude. Tunisia had remained stable. Libya, said Pres. Bourguiba, was also more stable as was Morocco. Lebanon likewise. The President said in the case of Libya, this was partly because they had found oil and the area had been quite unstable when he had been there in 1953. Pres. Bourguiba said this was the case and it was a good thing.

The President then asked what was the greatest threat to the people of this area and Pres. Bourguiba, without ever mentioning the name, made clear that in his opinion it was Pres. Nasser of Egypt. He had been saved from the British and French by the U. S. in 1956, even at the risk of endangering their relationships with old allies, and immediately he had heaped insults on the U. S. both on the Voice of the

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ches. He was a little man, filled with pride v By his people rather than talking common sense into the. There were others like him in Syria and Iraq. These men had led their countries to humiliation and defeat and still they held on through police and strongarm tactics. They had thoroughly mortgaged their countries to the Soviet Union which was pursuing the dream of Czarist Russia of reaching the warm waters and the world domination. These countries had even been more enslaved to the Soviet Union over the Czechoslovak invasion than the Communist parties of Western Europe or even the Romanians who are members of the Warsaw Pact. He had asked the Algerian Foreign Minister why they followed the Soviet Union so blindly when it had done nothing to help Algerian independence. The USSR had not even recognized the Algerian Government until after the Evian agreements had been reached with France. He was working on the Algerians trying gradually to draw them out of the bondage to the Soviet Union in which they found themselves.

The President said we knew all wisdom was not with us and were always anxious to have the counsel and advice of friends who saw the world as clearly and realistically as Pres. Bourguiba. He wondered what Pres. Bourguiba felt should be the policy of the U. S. in this area.

Pres. Bourguiba said he felt the U. S. policy in this area should be that of the Eisenhower doctrine which guaranteed the peoples of this area against attempts to deprive them of their liberty. Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon and others had accepted. He would like to think that Tunisia's future would be assured even after he himself disappeared. He would like to think that his country would continue to enjoy the support of the United States.

The President said that you can count on that. " He then said many people who came into his office felt that all that had to be done to solve the world's problems was that an agreement should be reached between the Soviet Union and the U. S., the two super giants. It was not that simple. The U. S. had to remember that in any agreement, it spoke for millions of people who wanted to retain their freedom. It was natural that there be discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States but he was not naive where the Soviet Union was concerned. We felt all of the people who lived around the Mediterranean, not just those in North Africa had to be able to choose their own path to the future.

President Bourguiba again expressed his pleasure at seeing the President again and in hearing what he had to say. The President then paid tribute to President Bourguiba's wise statesmanship and courage and escorted him to his car.