

SECRET

FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE

(United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Cypher/OTP.

Sir P. Dixon

D. 6.11 p.m. (LT) November 14, 1956

No. 1216

R. 4.40 a.m. November 15, 1956

November 14, 1956

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

JE 1074

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1216 of  
November 14

Repeated for information to: Washington  
Paris

1072  
1071  
1074

Following for Prime Minister from Secretary of State.

I dined with Lodge last night and had a two-hour conversation after dinner. He spoke of the shock which our action had been and the pain which it had caused him. We had been guilty of aggression and what we had done was indefensible. I said that I did not agree with him at all. We had acted to stop a wider conflagration. We had done so quickly because otherwise Syria and Jordan would have been in the war before we knew where we were. Our intention to protect our national interests in the Canal area was, in my view, legitimate self-defence. On the question of moral guilt I talked to him about Guatemala and said that the United States, on his arguments, had been guilty of aggression there. I, on the other hand, thought they had acted perfectly rightly and we had done what we could to help in spite of the pressures in the Security Council against them. He really had no answer to that argument. I went on to say that there were long-term interests at stake. We believed that Arab preparations for an attack on Israel were being advanced with Russian connivance and that Russian penetration of the area had gone much further than the United States believed. I said if there had been a concerted Arab attack on Israel at some later date we would have been in grave difficulties. Our troops would not have been ready, the Russians would be supported the Arabs and there might have been a real danger of world war III. He did not dispute all this but it did not shake his belief that what

/we have done was wrong.

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SECRET

U.K. Del. New York telegram No. 1216 to  
Foreign Office

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we had done was wrong, I said that we must now look to the future. Nasser must not be allowed to appear as having won. He had not won. His army's fighting capacity had been shown to be almost nil and his air force had put up no show at all. He had brought great economic hardship to Egypt. The only thing which would enable him to extricate himself would be United States support for him against us. We must deal with realities. I said that I hoped above all that the United States would not come along with economic aid for Nasser. Lodge said that he did not think there was any chance of that although the American Administration was so vast that one bit of it did not always know what other bits were doing. I thought that remark was rather disturbing and I should like Caccia to make such enquiries as he can rapidly in Washington.

2. With regard to the International Force, I pointed out the advantages there were for the West if this Force could be properly constituted, with a Canadian element in particular, and on the understanding that it would not be ordered out in a week or two by the Egyptians. I said that the principal negotiating card in the hands of the Secretary-General was the presence of our troops in Port Said and that if the United States were to take the lead in trying to get us out before the International Force had been properly constituted with appropriate functions the situation would be disastrous. I tried to pin him down on this. He was rather evasive but he professed broad agreement and said that there must be some withdrawal by us as the United Nations units moved in. I said that if it would make everybody happy for us to take out two platoons of infantry because two platoons of Finns had arrived in Ismailia we would, but we were not going to withdraw the bulk of our forces until there was something in their place and I put the vacuum argument to him again and again. He professed to be anxious about Russian volunteers and I said that that worried me much less than the United States trying to drive us out prematurely. I said I thought it was not in the interests of the United States or the West generally if they lent support to the idea that our operation had been a failure. I said that if the United States had not led the hunt against us in the United Nations I believed we would have

/had a

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SECRET

U.K. Del New York telegram No. 1216 to  
Foreign Office

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had a brilliant success and that Nasser by now would have gone. I do not think he relished that argument.

3. He was friendly throughout but on the whole reticent. His two advisers, Wadsworth and [grp. undec] sat almost silent. I am not sure how much impression I made. Dixon thought that the conversation had been very useful and that the American attitude was a considerable improvement on anything before. I am sure, however, that we have still a long way to go. Lodge suggested that I should go down to Washington to see Dulles. Hoover comes here tomorrow. I will try to have a go at him and I have it in mind to go down to Washington on Friday or Saturday particularly if there is any chance of my seeing the President.

Please repeat to Paris as my telegram No. 303

[Repeated to Paris]

ADVANCE COPIES

Sir I. Kirkpatrick  
Private Secretary  
Mr. Dean  
Mr. Beeley  
Mr. Wright  
Head of Levant Dept.  
Head of U.N. Dept.  
Resident Clerk.

E.J.J.

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FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Middleton

E. 10/14/4.

No. 1166  
November 15, 1956.

D. 5.29 p.m. November 15, 1956.  
R. 6.50 p.m. November 15, 1956.

IMMEDIATE

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1166 of November 15.

Repeated for information to Amman	Bagdad
P.O.M.E.F.	Tel Aviv
and Saving to Washington	Bahrain
Tripoli	Khartoum
Tehran.	

Following is text of resolutions adopted by the conference of Heads of Arab States. These resolutions follow a short survey of events in Egypt.

1. The United Nations decisions (of November 2, 4 and 7) must be implemented. If Britain and France refuse to withdraw their forces from Egyptian territory immediately and unconditionally and also if Israel contravenes the decisions of the United Nations and refuses to withdraw its forces behind the armistice lines unconditionally, or if as a result of the attitude of Britain, France and Israel a new crisis arises which leads to the resumption of military activities, then Britain, France and Israel would be jointly responsible for the continuation of the aggression.

At that stage, each country represented in this conference will immediately play its part and in accordance with the legal right of self-defence she will impose the provisions of Article 41 of the United Nations Charter and will take practical measures within her maximum possibilities in accordance with her obligations under Article 2 of the Treaty of Joint Defence and Economic Cooperation between the Arab League States (of 1951).

2. The question of the Suez Canal should be separated from the circumstances which accompanied the aggression on Egypt and considered it as an independent matter.

This should be solved in a manner consistent with Egypt's sovereignty and dignity within the framework of the United Nations and by negotiation between the parties concerned without manifestations of pressure and interference and on the basis of the 1888 Convention and the six principles laid down by the Security Council on October 13, 1956.

/3. To

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Beirut telegram No. 1166 to Foreign Office

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3. To support the claims of the Algerians in their struggle until their national aspirations for independence and sovereignty materialize. Members of the conference express their sincere fraternal greetings, appreciation and admiration to President Nasser to the Egyptian armed forces and to the Egyptian people.

They extol their patriotism and their devotion in defence of the safety of Egypt, its sovereignty and Arab nationalism and the dignity and glory of the Arab nation.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington, Bahrain, Tripoli, Khartoum and Tehran as my telegrams Nos. Saving 115, 15, 10, 8 and 16 respectively.

[Repeated Saving to Washington, Bahrain, Tripoli, Khartoum and Tehran]

ADVANCE COPIES:-

Private Secretary  
Sir I. Kirkpatrick  
Mr. Dean  
Mr. Beeley  
Mr. Wright  
Head of Levant Department  
Head of African Department  
Head of Eastern Department  
Head of News Department  
Head of United Nations Department  
Mr. Ashe, P.U.S.D.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO NEW YORK  
(United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND  
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No.1896

November 15, 1956

D.4.31 p.m. November 15, 1956

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to New York telegram No.1896 of November 15.  
Repeated for information to Paris and Washington.

Following for Secretary of State from Prime Minister.

We considered this morning your telegram No.1218 and the somewhat obscure letter from the Secretary General in your telegram No.1219.

We felt that we could accept an arrangement based on paragraph 4b of the Secretary General's letter. That is to say a withdrawal phased in relation to:

- a. the arrival of U.N. forces;
- b. arrangements for the clearing of the Canal;
- c. arrangements for an agreement on the Canal.

We could also accept token withdrawals in relation to progress under these three heads. We would not for instance rule out the withdrawal of a battalion if the United Nations brought a battalion in. But we could not possibly agree to a total withdrawal on the terms suggested in the second sentence of paragraph 4. That is to say we could not agree to a total withdrawal on a mere assurance that after our troops had gone, a beginning would be made with the clearing of the Canal and with steps to secure the negotiation of a Canal agreement.

In order to avoid the danger of being presented with an unacceptable proposal, should you make our position clear to Hammarskjöld through Swedish channels whilst he is in Cairo?

C CCC

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FROM NEW YORK TO FOREIGN OFFICE  
(United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations)

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND  
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir P. Dixon  
No. 1253  
November 15, 1956

D. 12.58 a.m. November 16, 1956 (L.T.)  
R. 9.36 a.m. November 16, 1956

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1253 of  
November 15,

Repeated for information to Paris and Washington

Following for Prime Minister from the Secretary of  
State.

Your telegram No. 1896.

I have been trying to make up my mind as to our position with regard to this question of withdrawal of Anglo-French forces. It seems to me that the following positions can be taken up:

- (a) We do not accept more than token withdrawals of British troops until the Canal has been cleared and we have a firm agreement about its future régime.
- (b) We do not accept more than token withdrawals until an agreement has been made with regard to the clearance of the Canal and negotiations have been [? gp. omitted] about its future régime.
- (c) We do accept withdrawal of British troops as they are replaced in Port Said by United Nations troops provided some progress is being made towards agreement about clearance and the future régime of the Canal, on the understanding that the International Force will remain until these two matters have been settled.

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UKDEL New York telegram No. 1253 to Foreign Office

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2. According to taste we can add settlement of the Arab-Israel disputes to (a), (b) and (c) above.

3. We shall not get (a) above. I believe that we could get (c) above. I am sure that Hammarskjold himself favours it in spite of Egyptian opposition. My own feeling, however, is that we should favour (b) with particular emphasis on clearance of the Canal. But it may not be wise to try to force this issue at the moment since we have to face the fact that as things stand I am doubtful whether Hammarskjold can be induced to put these conditions to the Egyptians. We can be reasonably certain that they would refuse them. If this were to happen would it be to our advantage, remembering that we cannot count on the Assembly backing us on such an issue?

4. On balance, I am therefore in favour of waiting for Hammarskjold's return before we define our requirements or lay down conditions for the withdrawal of our forces. I am not therefore inclined to send a message to Hammarskjold in Cairo at the moment other than that about Egyptian breaches of the cease-fire.

Please repeat to Paris as my telegram No. 309.

[Repeated to Paris].

ADVANCE COPIES:

Sir I. Kirkpatrick	Private Secretary
Mr. Dean	Mr. Ashe
Mr. Beeley	Mr. Wright
Head of African Department	Head of News
Head of Levant Department	Department
Head of United Nations Department	

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JE 1074

FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET AND  
WHITEHALL SECRET DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia

No. 2307

November 17, 1956

D. 3.00 a.m. November 18, 1956 (L.T.)

R. 12.15 p.m. November 18, 1956

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 2307 of November 17.

Repeated for information to UKDEL New York

Following for Prime Minister from Secretary of State.

This is an interim assessment from my Washington talks today.

2. Foster Dulles was most friendly and intelligent, but seemed to want to evade personal responsibility during the coming phase. Hoover was quite negative; I am afraid the same applies to Lodge. Loy Henderson was understanding and sympathetic, but said that he was without influence. Allen Dulles could not have been more cordial, but said that he did not influence policy. However, Harold Caccia tells me that Allen Dulles' willingness to continue to cooperate with us on the intelligence side is the first indication of its kind that there has been in day to day business here so far as the administration is concerned.

3. I am going to see Bedell Smith tomorrow morning, and also Elliot, who has had a private talk with the President. I did my best with Foster to get him to arrange a private meeting between myself and the President, but it looks as though the machine and perhaps the President himself, are not yet ready for that. It is clear that the most antagonistic elements are the second rank in the State Department (e.g. people like Rountree). In the absence of an effective Secretary of State they are more powerful than they should be.

4. I have put

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Washington telegram No. 2307 to Foreign Office

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4. I have put it quite plainly to both the Dulles and to Hoover that if Nasser is to emerge as the complete arbiter about what the international force should consist of, what its functions should be, where it should operate and how long it should exist, we should have seriously to consider resuming our operations. I have tried to persuade them that that is a contingency seriously to take into account.

5. To sum up, there is no desire here to see Nasser built up, but there is no grip in the administration as to what is immediately involved, or what should speedily be done. It will be 1917 and 1941 all over again.

ADVANCE COPIES:

Sir I. Kirkpatrick  
Private Secretary  
Mr. Dean  
Mr. Beeley  
Head of African Department  
Head of Levant Department  
Head of News Department  
Mr. Ashe  
Resident Clerk

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

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Sir H. Caccia  
No: 2308  
November 17, 1956.

D: 2.50 a.m. November 18, 1956. LT.  
R: 1.32 p.m. November 18, 1956.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 2308 of November 17

RECEIVED IN Repeated for information to: U.K. Del. New York.

Following from Secretary of State for Prime Minister.

Caccia and I saw Dulles this afternoon in hospital. Hoover was present. Dulles was up and dressed and looked remarkably well.

2. He was friendly throughout the conversation. Whenever any difficulty arose he explained that he was not Secretary of State and that Hoover was responsible. He agreed that there was no point in arguing about the past. The thing was to concentrate on the future. He said that he had no complaint about our objectives in our recent operations. In fact they were the same as those of the United States but he still did not think that our methods of achieving them were the right ones. Even so he deplored that we had not managed to bring down Nasser.

3. When I then said that this had been made more difficult by the United States not being prepared at least to be neutral, he defended what he had done by saying that if the United States resolution of November 2 had not been put forward, there would have been a very much worse Russian one for which the United States would have had to vote. I then said whether or not he approved of our methods we had at least produced a situation in which Nasser was highly vulnerable but what was important was the action to deal with him in the future. If he was permitted to dictate what was to be the composition of the international force, what were to be its functions, where it was to operate, and when it should be withdrawn, then we would have completely failed. He did not appear to disagree with what I said but he said that it all depended on Hammarskjold. I said that we were very doubtful about Hammarskjold. His ideas were probably the right ideas, but the point was whether he would....

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Washington telegram No: 2308 to Foreign Office

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he would be strong enough to insist that Nasser complied. Dulles, after indicating his thought that Hammarskjold was building himself up almost too much, agreed that it was important to prevent Nasser getting away with it.

4. I suggested that the whole weight of the United States Administration ought to be behind Hammarskjold in requiring the Egyptians to conform. He did not disagree but gave very little indication of how he thought that could be achieved.

5. I emphasized the importance for so many countries of clearing the Canal. Dulles did not dispute this. When I said that after Hammarskjold's return a resolution should at once be introduced in the United Nations in order to secure the clearing of the Canal, Dulles appeared to favour this but said that he had not followed things sufficiently to know how this should be handled. He thought that it might be best if an Asian country were prepared to take the lead.

6. I explained that we, and only we, had the proper equipment for getting on with this job and that we were prepared to make it available and place it under United Nations Command. It might be that an Asian country should sponsor a resolution but it would be of great importance that the United States should make it clear that they regarded this as justified and urgent. Hoover, to whom Dulles referred, did not have any suggestion to make beyond saying that we should wait until Hammarskjold's return.

7. Dulles went on to discuss the Soviet aims. He said that he was more worried than ever before about that. The whole régime in the U.S.S.R. was in peril and the Soviet Union might take reckless action to divert attention from domestic and satellite issues. He agreed, however, that this was probably not immediately imminent.

8. Dulles is leaving for Florida tomorrow for a fortnight's holiday. He intends to assume full responsibility on his return.

ADVANCE COPIES:

Private Secretary.	Sir I. Kirkpatrick.	Mr. Dean.
Mr. Beeley.	Mr. Wright.	Mr. Reilly.
Sir H. Trevelyan.	Head African Dept..	Head Levant Dept..
Head Northern Dept..	Head United Nations Dept..	Head News Dept..
Mr. Brenchley.	Mr. Ashe, P.U.S.D..	Resident Clerk.

JJJJJ