

25 October 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

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1. It was my understanding that Mr. McNamara had expressed opposition to the proposal that a three-star position be established here in the Agency in Mr. Bross' shop to cover the assignment of General [ ] and that Mr. McNamara had stated that this was a gambit by the military to get people promoted when they did not have slots for them and then retain them at that grade, and further that he had turned down or was sitting on a number of such requests, some of which were more compelling than [ ]

2. My sources tell me that since Mr. McNamara has been Secretary of Defense he has turned down only one request from the Army and that the Army has no requests pending. He turned down one request from the Air Forces early in his tenure and subsequently approved it upon reclama. An informal request (not in writing) on a sounding-out basis by Secretary Zuckert or one of his assistants was turned down by McNamara. The Air Forces have no requests pending. I do not have an adequate penetration of the Navy but I am reasonably certain from my Army and Air Force sources that the situation is no different and the probability is that they do not have any requests pending and if turned down at all it has only been once or twice.

3. Finally, it is statutorily illegal to maintain an officer at three-star or four-star rank unless he is assigned to a position for which the President has designated as calling for that rank. The Services are forced to drop to Major General any Lieutenant General who is not occupying a three-star position. This was done in the case of Admiral McDonald prior to his becoming CNO and is not an exceptionally unusual procedure. Normally, of course, the officer is picked up and re-promoted when he can be assigned to a properly authorized position.

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4. In view of the foregoing, I think the best move would be for you to explain the situation to Mr. Gilpatric, preferably not using the foregoing rebuttal but asking him to reopen the case with McNamara to get our basic request approved. General [ ] is slated to go to a command job authorizing two stars but I am told he is still very much in the running for the next three-star command assignment that becomes available.

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M. S. C.