

No. 224

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*The Chargé in Iraq (Ireland) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

BAGHDAD, August 23, 1954—4 p. m.

110. Embassy aware that Iraqi-Egyptian proposals regional defense scheme (Embassy's 105, August 22)² lack essential details, propose undertakings without indicating how they may be implemented, and give no indication exact degree of agreement between Iraq and Egypt re their firm intentions. Proposals are also disappointing in light of Nuri's previous forthright support for Turkish-Pakistani pact (Embassy's 590, April 5).³ Nevertheless, proposals have merit of committing Egypt to cooperation with West, of being plan indigenously initiated by countries in area, and of opening prospect accomplishing our policy objectives in this area along lines discussed in NIE 30-54.⁴

Department will, therefore, doubtless wish to give its careful consideration to proposals for these and for additional reasons below:

1. Plan possesses valuable psychological advantages in Arab States because of its indigenous origin.

2. Egypt and Iraq have taken US and UK into their confidence from the beginning. Outright rejection by US could cause high resentment, particularly should UK consider participation.

3. Nuri genuinely wants our ideas on modifications text ACSF. Opportunity thus given US to shape pact and to prevent it at least from having unacceptable features whether or not we adhere. Moreover, Iraqi and Egyptian reaction to our specific suggestions should provide measure of their real willingness to work toward effective regional defense organization.

4. Our presence as member or associate in new grouping would enable us, in company with other non-Arab participants, to restrain and guide Arabs re Israel more effectively than heretofore and should thereby allay fears of Israel.

5. If new pact really provides basis for peace with Israel, attention whole area could then be turned toward Soviet threat. Although Iraqi-Egyptian conditions re peace with Israel as given by Nuri still represent obstacle, acknowledgement of necessity for peace with Israel deserves recognition and encouragement.

6. Turkish-Pakistani pact will continue to exist. If new scheme bogs down after reasonable period of time we would still be in strong position to argue forcefully that, in view unsuccessful Egyptian and Iraqi efforts to create regional defense group including

¹ Repeated to Cairo, Ankara, Karachi, London, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Jidda, Jerusalem, Tehran, Tripoli, and Tel Aviv.

² *Supra*.

³ Document 202.

⁴ Document 209.