

posed memorandum to the French an appropriate expression of United States views.

Sincerely yours,

For the Secretary of State:  
HENRY A. BYROADE  
*Assistant Secretary*

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*Editorial Note*

The First Secretary of the Italian Embassy called at the Department of State on August 6 and 7 to discuss the plans for a Middle East Command or Defense Organization, and express the concern of the Italian Government that it had not been invited to participate. The Italians were concerned because the original Four Powers who had issued the November 1951 Declaration had invited South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia, but not Italy, to study the subject of Middle East defense. (Memorandum of conversation by Collins, August 11; 780.5/8-1152) A memorandum by Adair to Parsons, dated August 8, stated that while no wording in public announcements on the Middle East Defense Organization precluded Italian membership, lack of direct Italian interests in the Middle East meant that Italy had never been considered a possible participant in the Organization. The memorandum suggested that Italian inclinations to join the Organization should be discouraged. EUR officers attempted to do this on the occasion of calls at the Department by the First Secretary of the Italian Embassy on August 14 and September 22.

A Department of State position on this matter was formulated at the working level in a meeting on September 23 between officers of the Office of Western European Affairs (V. Lancing Collins and Stanley B. Wolff) and incorporated into an informal "Memo to Files" by Wolff on September 23. (780.5/9-2352) It stated that the Italians would be kept informed of future developments concerning the Organization that might be of interest to them. It added that the Political-Military Adviser of the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs was strongly opposed to Italian participation in the Organization at that time, but would not oppose additional Western members, including Italy, once the Arab States had joined.

Documentation is in Department of State file 780.5.