

tioned to their satisfaction. General impression conveyed these reports is that Egyptians planning adopt "neutral" attitude and while willing and eager receive Western assistance would refuse make any public or private commitments in return.

This impression reenforced by recent Egyptian public statements and private conversation new Ambassador here. (See memo of conversation with Jernegan April 24.)²

Realize this may be bargaining position but we are nevertheless concerned at apparent stiffening Egyptian attitude, especially since some of our information indicates intransigent views may be sincerely held by members inner-circle RCC and are not merely reactions to public opinion.

We also wonder whether protestations of desire for peace with Israel might not be simply window dressing to be disregarded once British evacuation achieved.

Would appreciate your analysis in light of above.

DULLES

² Not found in Department of State files, but see the memorandum of conversation, Document 132.

No. 130

700.5/6-152: Circular airgram

*The Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 1, 1953—7:55 p.m.

The following memorandum entitled, "An alternative approach to Middle East Defense Arrangements" describes a possible device for securing Arab cooperation in the form of defense organization agreed by the MEDO sponsors. The memorandum does not now represent a firm U.S. position, but is being forwarded to addressees at this stage in order to expedite the receipt of comments by the Department.

The memorandum is being cleared as a tentative proposal of the Department on which comments by the other sponsors will be invited. After clearance is completed, the Department will communicate by telegraph with Missions in the capitals of the Sponsoring Powers concerning action to be taken.

¹ Drafted by Daspit and cleared by EUR, S/P, and S/S-CR. Sent to Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jidda, Tel Aviv, and Ankara; and repeated to London, Paris, Pretoria, Wellington, Canberra, Karachi, Tripoli, and Rome for Unger.