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*Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Egypt
and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Affairs (Burdett)*

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] May 4, 1953.

Subject: Call of Egyptian Ambassador

Participants: Dr. Ahmed Hussein, Egyptian Ambassador Designate
NEA—Mr. Byroade
NE—Mr. Burdett

The Egyptian Ambassador Designate called on Mr. Byroade for a discussion of the current talks with the U.K. and Middle East defense. The Ambassador stated he held a five-hour conference with General Naguib and leading members of the Revolutionary Command Council immediately before departing from Cairo, and since has had several telephone conversations with his Government. He intends to leave for Cairo May 7 and will report on his discussions with U.S. officials.

Dr. Hussein made the following points:

1. The Naguib Government has the support of the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian people. Opponents consist only of communists and disgruntled landlords. There is no possible alternative. Only the Army is capable of effecting a change and another coup would lead to a series of unstable military governments. General Naguib is now accused of taking too conciliatory a stand in his relations with the West and of being pro-American.

2. MEDO or a similar organization is completely unacceptable to Egypt. General Naguib instructed him to stress the above point. MEDO was originally presented at a bad psychological moment. The Revolutionary Command Council cannot afford to appear before the Egyptian public less intent on achieving Egypt's national aspirations than previous governments. The Revolutionary Command Council is convinced that acceptance of any type of MEDO would be "suicide". Any arrangement replacing British forces by those of other Western countries would be merely a continuation of occupation in another form.

3. Egypt hates communism and realizes it would never be attacked by the West. In its own self interest it would resist any aggression on its territory. Egypt would welcome assistance from the West in building up its military strength to increase its defense capabilities.

4. Arrangement on the following lines could be worked out:

- a. Unconditional evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone Base.
- b. Immediate talks concerning Middle East defense involving building up the strength of the area both militarily and economically.