

a re-appraisal from both the military and political viewpoints. These developments include the accession of Turkey to NATO, the Anglo-Egyptian dispute, growing Arab unrest in French North Africa, and the Iranian situation.

6. *Would a Seven-power Conference in the Near Future Serve a Useful Purpose?*

Until the political and military objectives of the U.S. in the Middle East are more clearly defined and widely agreed, and until we have a better idea of what the other interested governments, especially the British, expect of the MEC, the question is whether a seven-power conference could achieve the results evidently expected of it. True, the conference is intended to be "preliminary" and is to try to avoid publicity. If, however, it fails to reach agreement (even on an *ad referendum* basis) or if it arouses fundamental differences, the news is bound to leak and the MEC enterprise will benefit least of all among the Arabs at which it is aimed.

*Conclusion*

Mr. Lewis Jones argues, with the support of the majority of the members of the Working Group, that the recommendations in the attached paper are in conformity with U.S. policy toward the Middle East as determined by the highest levels in the Government; further, that the situation in the area dictates this as the best approach to the problem. I have felt bound, however, to put the foregoing questions before you. They really boil down to one question: What is the U.S. stake in the Middle East and is the kind of MEC proposed by the Working Group the best way to defend it?

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*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Politico-Military Adviser,  
Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Daspit)*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] April 24, 1952. <sup>1</sup>

Subject: Discussion of MECO Position Paper--April 24, 1952.

Participants:

Mr. Bruce	Mr. Jessup	Mr. Bonbright
Mr. Matthews	Mr. Nitze	Mr. Byroade
Mr. Nolting	Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Lewis Jones
Mr. Bohlen	Mr. Wadsworth	Mr. Daspit

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum of conversation was prepared on May 9.