

No. 106

780.5/11-1052

*Memorandum of Conversation, by Frank Ortiz of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs*¹

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] November 10, 1952.

Subject: Interim British Reply to U.S. Views on MEDO Approach to Iraq

Participants: Mr. B. A. B. Burrows, Counselor of the British Embassy
NEA—Mr. Jernegan
NE—Mr. Ortiz

Mr. Burrows, Counselor of the British Embassy, called at his request to report on the interim British reaction to our memorandum of November 5² giving our views on the advisability of an approach to Iraq to join the MEDO. Mr. Burrows gave the Department's representatives the following extract from a Foreign Office telegram of November 8 which was indicative of the British reaction to our November 5 note:

"As far as Turkish soundings in Iraq are concerned, the Turkish Government have told us that they have now decided to defer any specific approach until after the Iraqi elections.

"We agree with the State Department that the Egyptian attitude is the key factor and that an approach to Egypt regarding M.E.D.O. is unlikely to produce any positive result unless it is accompanied by proposals for a settlement of the Suez Canal question. We welcome the United States expression of interest in negotiations with Egypt with a view to facilitating an Anglo-Egyptian agreement and we will produce proposals for a settlement for discussion with the Americans as soon as possible.

"As regards the suggestion of a programme of military and economic assistance we consider that such an offer should be linked with acceptance by Egypt of the principle of joint defense and preferably worked out through M.E.D.O. It will be our main inducement to Egypt to co-operate in Middle East defense.

"In the meantime, we propose to continue to try to reach firm agreement with the other Sponsor Powers on the functions and form of M.E.D.O."

Mr. Jernegan, while acknowledging the interim nature of the British reply, pointed out that with respect to the third paragraph of the reply it would not be possible for either the U.K. or the U.S.

¹ This memorandum of conversation was prepared on Nov. 12. An account of the conversation was transmitted in circular telegram 539, Nov. 12, to Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, London, and Paris. (780.5/11-1052)

² *Supra*.