

JFK: NSF, Reddown, 8x22, Ind. in, IO (IO 17) 1963, [with November 1963]

~~SECRET~~

McGB

How does this strike you? I thought that, rather than ask questions, the best tack was to show continuing interest, and make a few quiet points.

Bill Smith has seen and likes. I do not like to show this stuff to Shepard who has quite a vested interest here.

RWK

Attach. JFK Memo to SecDef on Indian Ocean TF

*His - see w. 1 List*

*President*

*10 July 63 memo?*

*Boundary*

*(as a "needle")*

*Not signed by*

*Mr. Namand*

*per RWK*

*4/17/63*

*John  
McGB*

SECRET

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

I note that George Ball has recommended consideration of an Indian Ocean task force as one of the matters arising out of his visit to Pakistan. You recall my previous interest in this matter.

One reason for my interest is the multiplicity of political as well as military purposes such a task force might serve. As I see it, it would provide tangible evidence of US military power in the entire area from Aden to Surabaya. It would seem to give us more flexibility than pre-stockage, for example, while avoiding many of the political complications of getting new base rights or of explaining to the Shah why we pre-stocked in Pakistan rather than Iran.

*George Ball's pre-stockage by counter-ship*

However, I have no desire to prejudice your view of this matter. I realize that putting a new task force in the Indian Ocean, while maintaining existing carrier deployments elsewhere, could be a very expensive proposition. So I have in mind redeployment of existing assets rather than any new capital outlays. It is also my impression that the ASW and counter-air threat to carriers in the Indian Ocean would be far less than in other areas, so that we might make do with less in the way of costly escorting vessels, for example.

Perhaps we ought to regard a carrier task force, certain pre-stockage, and use of CASF less as competing than as complementary options in an area where we probably need much more quickly deployable power than is presently available. I am rather concerned about this chink in our deterrent armor.

SECRET