

Encl JG.

SECRET

JE 1192 / 640 G

BRIEF FOR TRIPARTITE TALKS

Item 7. Egypt: Defence Negotiations

The Secretary of State will wish to give both Mr. Dulles and Monsieur Bidault an account of the talks with Egypt. The paper at Annex A gives a resumé.

2. He may wish to discuss individually with Mr. Dulles and Monsieur Bidault points noted in the papers at Annex B and Annex C respectively.

3. He may wish to ask Mr. Dulles to intervene with the Egyptians at once:

- (i) to indicate firm support for our terms on the availability of the Base; and
- (ii) to see that the Egyptians do not break off negotiations after the meeting scheduled for October 17.

[E. B. Bradley]

October 14, 1953

Returned by P.U.S.D. (who have made copies).

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Summary Account of Egyptian Negotiations

Draft.

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1. We have reached, or are close to, agreement in principle on the following points:-

- (i) The reference to navigation of the Suez Canal;
- (ii) Air matters;
- (iii) The functions of the Egyptian Base Commander and his British Assistant Base Commander;
- (iv) The wearing of uniform.

2. We believe it should be possible to reach agreement in principle, with a little bit of give on both sides, on:-

- (i) The organisation for maintenance of the Base;
- (ii) The duration of the Agreement;
- (iii) The period of withdrawal of British troops.

3. There remains the crucial question of the conditions under which the Base would be made available to the United Kingdom and her allies. The Egyptians will now only agree to availability in the event of an attack on a State party to the Arab Collective Security Pact, and in all other cases they ^{say they will} ~~could~~ only agree to consultation. The Egyptians having refused reactivation in the event of a major war, we thought we had got them to agree to make the Base available "in the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression". They have, however, now said that they cannot agree to this. We are therefore wide apart on the most important point.

4. The meeting on October 17 is regarded by the Egyptians as decisive. The Egyptians have told us that, if no agreement in principle is in sight, then they will break off negotiations again. We, for our part, have told them that the responsibility for a break will rest on them. We should, of course, in such an eventuality be obliged to stand pat on our position under the 1936 Treaty and look to our defences.

5. A more detailed summary of individual points is in the paper at [Flag A].

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EGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS(1/p) Note for bilateral talk with Mr. Dulles

Draft.

The Washington talks.

1. General Sir Brian Robertson accompanied Lord Salisbury at the Washington talks in July and was able to give Mr. Dulles a first hand account of the situation. Mr. Dulles had himself recently visited Cairo and returned disappointed with the Egyptians, whom he had hoped to be able to build up to be the corner-stone of Middle East defence. Mr. Dulles had given the Egyptians a salutary shock by telling them that the United States was withholding the \$ 11 million worth of arms, which they were expecting from the United States; and this, combined with our own firmness, was responsible for the Egyptian Government calling off their terrorist attacks and resuming talks.

2. Prior to the Washington talks, the Americans had never thought we would get an agreement based on Case A, that is to say one which gave us technical control of our own installations. Nor did they ever think we would get one lasting more than three years. At the time of the Washington talks our negotiations were again in suspense but General Neguib had, in a personal letter to President Eisenhower dated July 10, outlined the conditions under which he would resume: in this Neguib made it clear that Egypt would require substantial economic and military aid as the price of settlement. The Americans were still in a mediatory rôle,

/but

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

but more conscious than before of their power to help bring the Egyptians into the anti-Communist defence system. As Mr. Dulles himself put it (Record: July 14) "one of the reasons why the United States Government hesitated to back the British was that it seemed to Americans that the British attitude was more uncompromising than the new conditions in the Middle East warranted".

3. On the issue of availability of the Base, Mr. Bedell Smith (Record: July 11) "emphasized that the United States took a severely practical view of the reactivation of the Base since the national security of the United States as well as Britain and many others might be dependent on it." Later, however, speaking personally to Sir R. Makins, Mr. Bedell Smith counselled us not to rely too much on American support for precisely worded terms on availability, ^{and} though he implied that if a situation were produced in which the Base had to be reactivated they would be with us all the way.

More recent history

4. Since the Washington talks the United States Government have let us play the hand, confining themselves to interventions to stop the Egyptians from precipitate action and in general support of our main aims. They have faithfully kept to their undertaking not to supply arms under present circumstances. The Egyptians still go round to them for sympathy if they think they can induce the United States Government to persuade us to change our minds.

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IMMEDIATE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

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OUTFILE

October 9, 1953.

Next negotiations - availability

Our formula provides for reactivation of the base "in the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression" (see Cairo telegram number 1607, paragraph 1 (b)). The purpose of this phrase is to commit the Egyptians to permitting reactivation of the base in the event of a global war.

2. The Egyptians have rejected our formula and proposed a redraft (see Cairo telegram number 1713 of October 7) that fails to meet our point.

3. General Robertson understands very clearly that we have no disposition to make any concession.

4. Nevertheless, it may be that if the Egyptians show any signs of coming round, some rearrangement of our text might help them to give in gracefully. The following text might conceivably serve:

"In the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression if, in the light of the general situation, either party consider the according

Brigadier R. G. Ewbank, D.S.O.,
Chiefs of Staff Secretariat,
Ministry of Defence.

of/

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of such facilities essential for the society of the Middle East".

5. This formula gives nothing vital away. In particular it does not concede what the Egyptians want namely that they should be committed only to consultation and not to reactivation outright, in the event of a global war. It also has the additional advantage of localising to some extent the conditions under which we should have the right of reactivation. This will help to relieve Egyptian fears that we might want to make the base available in the event of, for example, another Korean war.

6. Subject to the views of the Chiefs of Staff, we should like to authorise our Delegation to use this text. We would add that there would seem to be no point in their doing so until it became clear that the Egyptians had decided to concede our requirements in substance, and were merely looking for a face-saver.

7. We should be grateful if their views could be obtained urgently, if possible today.

(K. B. Boothby)

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JR1192/026

The circulation of this paper has been strictly limited.

It is issued for the personal use of Mr R. G. Mackworth Young

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C.O.S. (53)507

9th OCTOBER, 1953

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

EGYPT NEGOTIATIONS - AVAILABILITY

Copy of a letter dated 9th October, 1953 from the Foreign Office to the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee

[Handwritten initials: HW]

Our formula provides for reactivation of the base "in the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression" (see Cairo telegram number 1607, paragraph 1(b)). The purpose of this phrase is to commit the Egyptians to permitting reactivation of the base in the event of a global war.

2. The Egyptians have rejected our formula and proposed a redraft (see Cairo telegram number 1412 of October 7) that fails to meet our point.

3. General Robertson understands very clearly that we have no disposition to make any concession.

4. Nevertheless, it may be that if the Egyptians show any signs of coming round, some rearrangement of our text might help them to give in gracefully. The following text might conceivably serve:

"In the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression if, in the light of the general situation, either party consider the according of such facilities essential for the safety of the Middle East".

5. This formula gives nothing vital away. In particular it does not concede what the Egyptians want, namely that they should be committed only to consultation and not to reactivation outright in the event of a global war. It also has the additional advantage of localising to some extent the conditions under which we should have the right of reactivation. This will help to relieve Egyptian fears that we might want to make the base available in the event of, for example, another Korean war.

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7. We should be grateful if their views could be obtained urgently, if possible today.

(Signed) R.C. MACKWORTH-YOUNG.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, S.W.1.,

9TH OCTOBER, 1953.

TOP SECRETExtract from Foreign Office Telegram
to Cairo, Number 1607

(1) In the event of -

United Nations action to resist an act of aggression

or

An attack by an outside power on Egypt;

or

An attack by an outside power on any country
which is a party to the Arab Mutual Security
Pact;

Egypt will afford to the United Kingdom all such facilities as may be necessary to place the base on a war footing and to operate it efficiently for the benefit of H.M. Forces and other friendly forces. These facilities will include the use of Egyptian ports by H.M. Naval Forces and merchant shipping.

(ii) In the event of an attack on Turkey or Persia or in the event of a threat of an attack on any of the above mentioned countries there shall be immediate consultation between the United Kingdom and Egypt.

TELEPHONE YOULOBAVE 224.

MIDDLETON HALL
BAKEWELL
DERBYSHIRE.

JE1192/512 4 October 53

My dear Anthony

I am delighted that you are well enough to be back at your office and much hope you will make your work fit in with your stomach and have in mind that even a little extra needs to be run in gently!

I have been asked to meet

Some people who are disturbed
about Suez Canal news and
rumours, at 5.30 on Tuesday.

I was coming to London by
a train arriving at 3.20 could
I possibly see you for a matter
of an hour between those times?
If that's not convenient I
could cancel a morning date
here and arrive in London 11.35.

If you can't fit me in
at all I shall of course perfectly

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JE.1192/512(B)

African Department

Captain Waterhouse, M.P. came to see me this afternoon to talk about Egypt. He told me that a group of interested political bodies were due to meet tomorrow under the Chairmanship of Leo Amery to discuss the situation in the light of the recent press rumours about the course of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. Could I tell him anything which he could pass on to this meeting? Or if not, something for his private ear. I said that I would prefer that he should tell the meeting very little, since there were still a number of important matters outstanding in our negotiations. The less said the better therefore for the time being. I should prefer that he would merely say that negotiations were still proceeding; the Egyptians had come a considerable way to meet us on the main questions of principle, but that they would have to come some way further on the matters still outstanding. We for our part would not depart from the position taken by the Prime Minister and the Minister of State with the Conservative Foreign Affairs Committee, which implied that there were certain minimum conditions which we should regard as a breaking point.

For Captain Waterhouse's private ear I said that the main principle upon which the Egyptians had met us was that of the management of the base, and the hiring and firing of the technicians. He would recall that when the Minister of State last dealt with the matter in the House on May 12th, the Egyptians had refused to concede this principle to us. They had since done so. Matters still outstanding were duration, availability and uniforms. We were pretty near agreement on the latter two points and I had reason to hope that we would eventually get the Egyptians to come along on duration, though their original offers on this issue had been quite unacceptable.

The effect of a bad agreement on the Sudan elections.

Captain Waterhouse seemed somewhat reassured about this, though he treated me to his usual speech about British prestige, Abadan, and ~~the Sudan and so forth~~. I of course made the obvious points about expense of the base, and the endless commitments into which we might be drawn if we did not make some agreement. I added that General Robertson, who, he would agree, was of all people the last to advocate "giving away" the Canal base, or to fall victim to Egyptian threats or blandishments, was fairly confident that the Egyptians were now ready to co-operate in honouring an agreement and in supporting a Middle-East defence arrangement, provided they were not driven beyond certain limits.

Copies:
Private Secretary
Mr. Allen

AN
Anthony Nutting
6th October, 1953.

OUTFILE

October 20, 1953.

(JE 1192/512)

Many thanks for your letter of October 4 and your good wishes on my return to work.

I am sorry that it was impossible for me to find time to see you on October 6 but I feel sure that you will have obtained all the information you wanted from Tony Nutting. It only remains for me to assure you that we are very conscious of the importance of a workable agreement over the Canal base. We should not sacrifice our agreed minimum conditions for the sake of Egyptian goodwill, essential though we believe this to be.

(Sgd.) ANTHONY EDEN

Captain Charles Waterhouse, M.P.,
Middleton Hall,
Bakewell.

6th October, 1953.

The Editor,
"THE TIMES",
London, E.C.4.

Sir,

The importance of the Suez area as a military and air base and of the Canal as an international waterway, have, rightly, been stressed by many of your correspondents, but the actions of successive Egyptian Governments in denouncing a treaty freely entered into and in inciting mob violence have given the present issue an even greater significance.

The eyes of the Eastern Mediterranean, of Asia Minor, and of Northern and Central Africa are focussed on these few square miles of land which before our coming were a strip of sand as barren as Sahara. They watch to see if Britain has the energy, as undoubtedly she has the power, to stand firm by her duties and her treaties; or if, wearied by the stresses and sacrifices of world leadership she has decided to throw in the sponge and assume an international position more in accord with her geography than with her history. Leaders of Arab countries conform to the present trend towards nationalism, have thought it proper to support Egypt with their voices, but they are brave peoples who respect courage and there are many indications that they would welcome a manifestation of British phlegm.

The House and the country were reassured by the Prime Minister's strong but temperate declaration during the Foreign Affairs debate in the Spring, but since then Mr. Churchill has been unwell, Mr. Eden seriously ill, and, ~~It is widely believed,~~ modified instructions were given to Sir Brian Robertson when he returned to London recently. Egyptian sources have put it about that Britain is prepared to move her armed Forces within eighteen months, to leave 4,000 un-uniformed mechanics under Egyptian command for a further three years, at the end of which we will hand over bases, stores and munitions intact to the Egyptians - a useful present should she still be inclined to hasten the Jews out of Israel. If the power to enforce justice is removed,

/Justice

/removed

Justice herself will assuredly disappear.

Meanwhile the election campaign in the Sudan is in full swing. On a flagrant breach of promise made on the signature of the Agreement last November, the Egyptian propaganda machine has been turned on to the full in broadcast, press and bribe. Untruths repeated loud and often without contradiction gain credence, and there is a real danger that overwhelmed by such a spate, Sudanese electors may, to their own destruction, return to their Parliament a majority prepared to hand their country over to Egyptian misrule and exploitation. A declaration that, in all essentials, the Government still stand by the Prime Minister's statement would remove doubts at home and allay fears abroad.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

CONFIDENTIAL

(10033/02/530)

British Middle East Office,
Political Division,
G.H.Q., M.E.L.F. 17.

October 2, 1953.

Gerry Duke and, perhaps, Tom Bromley will have given you their impressions of Wednesday's trip with Mr. Congressman Froughty and company. It was a pity that the aircraft arrived late and that their tour after lunch had to be a bit curtailed. Colonel Galloway, who took them round, said that he thought on the whole they were impressed with the size of the place; they asked a lot of questions about why it was necessary to have a base at all and I am only sorry that Mr. Congressman Smith did not come down too after his outburst last July.

2. On the other hand, all the accounts of Senator Knowland's visit the day before were more encouraging. He arrived here, apparently, without a clue of the size or purpose of the base, expressed gratifying interest and frankly said that he had no idea of the size of our commitment here. It is not, of course, possible to convert the unconvertible but I have a feeling that in a majority of cases American criticism is based on a lack of understanding of the purpose of the base and certainly a lack of understanding of its size and scope. We are, therefore, only too glad to have people like this down here though naturally we would like to have a little bit more notice than we had on these two occasions. The Services here played up, as usual, extraordinarily well.

I am sending a copy of this letter to African Department and to the Chancery at Washington.

(H. S. Stephenson)

C. B. Duke, Esq., C.I.E., D.B.E.,
H.M. Embassy,
CAIRO

~~TOP SECRET~~
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JE 1192 / 514 JE

Brief for Minister of State's Meeting with
Egyptian Ambassador a.m. Tuesday (October 6)

The Department have been unable to discover from the Egyptian Embassy whether Mr. Hakki wishes to raise any specific point, but assume that his request to see the Secretary of State was simply to make contact with him after his return.

2. It is, however, likely that he will wish to discuss the Cairo talks. The Department suggest that the Minister of State should in general follow the line taken by Lord Salisbury with Mr. Hakki on September 30 - that it would be crossing wires for him to embark on a discussion of the subject-matter of the negotiations being handled by our delegation in Cairo. It might, however, be useful if Mr. Hakki were to report something to Cairo of the views here of the present state of the game, and the Minister of State could therefore make the following points:

- Flag A
- (i) We are disappointed at the way in which the Egyptian side have gone back on various points agreed during the discussions.
 - (ii) We are at a loss to know what the Egyptian Government think they can gain by leaking to the press inaccurate accounts of the course of the talks. Insofar as they claim that we have agreed to what we have not, they merely make agreement less likely. Such progress as has been made has undoubtedly been helped by the absence of press speculation at an earlier stage.

3. Attached hereto are copies of:

- (a) A submission to the Secretary of State on the present state of negotiations. (*§2 summarizes the position*).
- (b) A submission on Egyptian leaks to the press. (*§1 & 2 state the position*).

E. B. Boothby

October 5, 1953

P. S. to Minister of State.

The Ambassador spent nearly an hour with the Minister of State this morning. Record now being typed.

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[Signature]
6:10

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(a)

TOP SECRET

EGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS

Cairo telegrams 1388 - 1391
and 1396

The negotiations have now reached a stage at which, in the view of our delegation, the Egyptians may move quickly either towards a final overall decision to agree in principle, or towards a break. It is therefore necessary to reconsider urgently the differences between the Egyptians and ourselves. In the meanwhile, the delegation might at their next meeting on October 7, proceed on the lines suggested in Cairo telegram number 1396, a draft reply to which is submitted.

2. The following are our differences: -

(a) Period of withdrawal

The Egyptians are agreed with us on an eighteen months' withdrawal period, but they insist that it should start from the signature of our Agreement in principle. *We insist that it should start from Agreement in detail.*

(b) Availability of the base

X | The Egyptians will now only agree to availability in the event of an attack on a State party to the Arab Collective Security Pact, and that in all other cases they could only agree to consultation. The Egyptians having previously refused reactivation in the event of a major war, we thought we had got them to agree to make the base available in the event of the United Nations taking action to repel aggression. We have tried, and failed, to maintain Egyptian adherence to this principle and we are still wide apart.

(c) Uniform

The Egyptians have said they would meet us to the extent of admitting that British technicians

left/

left in the Canal Zone after the withdrawal of the combatant troops should wear a dress which would be uniform, tidy, with distinctions showing rank, and with evidence of the fact that the men were servants of the Crown. We, for our part, insisted that they should wear ordinary uniform, which we are ready to modify to the extent of wearing a special armband. The Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East have, however, pointed out that in practice technicians in the Canal Zone workshops normally only wear overalls or khaki drill when on duty, and civilian clothes when off duty. This difference therefore appears to be less in reality than it would seem on the surface.

(d) Air Staging Post

The Egyptians will not accept our requirements for an air staging post.

(e) Suez Canal

On the Suez Canal, the Egyptians would not accept the clause for the preamble put forward by the Cabinet Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Crookshank, but have suggested a draft, which does not materially differ, to the effect that:

"The Governments of Egypt and the United Kingdom having in mind the 1888 Convention guaranteeing freedom of navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal which recognises that the Suez Canal is an integral part of Egypt and an international means of communication of economic, commercial and strategic importance".

The Egyptians would not accept a clause in the substantive part of the Agreement on this subject, but the delegation were not instructed to insist on this point.

(f) Maintenance of the base

On September 23, the Egyptians said that they might

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agree to the following: -

- (i) eighteen months period of withdrawal to start from agreement in principle;
- (ii) 4,000 technicians for the following three years;
- (iii) during the next one and a half years there would be a progressive reduction from 4,000 technicians to a small number of "inspectors".

We still want a seven year agreement from the time of signature (or ratification). We also have insufficient evidence of the Egyptian conception of the functions of "inspectors" to know if the arrangements they propose for the final period would be adequate, supposing we were to come to terms on the duration of the Agreement.

(g) Functions of Base Commander and his British Assistant

We have now given the delegation our views on a draft which they submitted on this question, and they are in a position to explore the Egyptians' views further on the basis of it. We do not yet know what differences there may still be.

(h) Duration of Agreement

We say seven years, and the Egyptians six.

3. The delegation now propose at their meeting on October 7 to explore further the Egyptians' attitude on (f), (g) and (h) above in order that, if a break has to occur, it can be attributed to a point of substance, and the Egyptians cannot attribute it to something about which they can make a case for showing us unreasonable.

The/

The position is therefore held, if the draft telegram attached is approved, until after the next Cabinet meeting on October 7, but the Cabinet may wish to be told at that meeting the extent to which agreement has been reached on the lines of paragraph 2 above.

4. Of the outstanding matters, it is to be hoped that the Cabinet will allow our delegation to reach agreement in principle on the Egyptian formula on the Suez Canal, which they may wish to have examined by the Cabinet Committee.

5. In regard to uniform, the Cabinet may wish to be aware of the views of the Commanders-in-Chief (Middle East). Meanwhile, the Department will explore with the War Office and the Ministry of Defence the extent to which our differences with the Egyptians can be ^{removed} ~~met~~ by codifying existing practice.

6. The withdrawal of troops would, on existing planning, start soon after the agreement in principle, and we might therefore find means of meeting the Egyptians on the basis of an understanding on this point. Unless, however, the Service authorities are in favour of it, the Department would not recommend our agreeing to the Egyptian suggestion unless there were a clear proviso that we would not be pinned down to an eighteen month period if the conclusion of the final settlement were delayed for a prolonged period, or if the Egyptians went back on any of the things that they had agreed to in principle.

7. The air staging post being essential to our global strategy, there can be no compromise on this point. It would be one on which we could expect to have the full sympathy of the United States Government if we break on it.

8. On availability, which is perhaps the most crucial point of all, we shall have to be careful not to manoeuvre for a break on this point unless we can clearly show the United States Government and our Commonwealth partners in the Middle East that the Egyptian case is utterly unreasonable. Considering the looseness of the

obligations/

obligations of member states of the United Nations to carry out United Nations recommendations to meet aggression, and considering that even in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, action by member states in support of one another is not automatic, Egyptian insistence upon consultation before reactivation of the base could be shown to be not unreasonable. Moreover, Egyptian concern with the conditions for reactivation should bear some relation to the safety of the Middle East as a position with which one can sympathise. The Department therefore suggest two further possible formulae on this question which might be put to the Cabinet at the meeting on October 7 before consideration at a later meeting. Drafts are attached.

9. Conclusions

- (1) That the delegation be instructed to act in accordance with their telegram number 1396 forthwith.
- (2) That Cabinet approval be sought for agreement to the Egyptian formula on the Suez Canal.
- (3) That we await the outcome of the delegation's further talks with the Egyptians on the maintenance of the base and the duration of the Agreement, before deciding upon our final breaking points.
- (4) That in the meanwhile further consideration be given to outstanding matters on the lines of paragraphs 3 - 8 above.

October 5, 1953.

SECRETEGYPTIAN PUBLICITY LEAKS

In the course of the past few days, the Egyptians have been deliberately announcing to foreign correspondents, particularly British and American correspondents, fictitious information regarding points upon which we are alleged to have reached agreement. Among other things they have said that we have agreed that technicians should wear civilian clothes. They have implied that the availability clause to which we have agreed is confined to making the base available in the event of an attack upon Egypt or one of the other Arab States.

2. The "high Egyptian authority" quoted by all correspondents is identified as Major Salem, the Minister of National Guidance. An A.P. report has named him as this source.

3. Mr. Hankey has already remonstrated regarding these leakages from the Egyptian side, but they have now become so serious that we should consider taking some counter action. This could take the form either of

- (a) making a complete statement of the points agreed and the points outstanding; or
- (b) making a simple warning to the press that statements on the course of the negotiations coming from Egyptian official sources cannot be regarded as necessarily being accurate.

4. In the meanwhile, the News Department are warning correspondents off the Reuter report to the effect that we have agreed to civilian clothes for the officials, but have otherwise refused to be drawn.

5. Perhaps before we take either of the courses suggested in paragraph 3 above, we should instruct Mr. Hankey to

put/

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put the position squarely to the Egyptians and tell them what
we propose to do.

October 1, 1953.

Five Pines,

Weald Road,

Sevenoaks,

Kent.

4th October, 1953.

Dear Mr. Rogers,

Forgive me for troubling you, I will be as brief as possible but there are two items of interest which are causing me considerable concern. They are as follows:

- I. The eventual surrender of our military base to the Egyptian Government. My case is covered by Lord Hailsham's article in the 'Evening Standard' which I am enclosing.

.....
(signed) D. Partridge.

★ I CALL ON ★ the Tories —

THIS week some six thousand delegates to the Tory Conference and their camp followers will be assembling at Margate to discuss 212 more or less innocuous resolutions.

These resolutions, as is usual when the party is in office, embrace almost the whole range of political platitude from the merely pompous to the openly hypocritical. It is evident that those who are responsible for thinking these things up in advance prefer their resolutions like flavoured tea, weak with plenty of milk and sugar.

It is, therefore, quite unlikely that the following emergency resolution will appear on the conference agenda:

BRITISH EMPIRE: SELL-OUT. That this conference congratulates HM Government on the subject surrender of vital British interests to an Egyptian military dictatorship at the instigation of the American State Department.

Nevertheless, I could wish that some young man with fire in his belly and his career in his hand, would stride forward to the rostrum and rouse the Tory Levantine before it is too late.

For, while the conference is busy approving its sweetly flavoured sentiments at Margate, the officials at the Foreign Office with subject surrender in their souls will be busy putting the finishing touches to a negotiation which will accordingly become known as the biggest sell-out in British Imperial History.

They are preparing to abandon the Suez Canal Base to the immediate military dictatorship General Neguib, and every attempt is being made to explain and justify this surrender to the British public.

The build-up

Venerable Service chiefs are already being disoriented from honourable retirement orders to write letters to the Times. Parliament is not in session, and it is doubtful if even the party conference will be informed.

The Canal is being whittled away, bit by bit, and is no longer the important base it was, and if not actually indefensible, can hardly be defended from Beneath the Butter Lakes.

Speakers are already being written for Ministers pointing out that, despite possession of the Canal in the last war, we lost command of the Mediterranean for nearly two years, and that, in any event, what we really need is a base somewhere else which will be much nearer the possible theatre of operations in a third world war.

In other words, it will be said that the battle of Alamein and the siege of Tobruk were all about nothing, and so long as Turkey is friendly, we can afford to surrender to Neguib. The trouble is that there is no evidence that we are getting a base anywhere else, or that if we did we should be allowed to keep it.

Rightly or wrongly, these same Service Chiefs have actively procured the exodus of millions of public money since the end of the war to equip the very base which they are now so keen to hand over. It is unlikely that they would have done this had they believed before pressure was brought to bear that it was of as little count as they now argue it to be.

Disasters

And, in arguing it to be worthless, they ignore the whole character of Mediterranean politics.

Experience of the last seven disastrous years would, one would have thought, have shown conclusively that such successive military defeat or diplomatic withdrawal has been followed by further and more uncompromising demands from fresh quarters, the only logical conclusion of which is the complete surrender by the United Kingdom of all its responsibilities abroad to a welter of petty nationalisms, each unable to defend itself against a great power, hankering to one another, and unwilling to co-operate together in a common system of collective security.

What reason, it may be asked, is there to suppose that withdrawal from the Suez base will not be followed by still further demands to undermine the prestige and power of the British? Perhaps the Commonwealth

STOP THIS SELL-OUT TO NEGUIB!

LORD HAILSHAM UNCOVERS THE QUESTION THEY WILL NOT RAISE AT MARGATE

Relations Office can tell us what exactly is happening to Malta at the moment? And why is Franco gradually stepping up his propaganda in Gibraltar, in continuous British occupation without much complaint for about 250 years? Has it, perhaps, something to do with his recently completed alliance with the United States? Is the State Department presently going to tell the Foreign Office when we are out of Suez that we do not need Gibraltar any more, and that as possession of Malta, the George Cross Island, did not ensure free passage of the Mediterranean in 1941 and 1942, it ought to be handed over to some other military dictatorship in the interests of the defence of democracy?

Wrong, wrong

For it must be stated very plainly that even since the middle of the war the policy of the American Government to the Mediterranean has been almost always hostile to British interests and almost always entirely wrong. All through the Vichy regime, and with only one honourable exception, the State Department staffed their Middle Eastern Consulates with anti-British and pro-Vichy Consuls.

In the Communist revolt in Greece, the Americans ostentatiously left us to fight the battle of liberation without their help. Yet, if the battle had been lost, both Greece and Yugoslavia would have been lost to the Communists.

America stood by and allowed New York to finance the Zionists while we were kicking out of Palestine, and because we had been kicked out of Palestine without an effective

blow, Mosaddeq thereafter deprived us without compensation of our legitimate interests in Persian oil. And of what use was our alliance with Washington in that bit of bad business? Can anyone seriously doubt that if our American ally had urged us to stand firm we should have put our troops ashore at Abadan? Humour has it that even Mr. Blinwell and the subject Motion were prepared to advise the Cabinet to take this course. If we had stood firm at Abadan it is pretty certain that we would never have had all this nonsense with the upstart Neguib over the Canal.

Which?

American democracy is, of course, entitled to choose its own friends. But which set of friends does it prefer, a group of military dictators like Mosaddeq, Neguib and Franco, or the British people? Reflecting calmly on the present status of Mosaddeq, it may possibly occur to Washington that, speaking only on the lowest plane, military dictators have a nasty habit of coming unstuck.

Of this, however, both Whitehall and Washington may assure themselves. However desirable, British and American friendship will never survive the destruction

Malaya, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand all depend upon the retention of our interests in the Mediterranean and particularly in the Suez Canal area. If war should come with a major Power, what Egyptian Government would dare to permit the entry of our troops, whether or not the terms of surrender require them to do so? Give up our interests in the Mediterranean and the British Commonwealth, ceased to be a viable political or strategic unit.

No doubt, in sharp contrast with this upon what strip of desert these communications are secured so long as they are strongly held. But ejected from Palestine, displaced to Egypt, and what strip of desert shall we possess the taxpayers' millions of pounds worth? And how long shall we be allowed to stay?

On Saturday afternoon thousands will anxiously await Sir Winston Churchill's first big speech since his illness in June. But the question is, will he come back wearing a big stick, or carrying an umbrella. Upon the answer to this question the whole future of our island may depend.

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NEGUIB

The son of our Mother.

O 371 | 102817

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CUT FILE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

October 15, 1953.

(JS 1192/519)

Dear Miss Oxley

Thank you for your letter of October 7, enclosing an extract from a letter of one of Mr. Rodgers' constituents, Mr. D. Partridge.

I do not think I can do better at this stage than refer you to Lord Salisbury's speech at Margate on Friday of last week for all the material you will need to refute the substance of Lord Hailsham's article in the Evening Standard.

Yours Sincerely

Sgd. (J. E. Killick)

Miss Elizabeth Oxley,
40, Berkeley Square,
London, W.1.

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TOP SECRET

APPENDIX A

Requirements in MER/P(53)9 Revise

| <u>Serial</u> | <u>Requirement</u> | <u>Reference</u> |
|---------------|--|---|
| 1. | To maintain the base in such a state that it can be used immediately on the outbreak of war. To do this all depots, installations, camps, signal rail and road communications and public utilities required during the first three months of war must be brought up to a proper standard of maintenance and either kept in use or placed on a proper care and maintenance basis. | page 6, para 1 page 43, para 2 (g) |
| 2. | To be able to use our stocks of medical stores and certain items of ordnance (including ammunition) and engineer stores to maintain certain of our forces remaining in the Middle East. This would include in particular the maintenance of our forces in Jordan and the Arab Legion. | page 6 para 2 page 8 para 2 page 43 para 2 (a), (c), (d) & (e) |
| 3. | For a sufficient reserve of petroleum products to be retained and turned over: to do this it will be essential to retain, through Shell Company, the use of existing tankage in Egypt. The Royal Navy would require the use of existing commercial oil storage facilities and pipelines. | page 6 para 3 page 8 para 3 |

| <u>Serial</u> | <u>Requirement</u> | <u>Reference</u> |
|---------------|---|---|
| 4. | To be able to retain and turn over stocks of supplies sufficient to feed certain of our forces remaining in the Middle East. | page 8 para 4 page 43 para 2 (d) and (e) |
| 5. | To maintain in the base certain mobilization equipment and war reserves for the Army and Air Forces in the Middle East, including the right to turn over stocks. To do this we must be free to move vehicles, equipment and stores into, out of, and within the Canal Zone. | page 7 para 2 page 8 para 5 page 43 para 2(f) |
| 6. | To be able to use 2 Base Workshop REME for the base repair and overhaul of vehicles and equipment from our forces remaining in the Middle East, together with the necessary RACC installations to supply it and to hold vehicles and equipment for repair. | page 8 para 6 page 43 para 2(b) |
| 7. | An allied manned air staging post would be maintained in Egypt. | page 6 para 6 |
| 8. | Depots and installations within the base to be run and controlled on the analogy of our base in Belgium or the United States base in the United Kingdom. | page 6 para 1 |
| 9. | All the main installations and depots will be commanded by a British Officer with a British staff. | page 56 para 2 |
| 10. | The Egyptian base area Commander would not initiate instructions of a technical or policy nature. | page 56 para 3(b) |

The Last PeriodMemorandum by Brigadier Dove

1. I attach at Appendix A the requirements for the base given in the brief.
2. During the period following withdrawal, and always provided that we can get full Egyptian cooperation, we can obtain these requirements on the following British personnel, as a bare minimum:-

| | |
|------|-------------|
| Army | 3200 |
| RAF | 600 |
| | <u>3800</u> |

The difference between this and 4,000 gives a reserve for contingencies.

3. In the last period we can obtain these requirements on the following British personnel:-

| | |
|------|-------------|
| Army | 1950 |
| RAF | 550 |
| | <u>2500</u> |

If we do not get a British run air staging post the RAF requirements will be reduced, and the total will become 2050.

4. The reduction below the requirement for the earlier period is due partly to a reduction in the requirement (e.g. overhaul of inland water transport and railway rolling stock will have been completed) and partly to more time being available for training Egyptians.
5. A reduction below this total can only be made if we are prepared to relinquish effective control of one or more installations.
6. The installations concerned fall into the following broad categories
 - (a) those required to hold stores, both for the maintenance of REIF and as war reserves
 - (b) their connected workshops
 - (c) the base workshops at TEK

A distinction can be made between (c) and those in (a) and (b) above, but there is no evident reason why, if we relinquish

/control

control of some installations in (a) and (b) we should not relinquish control of them all. The arguments that we have used for retaining technical control rather than inspection rights apply to them all equally.

7. Once we relinquish technical control of an installation we can no longer rely on it as a means of supply for MEIF in peace, and its function is reduced to maintaining war reserves, with the small turn-over needed for that purpose.
8. In the case of No. 2 Base Workshops we can argue that it will be required immediately on the outbreak of war, and that a workshop takes longer to get into running order than a depot, since it needs so many more skilled personnel. It ought therefore to be kept running in peace with a considerable active load. To do this we would need to use it as a base workshop for MEIF and if we do this we should retain technical control.
9. The critical points are thus the following:
 - (a) With 2500 men we can retain technical control of installations, and an air staging post.
 - (b) With 2050 men we can retain technical control of installations, but only have air staging facilities.
 - (c) With 600 men we can retain technical control of 2 Base Workshops, have inspection elsewhere sufficient to care for our war reserves, and have air staging facilities. This involves relinquishing serials 2, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Appendix A.
 - (d) With 200 men we can have inspection sufficient to care for our war reserves and air staging facilities. This involves relinquishing also Serial 6 of Appendix A.
10. The foregoing estimates are based on the fundamental assumptions that the Egyptians:-
 - (a) behave honestly in the base.
 - (b) guard it securely.
 - (c) run it with reasonable efficiency.

TOP SECRET

- 3 -

- (d) produce suitable men to be trained as technicians when required.
- (e) carry out all repairs found necessary by inspection.
- (f) produce all the labour both skilled and unskilled required to assist the inspectorate.

They also assume that the inspectors are used purely for inspection, and are not required to give advice or assistance to the Egyptians operating and maintaining the installations (though no doubt they could do this to some extent).

Inspectors will keep a general watching brief on organisation and methods, together with periodical stocktaking and snap inspection of equipment and stores.

TOP SECRETAPPENDIX ARequirements in MGR/P(53)9 Revise

| <u>Serial</u> | <u>Requirement</u> | <u>Reference</u> |
|---------------|--|---|
| 1. | To maintain the base in such a state that it can be used immediately on the outbreak of war. To do this all depots, installations, camps, signal rail and road communications and public utilities required during the first three months of war must be brought up to a proper standard of maintenance and either kept in use or placed on a proper care and maintenance basis. | page 8, para 1 page 43, para 2 (g) |
| 2. | To be able to use our stocks of medical stores and certain items or ordnance (including ammunition) and engineer stores to maintain certain of our forces remaining in the Middle East. This would include in particular the maintenance of our forces in Jordan and the Arab Legion. | page 6 para 2 page 8 para 2 page 43 para 2 (a), (c), (d) & (e) |
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| 4. | To be able to retain and turn over stocks of supplies sufficient to feed certain of our forces remaining in the Middle East. | page 8 para 4 page 43 para 2 (d) and (e) |
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| 6. | To be able to use 2 Base Workshop REME for the base repair and overhaul of vehicles and equipment from our forces remaining in the Middle East, together with the necessary RACC installations to supply it and to hold vehicles and equipment for repair. | page 8 para 6 page 43 para 2(b) |
| 7. | An allied manned air staging post would be maintained in Egypt. | page 6 para 6 |
| 8. | Depots and installations within the base to be run and controlled on the analogy of our base in Belgium or the United States base in the United Kingdom. | page 6 para 1 |
| 9. | All the main installations and depots will be commanded by a British Officer with a British staff. | page 56 para 2 |
| 10. | The Egyptian base area Commander would not initiate instructions of a technical or policy nature. | page 56 para 3(b) |

Rebut 10/10

FROM: J. E. S. SIMON, Q.C., M.P. *L. Miss Wilson African Dept.*

House of Commons,

London, S.W.1

8th October, 1953.

E. 1192/525

Dear Parliamentary Under-Secretary,

I attach a letter which I have received from one of my constituents, Mr J. Westwood, of 48 Ayresome Green Lane, Middlesbrough, about the talks taking place with Egypt.

Before replying, I would be grateful if you could confirm that we have in fact already guaranteed Israel's frontiers.

Yours sincerely

J. E. S. Simon

Antony Nutting, Esq., MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary for Foreign
Affairs.

COPY JE 1192/525

48, Ayresome Green Lane,
Middlesbrough.

4 Oct. '53.

Mr. Simon M.P.,
Hon. Member for Middlesbrough W,
House of Commons.

Dear Sir,

I am very concerned about the possible outcome of the talks now being held with Egypt. It is worthy of note, that while these talks are taking place, the Egyptians are pleading provocation against their neighbour Israel by accusing them of border incidents. It is also announced that the ex-premier has been condemned to death - one of the indictments being that he propelled Egypt into a war against the Jews "before the Egyptians were ready".

General Neguib made the infamous statement when he came to power - "when we have got rid of the British, we shall turn our attention to Palestine". All of which suggests that the Egyptians mean to start the war again.

I ask you sir, to establish what guarantees are made in the current talks to maintain peace, and just what action the UK proposes to take when Egypt breaks these guarantees.

It has been suggested that arms supplied by Britain to Egypt (these include jet fighter planes) will not be used in a war against Israel.

How is it possible to receive and believe such an assurance, and what steps will be taken by the UK if it is proved that Egypt breaks this undertaking?

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) John Westwood.

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES,
25th MAY, 1950.

The Governments of the United Kingdom, France and the United States, having had occasion during the recent Foreign Ministers' meeting in London to review certain questions affecting the peace and stability of the Arab states and Israel, and particularly that of the supply of arms and war material to these states, have resolved to make the following statement:

1. The three Governments recognise that the Arab States and Israel all need to maintain a certain level of armed forces for the purposes of assuring their internal security and their legitimate self-defence and to permit them to play their part in the defence of the area as a whole. All applications for arms or war material for these countries will be considered in the light of these principles. In this connexion the three Governments wish to recall and reaffirm the terms of the statements made by their representatives on the Security Council on 4th August, 1949, in which they declared their opposition to the development of an arms race between the Arab States and Israel.
2. The three Governments declare that assurances have been received from all the states in question to which they permit arms to be supplied from their countries that the purchasing state does not intend to undertake any act of aggression against any other state. Similar assurances will be requested from any other states in the area to which they permit arms to be supplied in the future.
3. The three Governments take this opportunity of declaring their deep interest in and their desire to promote the establishment and maintenance of peace and stability in the area and their unalterable opposition to the use of force or threat of force between any of the states in that area. The three Governments, should they find that any of these states was preparing to violate frontiers or armistice lines would, consistently with their obligations as members of the United Nations, immediately take action, both within and outside the United Nations, to prevent such violation.

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13 Oct 53

13/11

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| |
|---------------|
| Top Secret. |
| Secret |
| Confidential. |
| Restricted |
| Open. |

Draft letter. Mr. J. T. G. Simon, G.C.P. House of Commons.

Thank you for your letter of October 8, enclosing a letter, which I now return, for your constituent Mr. J. Westwood.

The Armistice Agreement between Israel and Egypt absolutely precludes military action by one party against the other and is supervised by the United Nations Chief of Staff of the Truce Supervisory organisation, who reports to the Security Council, of the United Nations. There is also a Mixed Armistice Commission, composed of three Israelis and three Egyptians under a United Nations chairman which deals with complaints regarding the working of the Agreement from either side. I think it is fair to say that these arrangements do more to preclude a resumption of hostilities than the presence of British troops in the Canal Zone.

In addition, there is the Tripartite Declaration of May 25, 1950, the last paragraph of which reads as follows:-

"The three Governments (the United Kingdom, France and the United States) take this opportunity of declaring their deep interest in and their desire to promote the establishment and maintenance of peace and stability in the area and their unalterable opposition to the use of force or threat of force between any of the states in that area. The three Governments, should they find that any of these states was preparing to violate frontiers or armistice lines would consistently with their obligations as members of the United Nations, immediately take action, both /within

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

From: Mr. Nutting,

Mr. Butler }
Mr. Killick } first

BTD. (Signature) 10/10

| |
|-------------|
| RECEIVED BY |
| DIVISION. |
| 13 OCT 1953 |
| 13/10 |

within and outside the United Nations, to prevent such violation."

11. I hope these points will enable you to make it clear that it is not ~~clearly~~ the responsibility of ^{the British} ~~Her Majesty's~~ Government ^{alone} to see that Egypt observed the armistice terms, but of the whole of the United Nations.

12. You may like to reassure Mr. Westwood at the same time that there has been a complete embargo on the sale of ~~United Kingdom~~ ^{from this country} arms to Egypt since October 1954 and a partial embargo since 1950. Only four jet fighter planes have been delivered to Egypt out of a large order outstanding. A very much larger number of jet planes has been supplied to Israel during the past ~~few~~ years:

JA
12/10
(Sgd) ANTHONY NUTTING

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EGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS

The main points of our present deadlock with the Egyptians were discussed at a meeting with the Secretary of State on October 5th. General Robertson has reported since then that the Egyptian position has not materially changed on any of them.

2. They are:-

(a) Uniform

(b) The question of the phrase in the preamble regarding the Suez Canal, and, apart from other matters not so much in the foreground,

(c) Availability of the base.

3. We propose to give the delegation some facts regarding the uniform question and some comments on the latest Egyptian formula regarding the Suez Canal which may help them to bring the Egyptians a little closer to us on those points.

4. Regarding availability of the base, however, General Robertson understands very clearly that we have no disposition to make any concession.

5. Nevertheless, it may be that if the Egyptians show any signs of coming round, some rearrangement of our proposed availability text might help them to give in gracefully. Our present formula provides for reactivation of the base

"in the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression."

The following text, which was read out at the meeting with the Secretary of State, while making it perfectly clear that no question of consultation (which is what the Egyptians want) is involved, might conceivably serve, provided progress

/is

is made on the other points, to persuade the Egyptians to change their minds in the manner suggested above. Under this wording the base would be reactivated

"in the event of United Nations action to resist an act of aggression if, in the light of the general situation, either party considered this to be essential for the safety of the Middle East."

6. This formula has also the additional advantage of localising the case to some extent and thus helping to relieve Egyptian fears that we should want to make the base available in such a case as, for example, the Korean war.

7. We should be grateful for authority to give General Robertson this text to use if he felt it might play a part in bringing the Egyptians round should they show a change of heart.

8. This would be in line with what the Minister of State told the Egyptian Ambassador on October 6th (marked passage in attached paper).

E. B. [Signature]

October 8, 1953

This text leaves the decision to us, and I think it would be acceptable in substance. But the formula will need some reworking to make it grammatical - perhaps "it" instead of "this" in the addition would do.

Should we not also first get the Legal Adviser's view, and the concurrence of the Chiefs of Staff, before submitting this?

African Dept.

RA 8/10.

FO 371/102817

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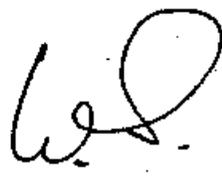
JE 1192

JE 1192 S15

CONFIDENTIAL.

THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR, whom I happened to meet today at lunch, said that he had noted from a telegram from Mr. Caffery, that the Egyptians seemed to think that there had been some misunderstanding between themselves and the U.K. Delegation about the extent to which the Egyptian Delegation had, at an earlier stage, given its agreement to our formula about availability. The Egyptians said that they had not gone back on their previous agreement: if the British Delegation had thought that the Egyptian Government had given their agreement, they were under a misapprehension. The Egyptian Delegation thought that if this misunderstanding could be cleared up, it would be easier for the two Delegations to come to a final agreement on this topic.

The Ambassador said that he had not been instructed to give this information to us, and he therefore requested that its source should be protected.



October 6, 1953.

Top: African Dept. (to enter)

Copies: Secretary of State
Minister of State
Lord Reading
Mr. Nutting
Sir P. Dixon
Mr. R. Allen.

JE 10342/31/53

The Dept don't
 whether the SFS has
 seen Gen Robertson's
 memorandum which,
 they feel, contains some
 very useful material
 ? tonight's box
 ceas

Mr Smeaton
 10/13
 This is
 a very able
 paper. I wish
 Cabinet had seen it &
 heard it.
 I have copy to
 my private
 files
 AS

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Mr. Figg

Confidential. Minutes.

Eg 1/68

Mr. Dodd Parker may care to read the memorandum prepared by General Robertson in July when there was a suggestion that he might address a secret meeting of members of parliament. It has not dated.

bid forward
12/11

Re Dodd Parker

An admirable summary - what a pity General Nixon did NOT deliver it in July, if only to a select group -

add-C
19 Dec

Africa 1/68
(the corners)

Thank you

17/19/68

861192 / 511 G

Minister of State
Lord Salisbury

You may remember that, at our meeting on Egypt a few days ago, the question arose whether it would be worth trying to put to selected Members of Parliament the political, economic and military grounds upon which we base the solution of the Canal Zone problem which we have been seeking to achieve in ~~collaboration~~ ^{negotiation} with the Egyptian Government.

It was decided that these arguments could be better deployed once an agreement had been reached.

General Robertson has nevertheless drawn up in the annexed paper the kind of case that might be put in defence of our policy. He has written a very persuasive paper which would, I think, bring new and decisive facts to the attention of some of our Parliamentary critics.

W. Stanger

July 7, 1955.

This is a very good paper.
but I still think that it is not yet the time
for Gen. Robertson to take to M.P.s. In case
he will not be available to do so, a second
blow, before the Press. *Telegraphed 7/7*

Please take this excellent
paper to Washington.

S.
P.7.

30

Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

6 July 53

My dear William,

I proposed that in case the idea of my talking to Mr. P. should come to anything.

Although it is not wanted for that purpose you may care to see it as a matter of interest. Whether you care to show it to anyone else is for you to decide.

I shall not be coming in again before we go unless you send for me, in which case of course I am available.

Yours ever

Truman

1492/541G

The Acting Foreign Secretary has asked me to give you this talk on the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations because he feels that it might help you to understand some of their implications. The subject is by no means as simple as some people think, and there is a good deal which cannot be said openly. In this connexion I hope that I may speak to you in all confidence. If some of my remarks were to reach the Egyptians, it would do our case very great harm.

2. As you know, the reason why we keep troops in Egypt is that we attach great importance to the defence of the Middle East. That defence cannot be successfully conducted without our participation, and we can only play our part in it if we have a base there in peace ready for use in war. We have such a base in the Canal Zone today, there is no practicable alternative location for the base, even if we could afford to move it, which we cannot. [In order to be brief, I have to make a number of categorical statements of this nature without substantiating them, but if you want to hear my justification of them I shall be glad to respond to questions afterwards.]

3. Our right to keep troops in Egypt rests on the 1936 Treaty. That Treaty has not been observed strictly to the letter by either side, but we can show pretty good reasons to justify such departures as we have made from it ourselves. The Egyptians, as you know, abrogated the Treaty in October, 1951. That unilateral act does not of course affect the validity of the Treaty in international law, but it undoubtedly has the effect that other nations, including even the Americans, tend to regard the Treaty as a dead letter. The rights which the Treaty gave us last until 1956, but it is not the case that we have no rights

thereafter. [The provisions made in this respect in the Treaty are complicated; I will explain them if you wish; I think, however, it may be sufficient to say that if we continue to keep troops in Egypt after 1956, in spite of Egyptian objections, we could state a fair legal case for doing so, but from a practical point of view we should find it very difficult to convince other nations that we were in the right.]

4. The obvious question which presents itself is: why do we not just stand pat on our treaty rights at least until 1956? It is of course part of our policy to maintain friendly relations with other countries, and it is tiresome to be involved in a wrangle with Egypt. However, the Egyptians are very difficult people, and their past behaviour does not constitute a claim on our good nature. On the contrary, it affords full justification for our telling them "to go to blazes". Our economic interests in Egypt are still important, but they are less than they were and we might perhaps recover them later. We have nothing to fear from the Egyptians from a strictly military point of view. To preserve freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal is not an exclusively British interest or responsibility.

5. There are unfortunately several reasons why the "go to blazes" policy is not nearly so attractive on examination as it might seem at first sight. I will mention the two most important of these reasons, though there are others.

6. The first reason is that the Base is useless to us without labour and in practice this labour must be Egyptian and a high proportion of it must be skilled. Prior to 1951 we employed about 50,000 civilians in the Base, most of them Egyptians. Today, due to Egyptian ill feeling and lack of co-operation the most that we can obtain is 20,000 and the proportion of

skilled personnel within this number is very low. The result is that the Base is not running properly even today. The workshops in particular are only running at a fraction of their full capacity. If the Egyptian Government were to call out our labour as they did in 1951 the Base would come virtually to a standstill as it did on that occasion. All efforts to find an alternative source of skilled labour have failed. We have brought in 10,000 East African pioneers and 1700 British technical troops who can ill be spared from elsewhere; but these reinforcements fail to fill the gap today and are obviously quite inadequate if our Egyptian labour should leave us again. In short, the usefulness to us of our Base is dependent upon a measure of Egyptian co-operation which cannot be obtained if we tell them to "go to blazes".

7. The second difficulty concerns the fact that the fighting services are maintaining our position in the Canal Zone in the face of Egyptian hostility. Let me emphasise again that we are not afraid of military defeat but that is not the point. Prior to 1951 we maintained in Egypt only about 20,000 troops, of which only 6,000 were fighting troops, the remainder administrative troops chiefly engaged in running the Base. This is the figure for the Army. I will not deal with the Air Force though it is similarly affected. The Navy is not affected in the same way. We now have over 50,000 United Kingdom troops and nearly 18,000 Colonial troops. Of these about 28,000 can be classed as fighting troops, so that the combatant force in the Canal Zone is nearly five times what it was at the beginning of 1951. The total garrison including Royal Air Force is about 80,000. We had hoped that this concentration would only be temporary but it has already lasted more than 18 months. Until we reach some modus vivendi with

the Egyptians we cannot afford to prejudice our position by reducing our strength. If you wonder why it takes so many troops to defend our position against these Egyptians the short answer is that it always takes a lot of troops to guard an area containing many highly important installations against sabotage and robbery. It is even conceivable that a situation might arise in which the present number of troops would be inadequate. If we were compelled to re-occupy Cairo and Alexandria because British citizens were being murdered or for any other reason, we should be able to carry out the military operation necessary for that purpose with our present forces but we should not be able to hold and control the administration of those large cities and the communications between them and the Canal Zone without heavy reinforcements and no reinforcements are available unless very drastic measures are taken in this country. The major part of our strategic reserve consisting of one Infantry division and one Parachute brigade group is already committed in Egypt. This in itself constitutes a highly unsound position.

8. This protracted retention in Egypt of such a large proportion of the Army is having a very bad effect on its efficiency. It aggravates the situation in which regular officers and men spend the greater part of their service abroad, which is prejudicial to recruitment. Moreover, conditions in the Canal Zone are eminently unsatisfactory. Since it has been assumed ever since the war that our stay in Egypt is temporary, no permanent construction has been carried out, so that there is no proper accommodation for our troops, 90% of them are living in tents,

/and

and what is worse there is a very grave lack of married quarters. Separated families cause more hardship and discontent than almost anything else, as you gentlemen must know only too well from your own mail bags. At this present time regular warrant officers and sergeants are leaving the Army faster than replacements can be found and trained and these men are the backbone of the Army. Statistics show that we are losing them from units which are stationed in the Canal Zone twice as rapidly as from units stationed elsewhere. It is very evident that if we are going to tell the Egyptians to go to blazes we must reckon on keeping the present number of troops in the Canal Zone indefinitely and this means that we must build proper accommodation for them and their families at a cost of several hundred million pounds. Even so, this accommodation will take many years to provide and the effect on the Army meanwhile is bound to be very grave.

9. As to expense, the maintenance of the Army in the Canal Zone including civilian labour costs about £50 millions a year. Great pressure is being brought to bear by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a reduction in the Army vote. Meanwhile costs are going up and as you know, we are faced with the prospects of meeting a very heavy additional bill in Germany. To put the matter plainly there is not at present and there is not likely to be in future, sufficient money to enable the Army to continue to meet its present overseas commitments and if a cut does not come in the Canal Zone it must come somewhere else.

10. Then there is the question of available manpower. The National Service intake is falling, regular recruitment is dropping at present and is not in any case likely to

increase substantially. The claims of the other fighting services, particularly the R.A.F. are growing. The War Office recognize that during the next two years a heavy reduction in the manpower available to them is inevitable. Inescapably a very big cut in the Army's overseas commitments must be made and must be made very quickly. Unless it is made in Egypt we shall either have to sacrifice our position in the Far East, that is to say in Korea, Hong Kong and Malaya, or we shall have to go back on our undertakings to N.A.T.O. by withdrawing troops from Germany.

11. It is for these reasons that the Chiefs of Staff are strongly supporting the view that we must seek to reach an agreement with Egypt which will enable us to take the bulk of our troops away. They do not say, and I do not say, that we must reach agreement at any price and it is the extent of this price which I will now discuss.

12. It is fortunate that on this occasion we are in some respects negotiating from strength. We are in Egypt and we are perfectly able to stay there if we choose to do so, though I have already pointed out that such a choice would be a very costly one for us. It does not however follow that we can force the Egyptians to accept our terms. We can bring great pressure to bear on them in many ways but there is a point beyond which neither the present Government of Egypt nor any that is likely to succeed it can go without being hounded out. Emotions have been stirred for a long period and there is a great deal of fanaticism in the country. In the last resort the Egyptians will certainly commit national suicide as the Persians have done.

13. If we want to reach agreement with them we must realise that the agreement must respect Egyptian sovereignty both in fact and in appearance. Indeed of the two appearances is the more important. It essentially follows from this that the agreement must provide for the evacuation of the Canal Zone by our fighting troops. Now that is a very serious matter because if we take our fighting troops away we lose the ability to enforce the fulfilment of the agreement. However, whether you like what I am saying or not, I am bound to tell you that unless we take them away no agreement is possible. We have in fact recognised this for some time and during the recent discussions we indicated that we would be willing to withdraw our troops as part of a satisfactory general agreement.
14. What then do we mean by a satisfactory agreement? In brief it is one which ensures that our Base in the Canal Zone is preserved in working order in peace and is at our disposal if war should come. I will however add something to this, namely that it must be an agreement which, although it involves a withdrawal of our troops, does not seriously damage our prestige in the Middle East and the world in general.
15. During the recent discussions in Cairo the Egyptians said that they were quite ready to agree that our Base in the Canal Zone should be maintained efficiently, but that they would do it for us. It is our contention and one of which I personally am firmly convinced that this is not a practical proposition. Our Base is not like a furniture

repository into which a man puts his furniture and leaves it untouched until he wants it. The Base is a living organisation. Work is going on inside it all the time. Stocks have to be turned over: types of equipment change and have to be replaced: the organisation of units changes and their mobilisation packs have to be adjusted accordingly. I could go on for a long time like this. The simple fact is that in the day-to-day operation of the Base a great deal of work is going on which can only be performed by men who understand British equipment, who are trained in British techniques of storage and maintenance and above all, who are responsible to British authority. The Egyptians cannot do these things, not from lack of skill or integrity, but simply because they are not British. It is from this that there arises the question of so-called technicians. Put simply, we are demanding that the main installations in the Base should continue to be commanded by British Officers with a small British staff to assist them and that these British officers should receive their instructions from British Service Departments. That is not the only difficult point, although it is the one that caused the most difficulty in May. There is the important question of our right to re-occupy the Canal Zone, which is what we should have to do in order to make full use of the base in War. There is also the question of the duration of the Agreement. The Egyptians would like a very short agreement.

16. (Finally, it has been part of our position, and in this we have been supported by the Americans, that the Egyptians should subscribe to a

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regional defence organisation for the Middle East. Egypt has said categorically that she is not willing to do this until the foreign troops of occupation, namely our own, have left her soil.

✓ 17. As you know, the discussions in Cairo were broken off by the Egyptians. They staged the break rather artificially to coincide with the visit of Mr. Foster Dulles. They did not intend the break to be permanent and they are anxious for a resumption of negotiations, but they cannot bring themselves to the point of asking us to come to the table again. We have taken the line that they broke the talks off and if they wish them to be resumed they had better say so. This attitude has paid a dividend. Recent indications from Cairo are that the Egyptians are perhaps willing now to be less intransigent. It may be that the time to start talking again has come.

18. However, before we do this there is something else which badly needs to be done. There is no hope of getting a better agreement out of the Egyptians so long as they feel that the Americans are ready to mediate with us in their favour. Unfortunately that is exactly the impression which they have had throughout and they do not appear to have been disillusioned by the visit of Mr. Foster Dulles. In fact responsible opinion in the United States today recognises that British participation in the defence of the Middle East is essential and that the preservation of the British base in Egypt is necessary for this purpose. However, we do feel that American support for our position has not been as forthright as it ought to be, with the result that the illusion in the Egyptian minds persists. This is why we are going to discuss this problem with the Americans in Washington. We hope to make it clear to them that we want

an agreement with Egypt and are prepared to pay a price for it which will be quite unpopular in this country and which is a very grievous one for us to have to pay. On the other hand, we are not prepared to pay just any price that Egypt may demand and in particular, we are not prepared to leave that enormous quantity of valuable military stores in Egypt under conditions which could only lead to their rapid deterioration and disappearance.

19. To sum up, there are three courses open to us in Egypt. The first is to tell the Egyptians to go to blazes: that means that you gentlemen, will have to confront the people of this country with a bill for money and men which to say the least of it, will cause them a very big shock, even indeed if it can be met. The second possible course is to clear out lock, stock and barrel. Some quite serious minded gentlemen favour this course. I do not, partly because I believe that the strategic importance of the Middle East is something of great permanent value which we should not throw away, and partly because I believe that the effect on our prestige as a great nation would be disastrous. ^{Moscow} The third course is to reach an agreement with Egypt and I believe that if we pick our way very carefully we may be able to get an agreement which can be accepted only in view of the serious consequences of having no agreement. Even so, of course, there is the possibility that the Egyptians will not stick to this agreement any more than they have honoured others. I have no complete answer to that: the best that we can do is to persuade the Americans to underwrite the agreement, and to keep ourselves as strong a force as we can afford in the Middle East near to Egypt in the hope that this evidence of our strength will induce them to be loyal to their undertakings.

20. There is no good answer to this problem, gentlemen. If we get an answer in the form of an agreement it will not be popular either in this country or in Egypt, and the politicians in both countries will have a major job to persuade their people that the answer obtained is the best that could be got.

July 6, 1953.

right unless they were prepared themselves to invoke the Treaty they have repudiated. Moreover, the arbitrator would have to be agreed between us and the Egyptians.

5. The obvious question which presents itself is: why do we not just stand pat on our treaty rights at least until 1956? It is of course part of our policy to maintain friendly relations with other countries, and it is tiresome to be involved in a wrangle with Egypt. However, the Egyptians are very difficult people, and their past behaviour does not constitute a claim on our good nature. On the contrary, it affords full justification for our telling them "to go to blazes". Our economic interests in Egypt are still important, but they are less than they were and we might perhaps recover them later. We have nothing to fear from the Egyptians from a strictly military point of view. To preserve freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal is not an exclusively British interest or responsibility.

6. There are unfortunately several reasons why the "go to blazes" policy is not nearly so attractive on examination as it might seem at first sight. I will mention the two most important of these reasons, though there are others.

7. The first reason is that the Base is useless to us without labour and in practice this labour must be Egyptian and a high proportion of it must be skilled. Prior to 1951 we employed about 50,000 civilians in the Base, most of them Egyptians. Today, due to Egyptian ill feeling and lack of co-operation the most that we can obtain is 20,000 and the proportion of skilled personnel within this number is very low. The result is that the Base is not running properly even today. The workshops in particular are only running at a fraction of their full capacity. If the Egyptian Government were to call out our labour as they did in 1951 the Base would come virtually to a standstill as it did on that occasion. All efforts to find an alternative

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source of skilled labour have failed. We have brought in 10,000 East African pioneers and 1700 British technical troops who can ill be spared from elsewhere: but these reinforcements fail to fill the gap today and are obviously quite inadequate if our Egyptian labour should leave us again. In short, the usefulness to us of our Base is dependent upon a measure of Egyptian co-operation which cannot be obtained if we tell them to "go to blazes".

8. The second difficulty concerns the fact that the fighting services are maintaining our position in the Canal Zone in the face of Egyptian hostility. Let me emphasise again that we are not afraid of military defeat but that is not the point. Prior to 1951 we maintained in Egypt only about 20,000 troops, of which only 6,000 were fighting troops, the remainder administrative troops chiefly engaged in running the Base. This is the figure for the Army. I will not deal with the Air Force though it is similarly affected. The Navy is not affected in the same way. We now have over 50,000 United Kingdom troops and nearly 18,000 Colonial troops. Of these about 28,000 can be classed as fighting troops, so that the combatant force in the Canal Zone is nearly five times what it was at the beginning of 1951. The total garrison including Royal Air Force is about 80,000. We had hoped that this concentration would only be temporary but it has already lasted more than 18 months. Until we reach some modus vivendi with the Egyptians we cannot afford to prejudice our position by reducing our strength. If you wonder why it takes so many troops to defend our position against these Egyptians the short answer is that it always takes a lot of troops to guard an area containing many highly important installations against sabotage and robbery. It is even conceivable that a situation might arise in which the present number of troops would be inadequate. If we were compelled to re-occupy Cairo and Alexandria because British citizens were being murdered or for any other reason, we should be

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able to carry out the military operation necessary for that purpose with our present forces but we should not be able to hold and control the administration of those large cities and the communications between them and the Canal Zone without heavy reinforcements and no reinforcements are available unless very drastic measures are taken in this country. The major part of our strategic reserve consisting of one Infantry division and one Parachute brigade group is already committed in Egypt. This in itself constitutes a highly unsound position.

9. This protracted retention in Egypt of such a large proportion of the Army is having a very bad effect on its efficiency. It aggravates the situation in which regular officers and men spend the greater part of their service abroad, which is prejudicial to recruitment. Moreover, conditions in the Canal Zone are eminently unsatisfactory. Since it has been assumed ever since the war that our stay in Egypt is temporary, no permanent construction has been carried out, so that there is no proper accommodation for our troops. 90% of them are living in tents, and what is worse there is a very grave lack of married quarters. Separated families cause more hardship and discontent than almost anything else, as you gentlemen must know only too well from your own mail bags. At this present time regular warrant officers and sergeants are leaving the Army faster than replacements can be found and trained and these men are the backbone of the Army. Statistics show that we are losing them from units which are stationed in the Canal Zone twice as rapidly as from units stationed elsewhere. It is very evident that if we are going to tell the Egyptians to go to blazes we must reckon on keeping the present number of troops in the Canal Zone indefinitely and this means that we must build proper accommodation for them and their families at a cost of several hundred million pounds. Even so, this accommodation will take many years to provide and the effect on the Army meanwhile is bound to be very grave.

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10. As the Prime Minister said on May 11 of this year: "We do not wish to keep indefinitely 80,000 men at a cost of, it might be, over £50 million a year discharging the duty which has largely fallen upon us and us alone of safeguarding the interests of the free nations in the Middle East, and also of preserving the international waterway of the Suez Canal. If agreeable arrangements can be made to enable this latter service and also the solid maintenance of the strategic base to be discharged by agreement with Egypt, it would mean a great saving over our men and money." The position is not changed. If the Egyptians accept the very reasonable terms we have offered in good faith, then as the Prime Minister said, "they would render possible the reduction of the British forces in the Canal Zone to a small fraction of that number. There would be left technical personnel discharging their function with the goodwill of the Egyptian monarchy, republic, oligarchy, dictatorship or whatever it may turn out to be." Unless we get an agreement with Egypt we must maintain our military strength in the Canal Zone up to and beyond December 1956 at the present level if we are to go on defending our position there. I leave you to consider whether we can afford to pay for this.

11. Then there is the question of available manpower. The National Service intake is falling, regular recruitment is dropping at present and is not in any case likely to increase substantially. The claims of the other fighting services, particularly the R.A.F. are growing. The War Office recognize that during the next two years a heavy reduction in the manpower available to them is inevitable. Inescapably a very big cut in the Army's overseas commitments must be made and must be made very quickly. Unless it is made in Egypt we shall either have to sacrifice our position in the Far East, that is to say in Korea, Hong Kong and Malaya, or we shall have to go back on our undertakings to N.A.T.O. by withdrawing troops from Germany.

12. It is for these reasons that the Chiefs of Staff are strongly supporting the view that we must seek to reach an agreement with

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Egypt which will enable us to take the bulk of our troops away. They do not say, and I do not say, that we must reach agreement at any price and it is the extent of this price which I will now discuss.

13. It is fortunate that on this occasion we are in some respects negotiating from strength. We are in Egypt and we are perfectly able to stay there if we choose to do so, though I have already pointed out that such a choice would be a very costly one for us. It does not however follow that we can force the Egyptians to accept our terms. We can bring great pressure to bear on them in many ways but there is a point beyond which neither the present Government of Egypt nor any that is likely to succeed it can go without being hounded out. Emotions have been stirred for a long period and there is a great deal of fanaticism in the country. In the last resort the Egyptians will certainly commit national suicide as the Persians have done.

14. If we want to reach agreement with them we must realise that the agreement must respect Egyptian sovereignty both in fact and in appearance. Indeed of the two appearance is the more important. It essentially follows from this that the agreement must provide for the evacuation of the Canal Zone by our fighting troops. Now that is a very serious matter because if we take our fighting troops away we lose the ability to enforce the fulfilment of the agreement. However, whether you like what I am saying or not, I am bound to tell you that unless we take them away no agreement is possible. We have in fact recognised this for some time and during the recent discussions we indicated that we would be willing to withdraw our troops as part of a satisfactory general agreement.

15. What then do we mean by a satisfactory agreement? In brief it is one which ensures that our Base in the Canal Zone is preserved in working order in peace and it is at our disposal if war should come. I will however add something to this, namely

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that it must be an agreement which, although it involves a withdrawal of our troops, does not seriously damage our prestige in the Middle East and the world in general.

16. During the recent discussions in Cairo the Egyptians said that they were quite ready to agree that our Base in the Canal Zone should be maintained efficiently, but that they would do it for us. It is our contention and one of which I personally am firmly convinced that this is not a practical proposition. Our Base is not like a furniture repository into which a man puts his furniture and leaves it untouched until he wants it.

The Base is a living organisation. Work is going on inside it all the time. Stocks have to be turned over: types of equipment change and have to be replaced: the organisation of units changes and their mobilisation packs have to be adjusted accordingly. I could go on for a long time like this. The simple fact is that in the day-to-day operation of the Base a great deal of work is going on which can only be performed by men who understand British equipment, who are trained in British techniques of storage and maintenance and above all, who are responsible to British authority. The Egyptians cannot do these things, not from lack of skill or integrity, but simply because they are not British. It is from this that there arises the question of so-called technicians. Put simply, we are demanding that the main installations in the Base should continue to be commanded by British Officers with a small British staff to assist them and that these British officers should receive their instructions from British Service Departments. That is not the only difficult point, although it is the one that caused the most difficulty in May. There is the important question of our right to re-occupy the Canal Zone, which is what we should have to do in order to make full use of the base in War. There is also the question of the duration of the Agreement. The Egyptians would like a very short agreement.

17. It has been part of our position, and in this we have been supported by the Americans, that the Egyptians should subscribe to a regional defence organisation for the Middle East. Egypt has said categorically that she is not willing to do this until the foreign troops of occupation, namely our own, have left her soil.

18. There has been some talk of disagreement between the Americans and ourselves over Egypt. In point of fact the Americans are acting as loyal allies and President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles reaffirmed this at Bermuda. The Egyptians have been told in no uncertain terms by the United States Government that they should accept the terms which we were prepared to offer on October 21st, which made provision for automatic reactivation of the Canal Zone base in the event of a specific recommendation by the United Nations to that effect. That would be in addition to automatic reactivation in the event of an attack on Egypt or on one of the other Arab States and immediate consultation between Egypt and ourselves in the event of a threat of attack.

19. You may not feel that American support for our position has been as forthright as it might have been, but I can assure you that behind the scenes the Americans are doing their best. You should, however, keep in mind that one of the implications of the policy of defending our position by force after December 1956 would probably be a serious divergence between the United States and ourselves.

20. To sum up, there are three courses open to us in Egypt. The first is to tell the Egyptians to go to blazes: that means that you gentlemen, will have to confront the people of this country with a bill for money and men which to say the least of it, will cause them a very big shock, even indeed if it can be met. The second possible course is to clear out lock, stock and barrel. Some quite serious minded gentlemen favour this course. I do not, partly because I believe that the strategic importance of the Middle East is something of great permanent value which we should not throw away, and partly because I believe that the effect on our prestige as a great nation would be disastrous. Moreover, if we clear out without an agreement with the Egyptians it will affect our treaty relationship with other

Middle Eastern states and have a catastrophic effect upon our position through the area. The third course is to reach an agreement with Egypt and I believe that if we pick our way very carefully we may be able to get an agreement which can be accepted only in view of the serious consequences of having no agreement. Even so, of course, there is the possibility that the Egyptians will not stick to this agreement any more than they have honoured others. I have no complete answer to that: the best that we can do is to persuade the Americans to underwrite the agreement, and to keep ourselves as strong a force as we can afford in the Middle East near to Egypt in the hope that this evidence of our strength will induce them to be loyal to their undertakings.

21. In all this you may think that I have not dealt adequately with the question of navigation through the Suez Canal. My answer to that is that it is a separate problem and one susceptible to handling on a multilateral basis rather than by direct Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. We have never condoned the Egyptian disregard of the Security Council resolution of September 1, 1951 regarding passage of ships to Israel. But even with our powerful forces in the neighbourhood of Egypt we could not prevent this Egyptian action. If, after withdrawal of troops, the Egyptians chose to act in bad faith in regard to navigation through the Canal, it would be a matter for all the maritime powers concerned to take up in accordance with our legal rights under the 1888 Convention of Constantinople which says that the Canal "shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag". Our rights have been reinforced by nearly 50 years of regular usage. I am hopeful that there will be a passage in any new Agreement concluded with the Egyptians which reaffirms the 1888 Convention.

22. As to the possible dangers to Israel of a new agreement with Egypt involving the withdrawal of troops, we stand by the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, which commits the Governments of France, the United States and the United Kingdom to do their utmost to maintain

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the frontiers of the Middle East and to avoid an arms race there.

23. In conclusion therefore, I would say that there never has been and there never will be a good or an easy answer to the Egyptian problem. If we succeed in getting an agreement with the Egyptians, it will not be popular in this country, nor will it be popular in Egypt. It is, however, my belief that it is in our interests to conclude such an agreement and that the only alternative policy, which is one of maintaining our position by force, would land us in a commitment which we cannot afford and do damage to our international position at a time when our international position most needs reinforcement.

(226)

FROM F.O. Minute,
Sir W. Strong

SECRET

No.

Dated 7. 7. 53.

Received in Registry— 3. 10. 53.

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Defence Negotiations with Egypt.

Attaches a memorandum prepared by Gen. Robertson regarding our policy towards Egypt and the reasons for obtaining an agreement.

References

MINUTES

102817

(Print)

(How disposed of)

RM) Mr Pitblado (No. 10)
from Mr Shackleton
19 Oct

- 1. This paper has just come in for entry, from the P.S.'s Office.
- 2. If we reach an agreement on principles, Ministers may wish to make use of it, amended as necessary, with M.P.'s.
- 3. Should the Dept bring it up to date?

Renny
8/12

I think if we reach an agreement on principles, it can be amended very quickly. Even so we do not know whether or when Gen. Robertson would be free to deliver the talk. Let us therefore simply remember that the paper exists, that Lord Salisbury has commended it, that it may still form the basis for a talk, but otherwise keep it in storage. ~~W. S. R.~~ e.r.

(Action completed)

24/12

(Index)

23/10

7/2 (RM)

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G.V. Zylber
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RM, revised
version
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JE1192/511
COPY NO. 15...
JE1192/511

(P.L. 71)
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS

The aim of this paper is to give you some of the facts and considerations which have led Her Majesty's Government to pursue a policy of settlement by negotiation with Egypt. There is a good deal which cannot be said openly and therefore the paper is given to you in confidence. If some of these remarks were to reach the Egyptians, it would do our case very great harm.

2. As you know, the reason why we keep troops in Egypt is that we attach great importance to the defence of the Middle East. That defence cannot be successfully conducted without our participation, and we can only play our part in it if we have a base there in peace ready for use in war. We have such a base in the Canal Zone today, there is no practicable alternative location for the base, even if we could afford to move it, which we cannot.

3. Our right to keep troops in Egypt rests on the 1936 Treaty. That Treaty has not been observed strictly to the letter by either side, but we can show pretty good reasons to justify such departures as we have made from it ourselves. The Egyptians, as you know, abrogated the Treaty in October, 1951. That unilateral act does not of course affect the validity of the Treaty in international law, but it undoubtedly has the effect that other nations, including even the Americans, tend to regard the Treaty as a dead letter. The rights which the Treaty gave us last until 1956, but it is not the case that we have no rights thereafter.

4. If we accept the view that we must maintain the 1936 Treaty integrally, not only as to rights under it but also as regards our obligations, there is a legal obligation upon us to accept arbitration if we fail to reach agreement with the Egyptians by December 1956. I would qualify this by saying that it would be extremely difficult for the Egyptians to demand arbitration as a

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Confidential

In the course of a long talk with Lord Salisbury this morning, Lord Hankey said that he thought H.M. Government ought to keep the Directors of the Suez Canal Company more closely informed of the course of their negotiations with Egypt and any other matters affecting the future of the Suez Canal.

He said that the French Directors were given much more information by their Government.

Lord Salisbury said that he would look into this.

September 24, 1953.

Sir W. Strang
Sir Pierson Dixon
Sir James Bowker
African Department

with attached

27/9

I now attach a note embodying what is known in the dept regarding the background to Hankey's complaint

G. C. Beveler

30.9

I think it undesirable to give secret information to the British Directors, other than the Government Directors. Lord Hankey, in our experience, is particularly unsafe. It might be possible from time to time for all other directors to have a general talk with a Minister, as they have in the past, but I doubt whether the present is a good moment. I suggest this might be considered again if we follow up the proposal put forward by Gen. Robertson at a meeting with Lord Salisbury about preparing public opinion for an agreement.

Sir P. Dixon PD. 2/10.
Sir W. Strang.

Hope Allen 1/10

FO 371/102817

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I agree with Mr. Allen.

Secretary of State

W. Strong
2/10

Yes.

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(A.L.N.)

CONFIDENTIAL

SUEZ CANAL DIRECTORS

Lord Salisbury told Lord Hankey on September 24 that he would look into Lord Hankey's assertion that the French Directors were given more information by the French Government than the British Directors were by Her Majesty's Government.

2. We make a point of keeping Sir Francis Wylie, and through him, Sir Alexander Cadogan, who with the Commercial Minister in Paris are the British Government Directors, very fully informed. Sir Francis Wylie comes in almost every week before his visits to Paris and he is also in close touch with the Treasury,

3. The British Commercial Directors, ~~on the other hand,~~ have not been as closely informed. Lord Leathers, on one occasion supported by the Minister of State, has seen them on various occasions over the past two years and discussed in rather general terms Her Majesty's Government's approach to the problem of the Suez Canal. They have on the other hand been given no indication of the course of our defence negotiations with Egypt. The senior Commercial Directors, Sir Harrison Hughes and Lord Hankey, have lost some of their discretion with the years and it would be a security risk to give them much information.

4. We do not know exactly what the Quai d'Orsay say to the French Directors, but we suspect that they have similar confidential relations with Monsieur Charles-Roux as we have with Sir Francis Wylie and Sir Alexander Cadogan. It is probable that the French Directors as a whole are much less fully informed and that

Monsieur/

Monsieur Charles-Roux exercises his own discretion in each case as to what he tells them. They can have no precise information regarding the course of our defence negotiations with Egypt.

Bob Edwards

September 30, 1953.

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Minutes.

JE 1192

RW
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Reactivation

The more we in the Department have thought about closer specification of the case where United Nations action becomes operative, whether by definition or - as you suggested - by exclusion, the further we seem to recede from a possible solution.

2. Definition always seems to make an area too alarming for the Egyptians to swallow. Exclusion arrives correspondingly at an area invidiously small. To exclude, say, the Far East would not look sufficiently reassuring to the public here (though it might be sensible enough) and might be upsetting for France (Indo-China) and the Australasian countries. On the other hand the place where we are sticking locks ever less promising to me as a breaking-point. I do not see how it could arouse much sympathy in the Americans, who I understand scarcely expect the base to be reactivated without some sort of dispute and are perhaps more likely than ourselves to assume the responsibility of knocking at the door or forcing it (vide Bedell Smith's remarks during the Washington conversations).

3. Our own feelings about the difficulty of getting back again once we have gone have been vigorously expressed by the P.M. as Lord Hankey recently reminded us.

4. For these reasons I am inclined to suggest looking somewhere else for a key, and I wonder whether the authority we have already given the Delegation to consider proposing a "MAJOR act of aggression" (F.O. despatch No. 234 B.8) does not contain it. The important difference between a "major act" and an "act" is, of course, the latitude allowed by the former for argument about its meaning.

5. My suggestion is that the Egyptians might therefore be allowed (very indirectly of course) to understand that if they accepted "major" they would be putting themselves into a position where they could treat the United Nations "case" as essentially one for the "consultation" we have conceded with regard to Turkey. It is because the case of reactivation by attack on Turkey at present looks such a likely one, that I do not believe anything which Ministers would think important would be given away by helping to put the implications of the "major act" notion into the minds of the Egyptians.

6. It might be objected that the concession regarding Turkey was only tolerable because we regarded an attack on Turkey as already covered by the wider "United Nations action" provision. But if that were so, the concession would have been no concession at all - in fact only a piece of verbiage. But this was presumably not what was in Ministers' minds.

[7.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

7. If you thought there was any merit in these considerations we could submit them in the usual way and possibly propose that Gen. Robertson should be asked to consider them.

E.B. Brophy
Oct 3rd

I agree that neither the exclusive nor the inclusive approach is satisfactory. Nor do I much like "major". It might be quite a small act of aggression which would set everything off.

We might consider either (a) adding a phrase to the effect that, in the event of U.N. action, the box should be available for reactivation if in the opinion of either of the parties this was necessary or (b) bringing this case under the "consultation" head.

For the moment I think we must concentrate on trying to persuade the Egyptians that the last thing we shall want is to spend money or manpower reactivating the box unless we really feel obliged to. Meanwhile we must see what emerges from the latest talks.

African Dept. R.A. 4/10.

MADON

JE

SECRET

51192/539

FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND WHITEHALL
SECRET DISTRIBUTION

(P.L.S. A)

Sir E. Chapman Andrews.
No.488.

D. 9.23 a.m. October 27, 1953.

October 26, 1953.

R. 9.49 a.m. October 27, 1953.

SECRET.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.488 of
October 26, 1953.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------|
| Repeated for information to | Cairo | Bagdad |
| | Bahrain | Damascus |
| | Amman | Tel Aviv |
| | Jedda | Benghazi |
| | Washington | |
| | B.M.E.O. | |

Cairo telegram No.1464. *JE*

As seen from here, the most useful point for publicity in this region lies in paragraph 2(d), "facilitating closer association between all Arab countries and the West", especially if there is to be little publicity about the details of the agreement, (paragraph 1 of Cairo telegram No.1463). *JE*

5376

2. While the Arabs will ask "where do we go from here?", the short answer is to emphasize Britain's strength in the Middle East, which underpins the defence of the Arab world. But if we leave it at that we lay ourselves open to the charge that we regard the Arabs only as pawns in the East/West conflict. For that reason I hope we can at the same time give expression in any public statements to some positive policies on the lines of paragraph 10 of my Despatch No.161.

3. I have consulted Glass, who agrees.

E1052/2

Foreign Office pass Bahrain, Benghazi, Cairo, Washington, B.M.E.O. as my telegrams Nos. 25, 10, 134, 17, 120 respectively.

[Repeated to Bahrain, Benghazi, Washington, Cairo and B.M.E.O.].

Secretary of StateEgypt Negotiations

TE 1192/54

(A. D.)

Mr. Roger Allen informs me that a short telegram was sent to Cairo this afternoon (copy not yet available) suggesting that if they hold their meeting on Wednesday and no point emerges which requires re-submission to Ministers, they might then hold their formal meeting on Saturday.

On reflection, Mr. Allen and the Department think their decision was over-hasty. They see dangers of leakage, etc., if the formal meeting and announcement are delayed until Saturday. They propose, therefore, unless you see objection, to send a further telegram tomorrow proposing that the formal meeting be held on Thursday, October 22.

Arrangements would then have to be made for a simultaneous release in Cairo and here, perhaps in the form of a Statement in the House.

AR Oct 20

R. A. D.

October 20, 1953.

JE 119/54

(PW 2) JE 119

TOP SECRETEGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS

The delegation in Cairo have asked how quickly we can give them final clearance after their agreement in principle has been reached with the Egyptians. Supposing that the agreement is reached on Wednesday and no fresh points are raised requiring submission to Ministers, it should be possible for us to authorise the delegation to go ahead at a formal meeting to be held on Saturday.

2. There is some advantage in holding the formal meeting fairly soon after the agreement in principles has been reached since this will allow a minimum of time for the Egyptians to waver or to think out new changes. Press speculation will be pretty wild during the intervening period and it is as well that the facts should be made known in time for the Sunday press here.

3. A draft telegram is submitted.

E. B. Dooling

October 20, 1953.

La 20/10.

*Tel. sent
LH
20/10*

R0371/102817

92939

Ester

TOP SECRET

EGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS JE 492/54

Cairo telegram No. 1468.

✓ 63501 JE 1192/541 G. (Pw B)

In our telegram No. 1755 we told the Delegation that no announcement should be made in Cairo indicating that final agreement had been reached until Ministers had received a report of the results of the meeting now scheduled for October 20. The Egyptians are glad to fall in with this since they wish to have an opportunity, as we do, to explain privately to their supporters the stage reached.

2. The Delegation propose in this telegram the text of an announcement that sufficient progress has been made to justify a formal meeting and fixing a date for it. But in this text they ~~had~~ ^{add} a hope that the meeting will establish that sufficient agreement exists on principles to justify the examination of more detailed questions and the drafting of a full agreement.

3. The Department recommend that while agreeing with the first part of the Delegation's text, we should ask them not to put forward the last sentence, which goes a step too far at this junction. ^{we} It would seem preferable that any statement that the two sides were now ready for a more detailed examination and the drafting of a text should find a place in the agreed ^{communicated} ~~minute~~ referred to in Mr. Hankey's telegram No. 1459 and No. 1460, regarding which a separate submission is being made. 96 C

JE 11915/95

4. A draft telegram is submitted.

E. G. Estlin

October 19, 1953.

I can't see that it much matters whether we have a "formal" meeting or not. On the whole I agree that the last sentence might be better omitted, but mainly because it seems to me

102817

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26

TOP SECRET

FE 1192 / 541

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/CTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Hankey
No: 1468
October 17, 1953.

D: 1.25 p.m. October 17, 1953.
R: 2.25 p.m. October 17, 1953.

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 1468 of October 17

Repeated for information to: B.M.E.O.. Washington,
Ankara.

and Saving to: Paris,

Your telegram No: 1755. / JE 1192 / 535G

Following from delegation.

It has always been understood that if we reached agreement in principle in these informal discussions we should hold a formal meeting to confirm and announce it, and the Egyptians have been insistent on this. They have their own problems of convincing their supporters. We hope that we might hold them for a few days.

2. The announcement would, however, be necessary if the next informal meeting produces agreement and we propose, if you agree, to try to secure the following text:

[Begins]:

As a result of their private discussions, the Egyptian and United Kingdom delegations today agreed that sufficient progress had been made to justify a formal meeting between the two delegations. This meeting has been fixed for It is hoped that the meeting will establish that sufficient agreement exists on principles to justify the examination of more detailed questions and the drafting of a full agreement.

[Ends].

Foreign Office please pass Washington, Ankara and Saving to Paris as my telegrams Nos: 353, 88 and 458 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington, Ankara and Saving to Paris.]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Sir W. Strang.
Mr. R. Allen.

Private Secretary.
Head African Dept..

Registry No. JE1192 (S)

CYPHER

Top Secret.
XSGHX
XGKMBGKX
XBSGKX
XGKX

EMERGENCY
~~IMMEDIATE~~
PRIORITY
ROUTINE
with priority
without
DEFERRED

(Date) 19-10-53.
Dispatched 9.15 pm

Draft.
Telegram to:
CAIRO.

[Security classification] TOP SECRET
-if any

OUTFILE

No. 1796

[Codeword-if any]

(Date) Oct 19th

Addressed to CAIRO

And to :-

telegram No. 1796 (date) 19/10

repeated for information to WASHINGTON, BMEQ Paris, ANKARA AND saving to PARIS.

Repeat to :-
BMEQ Paris. 1655
WASHINGTON 4207.
ANKARA 697.
saving to: 2597
PARIS. (See)

Your telegram No. 1468 [of October 17: Defence Negotiations].

I agree, provided you leave out last sentence of suggested text. ~~This would seem too early a stage to say that we were going to start drafting~~ (about drafting) Any announcement ~~at this~~ would more appropriately become part of the agreed ~~minute~~ ^{communication} referred to in your telegram No. 1459.

En Clair.
Conto
Cypher

Distribution :-

Foreign Office secret
Whitehall secret

JE11913/95G
19/10.

Copies to: 19/10.
Egypt Negotiations Distribution.
PD.
19/10.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

8:15 pm
9/10/53

TOP SECRET7/2/1953
(P.L.A.)FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICEFOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND WHITEHALL

Cypher/OTP.

SECRET DISTRIBUTIONMr. Honkey
No. 1478
October 19, 1953
IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

D. 10.59 a.m. October 19, 1953

R. 11.08 a.m. October 19, 1953

Following from Delegation.

Further to Cairo telegram No. 1468 paragraph 1.

Please advise us the minimum interval which you would require before the formal confirming meeting was held. We presume a week-end would be awkward for you.

ADVANCE COPIESSir W. Strong
Private Secretary
Mr. R. Allen
Head of African Department
Head of News Department

PPPP

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| 1 | 2 |
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TOP SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

JE 192/5112

No. 1804

October 20, 1953

D. 2.05 p.m. October 20, 1953

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

311 FILE

Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 1804 of October 20.

Repeated for information to: B.M.E.O.
Paris
Washington
Ankara

Your telegram No. 1478 [of October 19: Egypt defence negotiations].

Following for delegation.

Provided that no fresh points are raised on Wednesday requiring submission to Ministers here, I think that you could arrange your formal meeting to take place on Saturday.

0-0-0-

R0371/102817 92939

Registry No. JE1192/5416

Top Secret
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~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
IMMEDIATE
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
DEFERRED

Subject to your views, we would like to suggest the following programme.

(Date) Oct 20
Despatched 7-48 PM
OUTFILE

Draft.

Telegram to:

CAIRO

No. 1810

(Date) Oct 20

And to:—

[Security classification] TOP SECRET
—if any

[Codeword—if any]

Addressed to CAIRO

telegram No. 1810 (date) 20/10

repeated for information to Washington, Ankara, Saving to Paris.

JE1192/5416

My telegram No. 1804 [of October 20: Defence Negotiations].

Following ~~for~~ Delegation from Embassy.

We have had second thoughts regarding the date of your formal meeting and the timing of the agreed communiqué.

3. If you find ^{reach complete} agreement with Egyptians ^{on Wednesday} follows closely your instructions, you ^would try to obtain an agreed text for a communiqué with the Egyptians at the ^{same} meeting on Wednesday. A formal meeting could then be arranged for Thursday and the communiqué released at 17.30 hours Egyptian time (15.30 G.M.T.).

Ministerial statement would be made in the House of Commons simultaneously.

4. If on the other hand you find ^{and} that there ^{were} will be several outstanding points requiring reference to London, it would be preferable to arrange the formal meeting on a ^{later} day when Parliament is sitting. Friday would presumably be impossible because of the Egyptian holiday. It would therefore have to be Monday, when

/arrangements

Repeat to:— 4230

Washington
Ankara 706
Paris (Saving)

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
Cypher

Distribution:—

~~Top Secret~~
~~Whitehall Secret~~

FILES

Copies to:—

~~Egypt Defence~~
~~Negotiations~~
~~distribution.~~

African News
IPD

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

FO 371 | 102817

92431

arrangements for release of formal
communiqué and for statement in House of
Commons ^W should be made for 15.30 hours

G.M.T. Perhaps you would make sure that
^{the} this part is covered when
5. Please let me know which it is to be
you report on results of to-morrow's meeting
~~as soon as possible after your meeting.~~

W. H. ... 20/7.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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SECRET

JE 1192/54

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

(P.W.G)

J

Cypher/OTP

FILES

Mr. Hankey

No. 1486

October 21, 1953

D. 10.14 a.m. October 21, 1953

R. 10.35 a.m. October 21, 1953

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1486 of October 21.

Repeated for information to B.M.E.O. Washington Ankara and Saving to Paris.

Boothby's telegram No. 1810.

Following from Delegation.

You appreciate no doubt that agreed communiqué may look (repeat look) very different from the draft in my telegram No. 1460.

Foreign Office please pass Washington, Ankara and Saving to Paris as my telegrams Nos. 357, 92 and 462 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington, Ankara and Saving to Paris]

ADVANCE COPY

Head of African Department.

FFFF

21 1953
21/10

JE 11915

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

(JB 1192/5410)

October 22, 1953.

RESTRICTEDOUTFILE

Dear Chancery,

For local reasons we have found it necessary to make the following amendment to Foreign Office telegram No. 1810 to Cairo:

Delete "Following from Boothby"

Substitute "Following for Delegation".

2. Would you and the other recipients of our telegram under reference, to whom we are copying this letter, please do likewise?

Yours ever,

AFRICAN DEPARTMENT.

The Chancery,
British Embassy,
Cairo.

| |
|---------------|
| Top Secret. |
| Secret. |
| Confidential. |
| Restricted. |
| Open. |

EGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS

Note on the Suex Canal for bilateral talk
with Monsieur Bidault

Draft.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

1. M. Bidault is likely to show more interest in the issue of navigation of the Suez Canal than in the defence talks. His Government will know, through the French Embassy here, the formula for the preamble now agreed with the Egyptians and that we will try to put a clause into the substantive part of the Agreement. It is important that we should carry the French with us on this. It is also important to show that we have by no means forgotten our joint initiative in Washington in July to obtain United States consent to a secret conference of the main maritime countries designed to secure a common approach to the problem of securing freedom of passage.
2. M. Bidault might be asked if he would be ready, at a fairly early date, to make a fresh joint approach to the United States Government on this issue. The French Government have indicated in the past that they would do so as soon as we felt ready.
3. He might further be asked if he would agree to our saying to the United States Government that we would not want to hold up our approaches to the other maritime governments (the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Italy) any longer, even if the United States Government were unwilling to go with us. The publication of the references to the preamble in the British

/press

Reference:-

FO 371 | 102817

92939

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press have excited general interest among the shipping world and we are finding it hard to stave off inquiries from the maritime governments, especially the Dutch and the Italians.

f-371/62817

92939
Item II, 3 (a). 5
[for UK
Statement]

BRUSSELS TREATY PERMANENT COMMISSION

QUESTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL INTEREST

EGYPT NEGOTIATIONS

E 1192/522

Our delegation in Cairo are aiming to secure an agreement with Egypt on the following lines:-

- (a) All British combatant troops to withdraw from Egypt.
- (b) A few thousand British technicians to remain to run vital installations in the Base. Their numbers would be progressively reduced as Egyptians were trained to take their place.
- (c) The United Kingdom to be in a position to reactivate the Base in the event of a major East-West war.
- (d) The agreement to last for seven years. Thereafter the parties to consult concerning future of the Base.

2. In addition, we are trying to secure Egyptian agreement to a statement, which would probably be included in the Preamble to the agreement, reaffirming the right of free transit for shipping through the Suez Canal.

3. The effect of this agreement, if we secure it, will be to enable United Kingdom to keep the Egypt Base in a state of readiness for war without the need, as at present, to immobilise vast numbers of troops and resources in Egypt.

4. So far the negotiations are still in the informal stage (formal negotiations were started in the Spring of this year, but broken off by the Egyptians in May) and have been concerned purely with points of principle. If and when the principles are agreed formal negotiations will be resumed, and the delegations will get down to points of detail.

5. We have reason to believe that the Egyptians want an agreement, and that it would be politically possible for them to accept the terms we have proposed. Nevertheless, they are putting up a hard fight over each point. We are finding particular difficulty over the conditions under which we could reactivate the

/Base;

9/10

Base; the Egyptians have recently gone back on what we had hoped was agreement in principle to reactivate the base in the event of United Nations action to meet aggression. As regards the main questions at issue, we have now gone to the limit of our concessions, and it should become apparent within the next few days whether or not an agreement will be possible.

6. Failing agreement, we shall stand firm. Our forces in Egypt are fully capable of dealing with Egyptian attacks, whether by regular or irregular forces.

7. Meanwhile we are not of course sending any military equipment to Egypt, and we naturally hope that the other Brussels powers will likewise continue their own restrictions. It will be necessary to keep these restrictions in being until an agreement is signed. If we lift them when informal agreement has been reached on principle, then we shall have played one of our trump cards without securing any firm commitment in return, and the Egyptians may well feel able to go back on their undertakings. We earnestly hope that our allies will also keep their restrictions in being until an agreement is actually signed.

COPY
(JF.1192/36)

48 Warren Drive,
Tolworth,
Surrey.

9th October, 1953.

John Boyd-Carpenter, Esq., M.P.
House of Commons,
London, E.C.1.

Dear Mr. Boyd-Carpenter,

I am more than pleased to read of the proposed evacuation of British personnel from within the Suez Canal Zone.

Quite apart from the sentimental attachments shared by so many, who like yourself served in the Middle East, it is obvious that the presence of the British in this large area holds the balance between peace and war.

I do ask you to do your utmost to ensure our Foreign Policy is such that we shall not be intimidated by anyone, whether it be Marshall's Regib, Tito or the United States.

The Tory Government's record has been an outstandingly good one since 1951, but I fear if we do any more 'bowing down' we shall not be Her Majesty's Government for very much longer.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) C. H. DREJEFF.

Registry No. 11211/506

TELEGRAM
SELEX
CABLEGRAM
RADIOGRAM
Open.

Draft. letter.

J.H. Boyd -
Carpenter, Esq.,
M.P.
House of Commons.

From:
Mr. Nutting.

Mr. Killick,
first.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

OUTFILE

Thank you for your letter of October 12 enclosing a ~~copy of a~~ letter from your constituent, Mr. C.H. Drewett, *which I am returning to him.*

2. I think the points to be made here are that it is no part of our intention to withdraw all our troops from the Middle East, or to keep fewer men in the Canal Zone than are necessary for the maintenance of our installations or equipment there. By a settlement of outstanding grievances we hope to achieve Egyptian co-operation in the defence of the Middle East besides getting back the disposal of up to 70,000 troops now employed solely in order to guard against a possible Egyptian attack, for use where they are more urgently needed. There is no question of our being intimidated by General Neguib, but we have to allow for the give and take normal in a settlement between sovereign states when negotiating with them.

3. I hope these general points will enable you to persuade your constituent that we are not running away from our responsibilities.

920 16/10

16/10

RECEIVED IN
15-11-50

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CONFIDENTIAL

JEN 92/52/C
(P.W.A.)

Mr. Lennox Boyd wrote to Lord Salisbury on

Flag A October 2 before it was clear that the Egyptians had been told of our wish to include a reference to freedom of navigation in the body of the Agreement as well as in the Preamble. This point was cleared up by the Department in subsequent discussions with the Ministry of Transport and it was agreed that Lord Salisbury should not reply to this letter but that Mr. Lennox Boyd should write again to the Secretary of State, in the light of further telegrams from Cairo. The questions raised in

Flag B Mr. Lennox Boyd's second letter have now been discussed at departmental level and the Ministry of Transport have agreed to abandon their alternative formula for the Preamble and to accept the text contained in Cairo

Flag C telegram number 1414.

2. I attach a draft reply to Mr. Lennox Boyd's two letters.

E. B. Ashby

October 14, 1953.

Private Secretary

Ryan Allen
14/10.



FROM THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT
and Civil Aviation

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE,
TE1192 SM1.44

Not seen by S.S.

- ① African Dept.
- ② Legal Advisers
- ③ Mr. L. Allen
- ④ Sir W. Strong

7th October, 1953

My dear Anthony

Since I wrote to the Acting Foreign Secretary on the 2nd October, I have seen and studied closely the draft clause on the Suez Canal submitted by the Egyptians and reported in telegram 1391 from Cairo.

I understand that the view of the Foreign Office is that in point of legal validity there is nothing to choose between the British and Egyptian drafts. We do not disagree with this, if indeed it is true to say that neither has any binding effect without reference to something in the agreement itself.

But in other respects than strictly legal validity we think the Egyptian draft may have a very different effect from the British draft.

I attach a special importance to the words "being agreed as to the necessity of upholding the principles set forth in the Convention." First because they record agreement which, whatever its legal value must have some moral force, and, secondly, because they emphasize the principles of freedom in the Convention rather than the Convention as a whole. The Convention itself, as we all agree, has some unsatisfactory features, and it is surely much better, with future

/discussions

The Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden, M.C., M.P.

O 371/102817

92431

discussions on this subject in mind, to put the emphasis on the principles rather than on the Convention itself. The omission of these words makes the Egyptian draft unsatisfactory, but I should see no objection to an alternative to our own draft which would include some of the Egyptian phraseology rather on the following lines:

"The Governments of Egypt and the United Kingdom, recognising that the Suez Canal is an integral part of Egypt and an international means of communication of economic, commercial and strategic importance, and being agreed as to the necessity of preserving and upholding the principles of freedom of navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal set forth in the 1888 Convention..."

I say all this on the assumption that there is still hope of an article in the agreement itself, or an exchange of letters, to which my letter to the Acting Foreign Secretary on the 2nd October referred.

If, however, the Egyptians could not be persuaded to agree to an article, then a fortiori the preamble they propose would seem to be quite inadequate; for read in conjunction with an agreement which contained no article on freedom of transit, it would be taken to imply that we and the Egyptians agree that the mere existence of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888 is sufficient to safeguard the freedom of navigation. But such a reference to the Suez Canal Convention

/ can

6371/102817

92939

EGYPT DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONS

JE 1192/538C

In Cairo telegram No. 1462, the Delegation ask for an answer to the question whether we could consent to their using the following formula for keeping the Agreement open for further renewal after seven years have elapsed from its entry into force:-

"After six years from the date of signature of this Agreement the Contracting Parties will consult on the question of the renewal of the Agreement."

2. There should be no objection to this provided that the words "from entry into force" are substituted for "from date of signature". We discussed this with Brigadier Dove when he was here and he said that the Egyptians had put forward some such formula.

3. ^{The instructions} ~~Our~~ formula given in paragraph 3(v) of our despatch No. 234 of August 20 ~~was~~ were to secure that

Flag A

(JE 1192/464B)

"The Parties would consult together at the end of the period specified for the duration of the Agreement to decide what arrangements were necessary to provide for the continued maintenance of the base thereafter."

4. This was put to the Egyptians who reacted strongly against it. On the other hand, the Delegation understood at the time (see paragraph 6 of Cairo telegram No. 1222) that they could get the Egyptians to accept a clause which stipulated that there would be consultation towards the end of the period of validity of the Agreement as to what would happen to the base at the end of the Agreement, "provided that it does not commit the Egyptians to anything specific."

5. ^{The} formula seems to be perfectly in line with instructions.

6. A draft reply is attached.

E.B. ~~Phillips~~

Dated October 16, 1953.

Flag B

(JE 1192/566)

means nothing

I think this is all right, and
the Legal Adviser agrees.

Sir W. Strang.

Roger Allen

Minister of State
Secretary of State

W. Strang
7/10

It isn't worth much;
but I suppose the best
we can get? It will
be severely criticized in
Parliament.

Lord Salisbury spoke -
think in Cabinet of formula
proposed for renewal being
better than that of 1936 Treaty.
But this commits Egyptians
to nothing.

I think that we must
try to get nearer Hey B.

AS Oct 18

Telegram sent for despatch, as amended by
the Secretary of State. J.B. Ireland
Resident Clerk
Oct. 19



F.O.,

Registry No.

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| Top Secret |
| SECRET |
| CONFIDENTIAL |
| RESTRICTED |
| SECRET |

(Date).....

IMMEDIATE Despatched.....M.

Draft.

[Security classification].....TOP SECRET
—if any

Telegram to:—

Addressed to.....CAIRO

CAIRO

.....telegram No..... (date).....

No.

repeated for information to.....B.M.E.O. (Fayid)

(Date)

Repeat to:—

B.M.E.O.
(Fayid)

Your telegram No. 1462 [of October 16:
Defence Negotiations with Egypt].

Following for Delegation:

I have no objection to wording you suggest, though you should substitute ^{but} "from ~~entry into force~~ ^{the date of} signature". ~~We are not asking the Egyptians to commit themselves to anything specific and will be satisfied if there is some provision allowing for renewal of the Agreement by mutual consent.~~

Royce Allen
17/10

Enclosed.
Cypher.

W.S.

Distribution: 17/10

Foreign Office
(Secret)

Whitehall
(Secret)

Copy to:

Egypt Defence
Distribution

JE191/538

(P.W.B.)

TOP SECRETEGYPT: DEFENCE NEGOTIATIONSConsultation Clause

JE1915/99c

Flag A

The formula put forward by the Egyptians at the meeting on October 20 (see Cairo telegram 1490, paragraph 6 (i)) is off the point in that it makes reference only to the British owned property in the Base. What we want in this clause is provision for consultation between the Egyptians and ourselves before the Agreement expires to decide what arrangements are necessary for the continued maintenance of the Base thereafter. (See our despatch number 234, paragraph 3 (v)).

JE1915/444c

Flag B

2. It will be within General Robertson's instructions to accept a clause on the following lines: -

The parties will consult together not later than one year before the end of the period specified for the duration of the Agreement concerning arrangements ^{necessary to replace the present agreement} to be made for the future.

3. A clause on these lines would not commit the Egyptians to renewal of the Agreement, but we have no hope of persuading them to do that in any case. It would, however, keep the door open for renewal by mutual consent on the lines of our despatch number 234, and on the lines which the delegation suggested in their telegram number 1462, that they might put forward.

Flag C

J. B. Robertson

G. B. Robertson

October 22, 1953.

Robertson's instructions (contd) read -

You are authorised to obtain agreement on the line that -

The parties would consult together at the end of the period specified for the duration of the agreement to decide what arrangements were necessary to provide for the continued maintenance of the base hereafter.

S/S did not like -

" after six years from the date of signature of this agreement the contracting parties will consult on the question of the renewal of the agreement "

we suggest

" The parties will consult together not later than one year before the end of the period specified for the duration of the agreement regarding the arrangements necessary for the future (of the base). "

371/102817

92939

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TOP SECRET

TELETYPE / 1028

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET
AND WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Hankey

D. 12.52 p.m. October 16, 1953

No. 1462

October 16, 1953

R. 1.17 p.m. October 16, 1953

IMMEDIATETOP SECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1462 of October 16
Repeated for information to B.M.E.O.

Following from delegation.

Consultation Clause.

Please see paragraph 6 of our telegram [grp. undec].
This is a point on which we have not yet reached any clarity
in our discussions with the Egyptians. We will go as far
as we can to secure acceptance of the formula suggested in
your Despatch No. 234 but in the last resort can we accept
something on the following lines?

[Begins].

After six years from the date of signature of this agreement
the contracting parties will consult on the question of the
renewal of the agreement.

[Ends].

ADVANCE COPIES

Sir W. Strang

Private Secretary

Mr. R. Allen

Head of African Department

Head of News Department

PPPP

CYPHER

Registry No. JE 1192/538C

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~~EMERGENCY~~
~~IMMEDIATE~~
~~PRIORITY~~
~~ROUTINE~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~

Despatched 9/10/1953 11 10 P M.

Draft. Cairo

OUT FILE

IMMEDIATE
TOP SECRET

Telegram.

Addressed to Cairo tel No 1799 of 0419 repeated for info to BNEO. JE 1192/538C

No. 1799

Your telegram No. 1462 of

(Date) 10/12

October 16: Defence Negotiations with Egypt.

Repeat to:-

B.N.E.O. Fayid M.S.G

Following for Delegation:-

You should do your ~~very~~ utmost to secure formula suggested in my despatch No. 234. Alternative you propose seems to me worth ~~practically nothing~~ *to have no value.*

2. Nevertheless, in the last resort *you* ~~would~~ accept it, subject to substitution of "from the date of entry into force" for "from the date of signature".

Hayden

DB

~~SECRET~~

~~Cypher~~

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(-). Secret Whitehall Sec

Copies to:-

Reg - 1/13

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

637/102817

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JE 1192 / 539
539

TOP SECRET

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET
AND WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Hankey

D. 2.47 p.m. October 16, 1953

No. 1464

October 16, 1953

R. 3.09 p.m. October 16, 1953

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1464 of October 16
Repeated for information to B.M.E.O.

Beirut (for Mer Div)

My immediately preceding telegram: Guidance to Press.

Following from Delegation.

This is likely to be a difficult moment since what is meat at one end is poison at the other.

2. We propose to expand the line suggested in Allen's letter as follows:-

(a) The agreement, if it materialises as is to be hoped, will be an act of statesmanship in strong interest of both sides. It will take full account of Egypt's sovereignty and national aspirations as well as of our own defence needs.

(b) The Base will continue as a working Base for the British forces in the Middle East. This is a cardinal point. Our equipment will be maintained by British technicians who will control essential installations according to the instructions of the British Service Departments. (If we are to prevent a serious crisis arising immediately after agreement owing to a clash between British and Egyptian statements, we must avoid unduly emphasising the fact that technicians will be soldiers). Base has always employed thousands of Egyptians and in fact needs more for full efficiency. Now there will be some more thousands, as soon as they can be trained by our technicians.

(c) The Base will continue to be of value to all the Arab countries and indeed to the whole Middle East, as the Availability Clause makes clear. It is common sense that the Egyptians
/should take

TOP SECRETCairo telegram No. 1464 to Foreign Office

-2-

should take over the main duty of guarding it, since they are willing. We have far better uses for our manpower, and if we are going to be friends with Egypt, as is now agreed, (we must avoid word "alliance"), we do not want all these troops here.

(d) The burying of Anglo-Egyptian hatchet will facilitate closer relations between all Arab countries and the West. (We must avoid reference to M.E.D.O. and we must not suggest that our dispute has previously hindered Arab unity). We are still as interested as ever in Suez Canal area and in the Middle East.

(e) Agreement will throw great responsibility on the Egyptians. This is a great opportunity for Neguib and his friends to justify the confidence we are placing in them.

(f) Our negotiators have received friendly assistance from other Powers, both in the East and West, especially United States, many of whom are vitally concerned in security of Middle East and in free transit of Suez Canal, and are also most anxious that the dispute should be settled by agreement.

(g) Way will be clear for economic progress in Egypt as soon as agreement is signed.

(h) This is only an agreement on principles. Need for restraint and understanding on both sides until it is concluded. Many details remain to be settled on both sides.

3. The Egyptians on their side are bound to claim a success in attaining their national aspirations, and even a victory. But we will do our best to make them be moderate. This will not be easy, even if they are moderate at first. It will be impossible if our publicity is so framed as to suggest that there is no real change in the situation because British Military personnel still continue in full control in Suez Canal Base.

Foreign Office please pass to Beirut as my telegram No. 153.

[Repeated to Beirut].

ADVANCE COPIES

Sir W. Strang
Private Secretary
Mr. R. Allen
PPPP

Head of African Department
Head of News Department

371/102817

92939

JE 1192 (53)

TOP SECRET.

(Pw A')

ANGLO - EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS :

P u b l i c i t y.

1192/537/519

Flags A & B
(attached)

In Mr Hankey's telegrams Nos. 1463 and 1464 he sets out eight points for guidance in publicity matters. It is of especial importance that there should be complete agreement between ourselves and Cairo as to how this is to be handled and the points to be made, since a mistake in official publicity could lead to a public disagreement between the Egyptians and ourselves on the interpretation of some vital principle and that could easily upset the whole agreement.

See Cabinet
Minutes at
Flag C

2. We have told the Delegation that we wish no announcement to be made indicating that final agreement has been reached until the matter has been explained in private to Members of Parliament supporting the Government. When that has been done there will be presumably a further meeting between our Delegation and the Egyptians, after which *(separate submission)* an agreed communiqué will be issued. Almost at the same time there would be a Ministerial statement in both Houses of Parliament.

Flag E

3. The Ministerial statement will provide the basis for all our official publicity for the agreement in principle. An INTEL has gone out to posts, telling them this.

4. It would be convenient if we could tell the Delegation that the Ministerial statements in Parliament would follow the lines of Mr Hankey's telegram No. 1464.

E. B. *[Signature]*

October 17, 1953.

Copies sent to Hds of News Dept & I.P.D.

I agree with the Delegation's Telegram.
 But I do not think we can, at this
stage, commit ourselves about the shape
 of any Ministerial statement.
 We can hardly do more than tell
 the Del^s (perhaps by letter) that we
 agree in principle, & will let them have
 as much advance notice of any statement
 as possible (but it may not be much).
 It will in fact probably refer to the communiqué.
 Ra. 19/10

I agree generally with the line for publicity suggested
 in Cairo telegram 1464.

Unfortunately, the timing of publicity looks as though
 it may be far from ideal. There is bound to be a danger of
 leakage after Wednesday's meeting and it would, on the face
 of it, be advisable to follow this as quickly as possible
 by a further meeting, say on the Thursday, to agree on the
 communiqué. This should permit a statement to be made in
 the House of Commons on Friday morning and the appropriate
 guidance to be given by News Department to the press, but it
 would preclude any statement by, say, Lord Alexander in the
 House of Lords (which would have been most useful), since their
 Chamber will not be sitting on that day.

Incidentally, I am sorry that News Department was not
 consulted before the reply (telegram 1804) was sent to
 Mr. Hankey's telegram 1478, because I think that the
 suggestion this reply contains to arrange the formal
 meeting for Saturday (presumably to agree and to issue the
 communiqué) has not been thought out. It seems to overlook
 the Parliamentary angle and it does not take into account
 the imperfections of our own Sunday press which is on balance
 pretty inefficient and would normally be expected to take an
 anti-Agreement line.

If a meeting to agree the joint communiqué is not
 possible on the Thursday - and this may well be the case -
 there would be some advantage in postponing it until Sunday,
 or even Monday, in order that both press and Parliament
 (including the House of Lords which does not sit on Monday)
 could be informed in an appropriate manner. Such an
 arrangement would admittedly involve risking a good deal of
 speculation in the Sunday press, but this need not do much
 harm.

/As for

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As for the British weekday press generally, the bulk of it, I feel confident, can be brought to support the Agreement as a rational solution, and I do not think we need worry if it errs on the hither side of enthusiasm, too much of which might do damage at the Egyptian end. The "Daily Express" will doubtless take a hostile line, and I think the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Daily Mail" might well require a little special treatment to supplement News Department's efforts. If the Secretary of State at an appropriate moment could find time to have a word with Mr. Berry and Mr. Schofield, it would undoubtedly help.

W. Riddale

20th October, 1953.

Mr. Allen.

Perhaps we had better reconsider Saturday in view of Mr. Riddale's minute? Do we know when the P.M. will be speaking to the backbenchers? If on Wednesday, all the more reason for the formal meeting to be earlier; but I rather suspect that we may not after all conclude on Wednesday. If however we do, then we don't want to postpone the issue of the communiqué to Sunday or later, surely.

Appt. Dept. for comments. RA 20/10.

In view of Mr. Riddale's minute we have let Cairo know that we have reconsidered this question and have invited the delegation's views on the alternative programmes which Mr. Riddale suggests. The answer will be covered in the reports we receive of today's meeting.

Prof. Gordon
21/10

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TOP SECRET

JE1192

1537

16

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/CTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Hankey

D: 1.14 p.m. October 16, 1953.

No: 1463

R: 1.43 p.m. October 16, 1953.

October 16, 1953.

IMMEDIATE

TOP SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 1463 of October 16

Repeated for information to: B.M.E.O.

Beirut (for Herdiv).

My telegram No: 1459. - JE 11915/93 9.

Following from Delegation.

Publicity aspects of possible agreement on principles.

Flag D.

We note from Allen's letter of October 2 to Hankey that you wish as little publicity as possible about details. Egyptians Minister for Foreign Affairs has told us the same here. But with all respect we feel that in view of Press leakages and controversy since beginning of this month both Governments will in fact find it necessary to tell their people substantially the principles on which agreement has been reached, if only to answer damaging criticisms based on half truths.

2. As regards the extent of what is to be published: on availability and uniform it will be difficult to publish anything but the text as agreed: on the organisation of the base and on the question of technicians and duration we should hope to be able to agree a summary for publication. You will appreciate that as we are getting what we want by spelling it out and avoiding statements of principle it will be dangerous to compress some of the clauses too severely. If you have any contrary thoughts or other guidance for us please let us have them by telegraph.

See my immediately following telegram as regards oral guidance to the Press.

Foreign Office please pass Beirut as my telegram No: 152.

[Repeated to Beirut]

ADVANCE COPIES: Sir W. Strang.
Mr. R. Allen.

Private Secretary.
Head African Department.

JJJJJ

J. PW

October 19, 1953.

JE1192/S11G

OUTFILE

We were talking this morning about the Foreign Affairs Committee next Wednesday, at which the Prime Minister may be addressing the Party on Egypt.

I do not know whether the Prime Minister has seen the attached text of a talk which General Robertson was to have given to U.P.s when he was last in England, but which for some reason was never delivered. It is, in our view, a forthright and helpful apologia for the policy of reaching an agreement with the Egyptians over the Canal Zone, and the Prime Minister may find it useful to glance through it.

D. A. E. SHUCKBURN

D.B. Pitblado, Esq., C.V.O.

R371/102817

92939

SECRET~~E.1192/523~~Enter
E.1192/523

The Egyptian Ambassador spent an hour with me this morning. I repeatedly told him that the negotiations were being handled in Cairo, and it would not serve any useful purpose if he and I started a different set of discussions in London.

He said however that there were certain points that he had been instructed to make to me. He understood that the negotiations were sticking on certain matters. The first of these was the question of uniform. He thought that the soldiers we were to leave were to be regarded as civilians performing technical duties. I said that they would in fact be technical personnel of the Armed Forces. They would have to be under military discipline and it was much better for both countries that while on duty they should be in uniform. I said that I could not understand why the Egyptian Government were making such a point of this because in fact uniform would be only overalls, or khaki shorts and shirts with badges of rank, and military caps. We had offered, I understood, that some arm-band should be worn. The Ambassador said that if that was what we meant by uniform he himself could see no objection. But we had red uniforms, or ceremonial uniforms, and his Government were frightened of ceremonial parades in the bases and other military paraphernalia which would look to the Egyptians as though there was still military occupation. I said that this sort of discussion was much more usefully conducted with General Robertson in Cairo, but I would let General Robertson know the Ambassador's point about ceremonial uniforms.

M. Hakki then came to the question of the Suez Canal formula. I said that we were considering the wording suggested by the Egyptian negotiators and that discussion between the Ambassador and myself would not be of any value. He said that the insertion of a reference to freedom of navigation through the Canal would remind people in Egypt of the 1936 Agreement and that was why they did not like it. I told him that I would prefer not to discuss the wording with him, but I was certain that it would be impossible for us to adhere to any agreement which did not include some reference to freedom of navigation.

The Ambassador then referred to the question of availability. I told him that we were very disappointed that the prospect of agreement upon this matter appeared to have receded. We had been under the impression that the Egyptians would agree to the phrase about the United Nations which we had proposed.

/The Ambassador

12/10

The Ambassador said that it was considered by the Egyptian Government to be far too wide in that it would mean that if there was, for example, an attack by Russia on Japan, we should be entitled to re-activate the base. I said that there might be something in his point but the position from which we could not recede was this: it could not be left that if Russia attacked Western Europe (for example, Germany, Yugoslavia, Greece or Turkey) there would have to be discussion between us and the Egyptians before we could re-activate the base. He told him that it was absolutely impossible for us to accept that situation. The Ambassador said that we should trust the Egyptians, that consultations would only take a question of hours or at the most days, and he did not think it was necessary to have an automatic right of re-activation under those circumstances. I said that there really could be no argument about the proposition which I had just put forward, but if the negotiators could work out among themselves a different form of words covering the eventuality which I had mentioned that would be all right with us. He pointed out that really it would be very much better for the Egyptian Government itself if the action to be taken in that contingency were beyond any doubt. If it was to be a matter for consultation, the Egyptian Government would find themselves subject to all sorts of pressures from the Soviet Union in one way or another. While if it was clear and definite that there would be immediate re-activation, the Egyptian Government could evade that sort of pressure from the Soviet Government.

The Ambassador then referred to the R.A.F. staging post. I said that there could not be any argument about this. He must realise that in removing 76,000 troops from the Canal Zone and agreeing to remove the rest in the course of seven years and to hand over the whole base area to the Egyptian command we were making an enormous gesture towards the Egyptians in an endeavour to put our relations with them on a basis of friendship. Compared with that the retention of the staging post was a small matter, but in view of our world-wide commitments, it was a matter upon which we had to be adamant.

Finally the Ambassador said that the whole purpose of the Egyptian Government was to put relations between our two countries on a basis of trust and friendship and he hoped that we would not be difficult about the remaining points of difference.

/I said that

371/102817

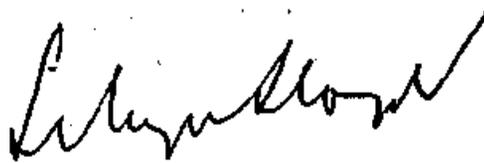
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I said that because we shared that desire we were sacrificing our rights under the 1936 Agreement and making a very great effort to obtain Egyptian good will.

I pointed out that it was quite wrong to assume that our rights ended in 1956. The 1936 Treaty was one in perpetuity, and simply specified that after 20 years either party had the right to call for the treaty to be revised in such a way as might seem appropriate in the circumstances then existing. It was not at all clear what international body would be competent to arbitrate in the event of us being unable to agree on a revised treaty, and it might well be that years would pass while all this was being thrashed out. During this time we would be able to maintain our forces in the Canal Zone and we would therefore be making a great sacrifice by the proposed agreement.

During the course of the conversation I spoke to the Ambassador about the leaks to the press in Cairo, and I quoted from the press cuttings of October 6 and Colonel Nasser's remarks. I impressed upon the Ambassador how unhelpful was that sort of thing.



Selwyn Lloyd
October 6, 1953.

African Department to enter

Copies: Foreign Secretary
Sir William Strang
Lord Reading
Mr. Nutting
Mr. R. Allen
Mr. Boothby

Archives

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JE 1192/517G

Copy No. 8

**CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE
UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR ON OCTOBER 7, 1953, CON-
CERNING THE EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS**

Mr. Eden to Sir R. Makins (Washington)

(No. 1049. Secret) *Foreign Office,*
Sir, *October 7, 1953.*

The United States Ambassador called on me at his request to-day, to speak about the Egyptian negotiations. He said that the United States Government had never regarded themselves as an intermediary between the United Kingdom and Egypt, but that they had in fact supported the United Kingdom position as strongly as they could with the Egyptians. In particular, they had recently supported our stand on three items: (a) the future of the Suez Canal: (b) the availability of the base: (c) the duration of the agreement. They now understood that there was no further difficulty on these points, but that the negotiations were in danger of breaking down over the question what kind of uniform the technicians should wear in the base zone. They still did not wish to intervene in any way, but they had instructed the Ambassador to present to me personally their view that it would be unfortunate if the negotiations were to break down on this issue.

2. I hastened to explain to the Ambassador that it was not the case that the question of uniforms was the only outstanding issue, and I told him of the difficulties the Egyptians were now making over the availability formula, amongst other things. I also gave him an account of our position regarding uniforms. On this Mr. Aldrich said that in Mr. Caffery's judgment the Egyptian Government would be run out of office if they gave way on the uniform question. Mr. Aldrich assured me that Mr. Caffery was now being extremely helpful to us in Cairo. It was his view that if these negotiations broke down, the chances of any future Egyptian Government negotiating a settlement of any kind were practically nil.

3. I said that I thought that the United States Government did not perhaps understand exactly the position which had been reached in the negotiations. On the freedom of transit through the Suez Canal, the Egyptians had proposed an alternative formula which we were considering and which would not, in my view, raise serious difficulties if it were slightly amended. On the wearing of uniforms by the British technicians, I said that we must insist upon the right to wear uniforms. In practice, our technicians might wear overalls or khaki drill, and they might also wear an armband showing that they were base technicians, but they would be British soldiers and as such they must be able to wear their uniform on occasions. The most serious point between us and the Egyptians, however, concerned the availability of the base in case of war. What we were asking for was that the same principle should apply in the case of United Nations action against aggression as in the case of an attack against an Arab country. This seemed not unreasonable to me. Moreover, we had only agreed to accept the Egyptian proposal for consultation in the case of an attack on Turkey because we considered that such an attack would not take place without United Nations action, and therefore we should be covered by the United Nations formula.

4. The Ambassador promised to report the exact position to his Government at once.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Cairo and Paris, and to the Head of the British Middle East Office at Fayid.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

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JE 1192/518G

Copy No.

8

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND SIR ZAFRULLAH KHAN ON OCTOBER 7, 1953, CONCERNING THE EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS*Mr. Eden to the Hon. R. Hankey (Cairo)*(No. 276. Secret)
Sir,*Foreign Office,
October 7, 1953.*

Sir Zafrullah Khan called on me to-day on his way back to the United Nations General Assembly in New York. He had just come from Cairo, where he had had conversations with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and other members of the Council of the Revolutionary Command, including Major Salah Salem. He had been unable to see General Neguib himself, since he was in Alexandria and unwell, nor had he seen Colonel Gamal Nasr, who had also been away.

2. Sir Zafrullah said that he thought that there was not now very much between the British and Egyptian positions in the Canal Zone negotiations. He said he had told the Egyptians that in his opinion there was the basis for an agreement with us, and had advised them strongly to take the chance offered them. He had pointed out to them the great advantages which they would obtain from an agreement on the lines now proposed by us, and had urged them to leave aside for the moment points on which they could not accept our proposals and to build up agreement on other points.

3. In particular, he had told them that it was unreasonable to expect us to agree that the base should only be reactivated in the event of an attack upon the Arab States. He had pointed out that this was obviously

not our main interest (nor indeed was it Pakistan's either, since Pakistan was not an Arab country) and that we were more concerned about a possible attack on Turkey or Persia, which was far more likely. He made the point that no doubt we had agreed to make the contingency of an attack on Turkey or Persia subject to consultation because, and only because, we thought that the clause providing for reactivation in the event of United Nations action against aggression would in practice enable us to return to Egypt in the event of an attack on Turkey or Persia. He had also impressed upon the Egyptians the need to clinch an agreement quickly, since there was always the danger that two sides who were close together to-day might drift further and further apart if time were allowed to pass.

4. I thanked Sir Zafrullah Khan warmly for the advice which he had given to the Egyptians, and said that I hoped they would take it to heart. I said that I thought that Sir Zafrullah Khan had understood our position very well, and that we always relied upon his wise statesmanship.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Washington, New York and Paris, and to the Head of the British Middle East Office at Fayid.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

1. Mr. Killick
2. African Dept



40, Berkeley Square,
London, W. 1.
7th October, 1953.

E. 1192/019

Dear Private Secretary,

As Mr. Rodgers is at present in America I am forwarding the enclosed extract of a letter from one of his constituents.

I know he would be very grateful if you could let me have a suitable reply to send to Mr. Partridge.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Orley

Private Secretary to
Mr. John Rodgers, M.P.

J.E. Killick, Esq.,
Private Secretary to Mr. Nutting,
Foreign Office, S.W. 1