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E/4211/193

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM MOSCOW TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir W. Hayter  
No: 1054  
August 2, 1956.

D: 10.52 a.m. August 2, 1956.  
R: 12.47 p.m. August 2, 1956.

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 1054 of August 1  
Repeated for information to: Cairo. Washington.  
and Saving to: Paris. P.O.M.E.F..

My immediately preceding telegram and your telegram  
No: 1233: Suez Canal.

My preliminary estimate of Soviet reactions is that whatever we say they will continue to give public approval to the Egyptian case (you will recall that Nasser is due here on an official visit in ten days' time), and would support Egypt in the United Nations with a veto if necessary, but that if the Western Powers decided on energetic action and Nasser enquired of the Soviet Government whether he could count on any support from them beyond the above, he would get a discouraging reply. Soviet policy in the present phase is designed to encourage us to accept the fait accompli and to discourage us from energetic action; but if we decided on energetic action I do not believe their reaction would go beyond words and Notes.

2. French Ambassador agrees with this. He and I are meeting United States Ambassador tonight, and if our joint assessment is modified I will let you know.

3. When your telegram No: 1233 arrived I was on the point of suggesting to you that when we decide on our course of action it might be desirable to give Bulganin short advance notice of it, the notice in our case referring specifically to London discussions on Middle East oil. I am still inclined to favour this course. If I speak to him now in the sense of paragraph 3 of your telegram he will at once enquire what action we intend to take, and to this I could not reply. I should, therefore, much prefer to wait before asking to see him until I am in a position to answer this. If, meanwhile, I

meet him....

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Moscow telegram No: 1054 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

meet him socially I would, of course, speak in the sense of your instructions, but I do not foresee any occasion for this in the near future.

Foreign Office please pass to Cairo and Washington and Saving to Paris and P.O.M.E.F. as my telegrams Nos: 17, 49, 110 and 5 respectively.

[Repeated to Cairo, Washington and Saving to Paris and P.O.M.E.F.]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Private Secretary.

Sir H. Caccia.

Mr. Ross.

Head African Department.

JJJJ

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO MOSCOW

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
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No. 1256  
August 3, 1956

D. 5.23 p. m. August 3, 1956

EMERGENCY  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Moscow telegram No. 1256 of August 3.  
Repeated for information to Washington [Immediate]  
Cairo Paris  
P. O. M. E. F. [Priority]

Your telegram No. 1054 [of August 3]: [Suez Canal.]

The invitation to an international conference which you were instructed to convey in my telegram No. 1247 has met the need which you expressed to be able to tell Bulganin what action Her Majesty's Government intended to take. It is of the greatest importance that the Soviet Government should comprehend the issues raised by Nasser's action and the vital importance of this matter to the United Kingdom. I recalled in paragraph 3 of my telegram No. 1233 how the Prime Minister told Bulganin and Khrushchev, during their visit to the United Kingdom, that it was vital for us to have uninterrupted access to Middle Eastern oil and I made it clear that we would take it very ill if the Soviet Government were to support the Egyptian action.

2. In his "Builders' Day" speech, Khrushchev said that the Soviet Government considered "that the Suez Canal question can and should be settled by peaceful means" (paragraph 11 of your telegram No. 1050). The invitation to the international conference gives the Soviet Government the opportunity to make an important contribution towards producing precisely the peaceful settlement which Khrushchev advocated.

3. If you have not already done so when conveying the invitation, please seek an immediate interview with Bulganin, or failing him Shepilov, and speak in the foregoing sense. You should express the confident assumption of Her Majesty's Government that the Soviet Government will accept the invitation and that we may rely upon their cooperation at the conference in finding an international solution to this very grave problem.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO ROME

Cypher/OIP

FOREIGN OFFICE AID

WHITTMALL DISTRIBUTION

No. 767  
August 3, 1956

D. 11.30 p.m. August 3, 1956

PRIORITY  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Rome telegram No. 767 of August 3

And to: The Hague 359      Tokyo No. 311  
 Madrid No. 297      Addis Ababa No. 385 [all Priority]  
 Ankara No. 1437      Djakarta No. 244  
 Bonn No. 853      Tehran No. 743

Repeated for information to:

Paris	Lisbon
Washington	New Delhi
Cairo	Ottawa
Moscow	Canberra
Oslo	Wellington
Stockholm	Colombo
Copenhagen	Karachi

My telegram No. 378 to Addis Ababa.

Suez Canal Conference

At the meeting with Mr. Dulles and M. Pineau it was agreed to divide up the task of lobbying other powers invited to the conference, in order to bring their ideas into line with our own. It was agreed that the United Kingdom would take the lead in the Commonwealth countries, the three Scandinavian countries and Portugal. Personal messages are being sent to the Prime Ministers or Foreign Ministers of these countries. It was also agreed that the United States should take the lead in Japan, Spain, Turkey, Greece and Iran; France in the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Ethiopia; and that the Egyptian, Soviet and Indonesian Governments should not be approached for the present. It was agreed that, where one country took the lead in canvassing support, the others would back up its efforts as required.

2. Please therefore keep in touch with your United States and French colleagues and assist their efforts as you think appropriate; drawing on the arguments in my recent guidance telegrams.

/[To Rome .....

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Foreign Office telegram No. 767 to Rome

- 2 -

[To Rome only].

3. Italian Embassy here have stated that Italian Government are most anxious to be kept in the picture about Her Majesty's Government's thoughts and objectives as these develop. Please inform the Italian Government that we shall do our best to do this.

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SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO ADDIS ABABA

Cypher/OTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
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No: 390  
August 4, 1956.

D: 4.50 a.m. August 5, 1956.

PRIORITY  
SECRET

Addressed to Addis Ababa telegram No: 390 of August 4

and to: Athens No: 951.	Bonn No: 859.
Tokyo No: 315.	Madrid No: 301.
Washington No: 3558.	Djakarta No: 248.
Paris No: 1270.	Lisbon No: 275.
Moscow No: 1273.	Copenhagen No: 284.
Rome No: 775.	Oslo No: 245.
Ankara No: 1447.	
Cairo No: 2165.	Tehran No: 748.
The Hague No: 365.	Stockholm No: 435.
Colombo.	New Delhi.
Canberra.	Wellington.
Karachi.	

My immediately preceding telegram: Suez Canal.

Following is text:

Begins:

Proposal for the Establishment of an International  
Authority for the Suez Canal.

I. France, the United Kingdom and the United States are in agreement that at the Conference a resolution shall be tabled setting up an international authority for the Suez Canal on the following lines.

II. The purposes and functions of this International Authority would be

(i) to take over the operation of the Canal;

(ii) to ensure its efficient functioning as a free, open and secure international waterway in accordance with the principles of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888;

(iii) to arrange for the payment of fair compensation to the Suez Canal Company;

(iv) to ensure....

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SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No: 390 to Addis Ababa

- 2 -

(iv) to ensure to Egypt an equitable return which will take into account all legitimate Egyptian rights and interests.

Failing agreement with the Company or with Egypt on either of the last two points, the matter would be referred to an Arbitral Commission of three members to be appointed by the International Court of Justice.

III. The constituent organs of the International Authority would be

(i) a Council of Administration, the members of which would be nominated by the Powers chiefly interested in navigation and sea-borne trade through the Canal;

(ii) the necessary technical, working and administrative organs.

IV. The powers of the International Authority would in particular, include

(i) the carrying out of all necessary works;

(ii) the determination of the tolls, dues and other charges on a just and equitable basis;

(iii) all questions of finance;

(iv) general powers of administration and control.

Ends.

JJJJJ

109

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO AMBASSY

Cypher/OTP and By Bag

DEPARTMENTAL DISSEM BUION

No. 1449

August 4, 1956.

D. 9.48 p.m. August 4, 1956.

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Ankara telegram No. 1449 of August 4.

Repeated for information to Washington

Tripoli

And Saving to Paris No. 2658

My telegram No. 378 to Addis Ababa [of August 2]: Suez Canal.

We have agreed with the Americans that they should be responsible for the detailed discussions with the Turkish Government about the procedures for the London Conference. But I think it might be useful if I sent a personal message to M. Menderes. You should inform your American colleague and, if you see no objection, please deliver the following message:

Begins:

I am sure that you will agree that the Egyptian Government's action in seizing the Suez Canal is unacceptable. I have very much in mind the effect on the Bagdad Pact. If Nasser is not checked, his position will be so strengthened that the Bagdad Pact would be rendered ineffective, if indeed it were not, disrupted. We are firmly resolved to prevent this. Our aim is to establish a fair international system to operate the Canal. Our intention is that at the London Conference we should present Egypt with a firm and united front and insist on the acceptance of the principle of internationalisation. I am sure that it would be most valuable if you would use your considerable influence in this sense with our other allies in the Bagdad Pact. I hope I may also count on you to give good advice to the King of Libya and to the Libyan Prime Minister during their present visit to Turkey. We are determined not to give in to the Egyptians in this matter and it would be well that the Libyans should know this.

Ends.

/ 2.

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Foreign Office telegram No. 1449 to Ankara

-2-

2. The use of Libya is essential for our precautionary measures. How long will the Libyans be in Turkey? Please watch their reactions very carefully and do your best to see that the Turks exercise a salutary influence on them.

DISTRIBUTED TO:-

African Department  
Southern Department  
Levant Department

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
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No. 3618  
August 7, 1956.

D. 7.5 p.m. August 7, 1956.

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET

Addressed to Washington telegram No. 3618 of August 7.  
And Paris No. 1307.  
Repeated for information to U.K. Del. New York.

Suez Canal

French Minister stated this morning that his Government wondered whether it would not be both correct and prudent for us to take some action to inform the United Nations about the Conference. French Government thought that a communication might be sent by United Kingdom Government to Secretary-General communicating text of London statement of August 2, 1956, and list of Powers invited. French Government further thought that the Secretary-General might be invited to distribute these documents to all members. Washington would make a similar approach to United States Government.

2. French Ambassador (a former French Embassy representative to United Nations) is pointing out to his Government that it might be better not to make this a positive suggestion. That might give the impression that we were, in some sense, seizing the United Nations of the problem. It would be better to send the correspondence à tout fins utiles. The Secretary-General would then no doubt distribute it to all members in accordance with his usual procedure.

3. French Minister was told that I had already sent a purely personal message from myself to the Secretary-General, not as Secretary-General but as Mr. Hammarskjöld, since as a formal message might be embarrassing for both.

4. I consider that it would be far better not to take even restricted action suggested by the French Government with the United Nations at this stage. It might be done say 48 hours before the Conference. By then, amongst other things, we should know what the Egyptians were doing.

5. The French Minister will inform his Government accordingly.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

En clair.

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
DISTRIBUTION

No. 3627

D. 8.56 p.m. August 7, 1956.

August 7, 1956

IMMEDIATE

Addressed to Washington telegram No. 3627 of August 7

AND TO: Paris No. 1313

Repeated for information to Cairo

Following statement is being issued by News Department to-night.

Begins.

Some misunderstanding may have arisen from the answers given by the Foreign Office spokesman at this morning's press conference with regard to the scope of the proposed Conference on the Suez Canal.

The invitations issued were in the following terms:

"Her Majesty's Government hereby invite the..... Government to take part in a Conference to be held in London on 16th August, 1956, in order to consider what steps could most appropriately be taken to establish operating arrangements under an international system designed to assure the continuity of operation of the Canal as guaranteed by the Convention of October 29, 1888, consistently with legitimate Egyptian interests".

That is the scope of the Conference. It is not intended that the Conference should concern itself with proposals which do not come within these terms. It will be for the Conference itself to decide its procedure.

It is of course correct, as the Foreign Office spokesman said, that while the Conference is called to discuss the principle of internationalisation and while that principle was the one agreed by the United Kingdom, United States and French Governments, acceptance of the invitation does not necessarily imply acceptance of the principle.

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S E C R E T

**Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office**

TO: (1) U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA  
 (2) U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND  
 (3) U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA  
 (4) U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN PAKISTAN (ACTING)  
 (5) U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN CEYLON (ACTING)

(Sent 04.50 hours 5th August 1956)

CYPHER

PRIORITY

- (1) No. 1275
- (2) No. 656
- (3) No. 1795
- (4) No. 1583
- (5) No. 449

SECRET

*SE 17/21/196 A*

TEHRAN 11/194A (J)  
 2142.

Following is text of Foreign Office telegram to Addis Ababa No. 390 of August 4th, and to Athens, Bonn, Tokyo, Madrid, Washington, Djakarta, Paris, Lisbon, Moscow, Copenhagen, Rome, Oslo, Ankara, Cairo, Tehran, The Hague, Stockholm, Colombo, New Delhi, Canberra, Wellington, and Karachi.

My immediately preceding telegram.

S U E Z C A N A L

Following is text. Begins.

PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR THE SUEZ CANAL

1. France, The United Kingdom and the United States are in agreement that at the Conference a resolution shall be tabled setting up an international authority for the Suez Canal on the following lines.
2. The purposes and functions of this international authority would be
  - (I) To take over the operation of the Canal;
  - (II) To ensure its efficient functioning as a free, open and secure international waterway in accordance with the principles of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888;
  - (III) To arrange for the payment of fair compensation to the Suez Canal Company;
  - (IV) To ensure to Egypt an equitable return which will take into account all legitimate Egyptian rights and interests.

Failing agreement with the Company or with Egypt on either of the last two points, the matter would be referred to an arbitral Commission of three members to be appointed by the International Court of Justice.
3. The constituent organs of the international authority would be
  - (I) A Council of Administration, the members of which /would

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would be nominated by the Powers chiefly interested in navigation and sea-borne trade through the Canal.

(II) The necessary technical, working and administrative organs.

4. The Powers of the International Authority would in particular, include

- (I) The carrying out of all necessary works;
- (II) The determination of the tolls, dues and other charges on a just and equitable basis;
- (III) All questions of finance;
- (IV) General powers of administration and control. Ends.

Copy to:-

D. II

SUEZ CANAL DISTRIBUTION

SOUTH ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST DEPT.

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NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

Minutes

Our telegram No. 390 of August 4 to Addis Ababa contains the tripartite proposal for the establishment of an international authority for the Suez Canal.

It strikes me that this proposal may not be welcomed by some of the countries who have been invited to the London Conference, particularly the Asiatic countries. They seem likely to criticise the proposal on the following grounds:-

- a) It would altogether remove the Suez Canal from the jurisdiction of Egypt, thereby infringing Egyptian sovereignty.
- b) It proposes a more stringent form of international control than existed in the days of the Canal company.
- c) The proposed international authority would be a consortium of interested parties; no provision for any relationship between the international authority and any United Nations body except the International Court of Justice is provided for made.

Bearing such possible criticisms in mind, it might be useful to consider the kind of compromise proposal which, say, India might put forward to the Conference, assuming that she attends it. Attached is a draft proposal of the type which might be put forward. It might be useful to consider how far our interests would be met by agreeing to a proposal on these lines.

R. S. Swann  
7/8.

African Dept. (R. S. Swann)  
August 7, 1956.

I'm sorry to have delayed this.  
It has been in use in connexion  
with the Suez Canal Committee's work.

H. Berkeley 12/8

African Dept.

R.L.  
18/2

INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON THE  
SUEZ CANAL

Outline of possible Indian proposal.

Registry  
No.

Top Secret.  
Secret.  
Confidential.  
Restricted.  
Open.

RSS

Draft.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

- 1) Recognition that the Suez Canal is an integral part of Egypt and that ownership vests in Egypt.
- 2) Recognition of international character of Canal and duty of all interested parties to maintain principles of the 1888 Convention.
- 3) To give effect to the above, establishment of an international commission, to be consulted by Egypt as the operating authority on matters affecting the international character of the waterway.
- 4) In particular, Egypt to consult the international commission regarding:-
  - a) the <sup>annual</sup> ~~National~~ Budget of the Egyptian Suez Canal Authority;
  - b) the Capital Works Budget of the ~~Suez Canal~~ Authority;
  - c) any proposals affecting tolls, dues and other charges; and
  - d) any proposals affecting the conditions of service of non-Egyptian staff
- 5) In the event of disagreement between Egypt and the International Commission, the matter would be referred to an arbitral commission appointed by the International Court of Justice, whose jurisdiction would be final and binding on all parties.
- 6) International Commission to report each year to the United Nations General Assembly on its activities.
- 7) the International Commission to be <sup>elected</sup> ~~allied~~ by the United Nations General Assembly on, say, a three years' basis: representation  
/ being

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being based on:-

- (a) maritime interests and
  - (b) the geographical areas concerned.
- 8) (Transitory) International commission to supervise payment of compensation to the Suez Canal Company (? by means of an internationally guaranteed loan serviced from Canal dues).

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

WFO  
The Secretary of State  
Washington

African Dept to Foster Green  
Seven days to Sir Hall  
JFK to Dulles  
The Hon. Mr Dulles  
August 1, 1956.

JE/k211 196 3' 1/111

Dear Anthony,

I enclose herewith a letter which President Eisenhower dictated for you yesterday while I was making my arrangements to come here.

I think that the sentence at the end of the first paragraph refers not to the going through the motions of having an intermediate conference but to the use of intermediate steps as a genuine and sincere effort to settle the problem and avoid the use of force.

I hope to see you very soon.

Sincerely yours,

FOSTER

(John Foster Dulles)

The Right Honorable  
Sir Anthony Eden, K.G., M.C., M.P.,  
The Prime Minister,  
London.

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COPY

The White House,  
Washington.

TOP SECRET

July 31, 1956.

Dear Anthony,

From the moment that Nasser announced nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, my thoughts have been constantly with you. Grave problems are placed before both our governments, although for each of us they naturally differ in type and character. Until this morning, I was happy to feel that we were approaching decisions as to applicable procedures somewhat along parallel lines, even though there were, as would be expected, important differences as to detail. But early this morning I received the messages, communicated to me through Murphy from you and Harold Macmillan, telling me on a most secret basis of your decision to employ force without delay or attempting any intermediate and less drastic steps.

We recognize the transcendent worth of the Canal to the free world and the possibility that eventually the use of force might become necessary in order to protect international rights. But we have been hopeful that through a Conference in which would be represented the signatories to the Convention of 1888, as well as other maritime nations, there would be brought about such pressures on the Egyptian government that the efficient operation of the Canal could be assured for the future.

For my part, I cannot over-emphasize the strength of my conviction that some such method must be attempted before action such as you contemplate should be undertaken. If unfortunately the situation can finally be

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resolved only by drastic means, there should be no grounds for belief anywhere that corrective measures were undertaken merely to protect national or individual investors, or the legal rights of a sovereign nation were ruthlessly flouted. A conference, at the very least, should have a great education effect throughout the world. Public opinion here, and I am convinced, in most of the world, would be outraged should there be a failure to make such efforts. Moreover, initial military successes might be easy, but the eventual price might become far too heavy.

I have given you my own personal conviction, as well as that of my associates, as to the unwisdom even of contemplating the use of military force at this moment. Assuming, however, that the whole situation continued to deteriorate to the point where such action would seem the only recourse, there are certain political facts to remember. As you realize, employment of United States forces is possible only through positive action on the part of the Congress, which is now adjourned but can be reconvened on my call for special reasons. If those reasons should involve the issue of employing United States military strength abroad, there would have to be a showing that every peaceful means of resolving the difficulty had previously been exhausted. Without such a showing, there would be a reaction that could very seriously affect our peoples' feeling toward our Western Allies. I do not want to exaggerate, but I assure you that this could grow to such an intensity as to have the most far reaching consequences.

I realize that the messages from both you and Harold stressed that the decision taken was already approved by the government and was firm and irrevocable. But I personally feel sure that the American reaction would be severe and that the great areas of the world would share that reaction. On the other hand, I believe we can marshal that opinion in support of a reasonable and conciliatory, but absolutely firm, position. So I

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hope that you will consent to reviewing this matter once more in its broadest aspects. It is for this reason that I have asked Foster to leave this afternoon to meet with your people tomorrow in London.

I have given you here only a few highlights in the chain of reasoning that compels us to conclude that the step you contemplate should not be undertaken until every peaceful means of protecting the rights and the livelihood of great portions of the world had been thoroughly explored and exhausted. Should these means fail, and I think it is erroneous to assume in advance that they needs must fail, then world opinion would understand how earnestly all of us had attempted to be just, fair and considerate, but that we simply could not accept a situation that would in the long run prove disastrous to the prosperity and living standards of every nation whose economy depends directly or indirectly upon East-West shipping.

With warm personal regard - and with earnest assurances of my continuing respect and friendship.

As ever,

D.E.

The Right Honourable  
Sir Anthony Eden, K.G., M.C., M.P.,  
The Prime Minister,  
London.

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SECRET

JEIKAI/196  
01

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

Cypher/OTP

P R I S E C

No. 3568

August 5, 1956.

D.2.2 p.m. August 5, 1956.

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

RECEIVED IN C.B.
- 7 11 1956
SENT TO DEPT.
4/8

Please pass following from Prime Minister to President.

Begins.

Dear Friend,

Thank you for the message which you sent me via Foster.

In the light of our long friendship I will not conceal from you that the present situation causes me the deepest concern. I was grateful to you for sending Foster over and for his help. It has enabled us to reach firm and rapid conclusions and to display to Nasser and to the world the spectacle of a united front between our two countries and the French. We have however gone to the very limits of the concessions which we can make.

I do not think that we disagree about our primary objective. As it seems to me, this is to undo what Nasser has done and to set up an international régime for the Canal. The purpose of this régime will be to ensure the freedom and security of transit through the Canal, without discrimination, and the efficiency and economy of its operation.

But this is not all. Nasser has embarked on a course which is unpleasantly familiar. His seizure of the Canal was undoubtedly designed to impress opinion not only in Egypt but in the Arab World and in all Africa too. By this assertion of his power he seeks to further his ambitions from Morocco to the Persian Gulf. In this connexion you have no doubt seen Nasser's own speech at Aboukir on August 1 in which he said "We are very strong because we constitute a limitless strength extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arab Gulf."

/I know

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SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No. 3568 to Washington

- 2 -

I know that Nasser is active wherever Muslims can be found even as far as Nigeria. The Egyptians tried to get one of the Nigerian Amirs who was on his way through Cairo to sign a message endorsing Nasser's deeds. The man tore it up, but if Nasser keeps his loot how long can such loyalty last. At the other end of the line the Sheik of Kuwait has spoken to us stoutly of his views of Nasser. But all these men and millions of others are watching and waiting now.

I have never thought Nasser a Hitler, he has no warlike people behind him. But the parallel with Mussolini is close. Neither of us can forget the lives and treasure he cost us before he was finally dealt with.

The removal of Nasser and the installation in Egypt of a régime less hostile to the West, must therefore also rank high among our objectives. We must hope, as you say in your message, that the forthcoming conference will bring such pressures upon Nasser that the efficient operation of the Canal can be assured for the future. If so, everyone will be relieved and there will be no need of force. Moreover, if Nasser is compelled to disgorge his spoils, it is improbable that he will be able to maintain his internal position. We should thus have achieved our secondary objective.

Nevertheless I am sure you will agree that we must prepare to meet the eventuality that Nasser will refuse to accept the outcome of the conference. Or, no less dangerous, that he, supported by the Russians, will seek by stratagems and wiles to divide us so that the conference produces no clear result in the sense we both seek. We and the French Government could not possibly acquiesce in such a situation. I really believe that the consequences of doing so would be catastrophic and that the whole position in the Middle East would thereby be lost beyond recall. But by all means let us first see what the conference can do - on the assumption that Nasser commits no further folly meanwhile.

You know us better than anyone, and so I need not tell

/you that

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SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No.3568 to Washington

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you that our people here are neither excited nor eager to use force. They are, however, grimly determined that Nasser shall not get away with it this time because they are convinced that if he does their existence will be at his mercy. So am I.

I am infinitely grateful for your patience and understanding of our feelings. I cannot tell you how much they mean to us in this time of anxiety.

It is splendid news to hear of your growing strength. We will do our best not to add to the strain.

Yours ever,  
Anthony.

[Copies sent to No.10 Downing Street].

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5.)

... "The USSR is a mighty sea power. The waters of many seas and oceans, among them, the basin of the Mediterranean, wash the Soviet coasts and hence the Suez Canal is of great significance for the Soviet Union. It is used by our State not only for assuring trade routes to foreign countries but, above all, as the shortest and vitally important sea route connecting our Baltic, Northern and especially Black Sea regions with other parts of the great country of Socialism.

Since the construction of the Volga-Don Canal named after V.I. Lenin that has connected the central region of the <sup>Soviet</sup> Union with the Black Sea, the significance of the Suez Canal for the economic and trade links of the USSR has considerably increased....

(page 7.)

... "The struggle of the Egyptian people for national independence and the resistance exerted by it to the imperialist designs for drawing Egypt into aggressive blocs, in which it has the friendly support of the peoples of other Arab countries, evokes the sympathy of progressive mankind.

<sup>private</sup> The question of the fate of the Suez Canal does not constitute a question peculiar to the mutual relationships of England and Egypt but is a complicated international problem. All states, taking part in international trade are interested in a correct and just solution of this problem." ...

The Suez Canal  
by I.A. Demontyev  
Edited by Academician L.N. Ivanov  
State Publishing House of Geographical Literature  
Moscow, 1954. 69 pages.

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Soviet Statement on Suez Canal in 1946  
(translation)

A Soviet note of September 21, 1946 in reply to a Turkish note of August 22, 1946, contains a reference to the Suez Canal as a main sea route requiring international control. The exchange of notes was published in the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia of September 23, 1946. The exchange concerned the Dardanelles. The relevant passage reads:

".....It is therefore quite natural that the Soviet Union and other Black Sea Powers are the most interested in establishing a regime for The Dardanelles and furthermore their position in this case is not to be compared with the position of other Powers. The purpose of The Dardanelles which lead into the closed Black Sea is completely different from the purpose of such world waterways as, for example, the Straits of Gibraltar or the Suez Canal, which do not provide passage to some limited circle of states and which, as is known, are main world waterways. In relation to these world waterways it is in fact necessary to establish international control with the participation of the most interested Powers which, moreover, has not yet been accomplished up to the present. As far as the Dardanelles are concerned ....."

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SAVINGRAM

SIR JAMES FOWER  
No.25 Saving  
July 31, 1956

RESTRICTED

FROM ANKARA TO FOREIGN OFFICE

PRIORITY

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram no.25 Saving of July 31, 1956, repeated for information saving to:

Washington	no.90	Saving
Paris	no.21	"
Cairo	no.13	"
Pomef	no.54	"
Karachi	no.11	"
Bagdad	no. 6	"
Teheran	no. 8	"
Damascus	no. 4	"
Beirut	no.13	"
Amman	no. 4	"
Tel Aviv	no. 5	"

JE14211/198

Turkish Press comment on Egyptian nationalisation of the Suez Canal.

The Turkish press has commented with strong disapproval and disquiet on the Egyptian unilateral decision to nationalize the Suez Canal. It hopes the Western Powers will take strong measures to check the dangerous situation resulting from Nasser's irresponsible action; blames the lack of Anglo-American solidarity and American pandering to Nasser for the event, and hopes the lesson will be drawn with regard to the Cyprus problem. There has so far been no Turkish official comment and the Government organ has not yet reacted, though other pro-Government papers and the Opposition press have reacted strongly.

2. Comment by the Opposition paper DUNYA is typical. This labelled Nasser's action 'medieval piracy' and a dictator's pique at the expense of his own nation. Nasser should be taught a lesson to deter other adventurers, and the United States should correct the mistakes she had made in Egypt and Africa. DUNYA also reported the opinion of political circles in Ankara as being that, although the Canal is not of great importance to Turkey economically and financially, this country is vitally interested from the point of view of her political security, particularly since the Egyptian Government might not honour her undertaking under the Anglo/Egyptian Agreement to allow Britain to reactivate the Canal Zone in case of an attack on Turkey. The issue would also concern Turkey if the dispute caused a general conflagration in the Middle East. Nasser's move could be expected to influence American policy in the region and the United States would probably join the Bagdad Pact. If the Western Powers decided to dig a new canal through Israel connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, Egypt would become a second rate Arab Power and Nasser would go the same way as Mossadeq.

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

JE/421/199

Sir H. Trevelyan

No. 1375  
August 2, 1956.

D. 10.32 p.m. August 2, 1956  
R. 11.59 p.m. August 2, 1956.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1375 of August 2.  
Repeated for information to Washington  
Paris  
P.O.M.E.F.

Following is Ahram version of speech by Nasser yesterday at University Week rally in Alexandria.

Begins.

O citizens of youth, youth has always been lying in wait for imperialism. They have struggled for many years and have never abandoned their right to live. We have inherited this struggle from generation to generation. Youth has struggled hard in cooperation with the entire fatherland and many of them died as martyrs. Today, when we are in our great battle to confirm and consolidate our liberty and independence, I see the youth full of zeal and determination having taken it upon themselves to prove their right to life. Now that Egypt old and young alike, is fully united and constitutes one bloc, we go ahead in our path to confirm our liberty and independence and we never look backwards, but we shall go forward to confirm this freedom and this independence. We have learned from the past many lessons which prove that right cannot be confirmed except with continuous struggle. Today Egypt has declared her policy - free and independent policy - which emanates from Egypt's land and Nile. She has declared her policy of neutrality for the sake of peace, justice and humanity at large, her opposition to military blocs and her refusal to engage in trade of war. Today, now that Egypt has declared this policy and feels free, she will defend this policy to the last drop of her blood. We have tasted liberty, independence, honour and dignity and we will never part with them. The Canal, which has always been the property of Egypt, has been returned to her sons. In all agreements and treaties there are clauses stating that the Canal is an integral part of Egypt. Article 8 of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954 lays it down that the Canal is an integral part of Egypt. The Canal has returned to its sons after it had been usurped for long years. The Canal, /which

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Cairo telegram No. 1375 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

which was dug with our blood and which cost Egypt the death of 120,000 of her sons has been returned to us and has really become our property, a real and not fictitious property, and those Articles provided for in the treaties and agreements have become an established fact after it was a fictitious fact.

This citizens is our stand today. The Canal is Egypt's property, but Egypt's ownership of the Canal in the past was fictitious, thanks to the usurpers, exploiters and blood suckers who want to dominate the nations. Today, now that Egypt has announced her independence and felt her freedom, the Canal has returned to us as a real and not a fictitious property. Today I hear a commotion in every place. I hear a commotion in England. I hear some people say that Egypt has robbed us of the Canal. By God this is a big farce, this is the work of the pirates, the usurpers and the despots. The Canal was always Egypt's property and today it is Egypt's property. In the past it was a fictitious property which was exploited by the usurpers and the despots under various and fictitious names. But today it is the real property of its sons, the Canal has returned to us and we will in no way or by any means part with it.

There is a commotion in London about the protection of the Canal. Who used to protect the Canal? The Canal has always been protected by Egypt and no change has occurred. There was an exploitation and monopolising company which sucked Egypt's blood. Was this company protecting the Canal or the navigation in the Canal? Its only work was to suck blood, act as agent of imperialism and to conspire against Egypt's liberty and independence. This company, which had been formed of a number of French Counts and unemployed Englishmen, had nothing to do except to work for the strengthening of imperialism. Today the Canal has returned to us and Egypt as a whole has declared that she will defend her rights with her blood and soul. Today the real fact has been disclosed and the imperialists appear in their real state. Imperialism has shown its ambitions based on no legal right, and devoid of all rights except that of piracy and usurpation. We shall never allow the right of usurpation to encroach on our rights. We will resist piracy and usurpation and we will defend our land and Canal. Today the whole world knows who are the usurpers who call for freedom and speak for the free world, today the entire world will know which countries wish to suck the blood of the nations and dominate nations. There is one thing which the entire world should

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Cairo telegram No. 1375 to Foreign Office

- 3 -

know, either independence or no independence. Countries should either be independent, or England should be left to dominate them. Egypt has decided to be independent and will not allow Britain or any other Power to dominate her. Today world opinion is divided into two sections. One supports right, and the other supports usurpation. The section which supports usurpation is unfortunately represented by some large Powers which claim to be great Powers advocating usurpation and the robbing of rights. Today the entire world knows what the methods of the free world are. Today, on hearing a commotion from London, we reply that our nationalism and patriotism are firm and certain and that Arab nationalism has been confirmed. Arab nationalism from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean has flared up. The Arabs today, O countrymen who have declared their support for Egypt and for her step, the Arabs today represent a big group and will go ahead side by side with Egypt. They have declared that they will march forward with Egypt to defend right. Today citizens, on hearing threats and on hearing the big clamour, we declare that we will defend the Canal and will ensure free navigation through it, but in defending our land we will do so with determination and faith. The imperialists will know that if they transgress right they will suffer a big disaster. We know how to defend our fatherland. We know how to repulse the usurpers. We know how to repulse the despots. We know how to repulse the pirates. O citizens go forward, do not look back. We shall confirm liberty and will confirm dignity and prestige and will confirm independence and the real ownership of the Canal.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my telegram No. 179.

[Repeated to Washington].

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JE/4211/200

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Trevelyan  
No. 1376  
August 2, 1956

D: 11.05 p.m. August 2, 1956  
R: 12.29 a.m. August 3, 1956

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 1376 of  
August 2.

Repeated for information Washington Paris P.O.M.E.F.

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following is Gomheuria version of speech by Nasser yesterday at Arab scout camp at Aboukir.

Begins.

I welcome you in your fatherland, Egypt whose constitution lays it down that she is a part of the Arab nation. Egypt feels proud of her Arab nationalism and if I welcome you I am welcoming you in your country. We have always believed that our strength lies in our Arabism and nationalism. Meanwhile we have always felt that there are some who have always attempted to fragment our nationalism, engineer intrigues and sow dissension in our ranks. Arabism as nationalism had always met with resistance from usurpers, despots and exploiters who wanted to dominate the Arabs. In the course of time we felt weak and disunited in the midst of imperialistic greediness and ambitions. Since the revolution started in Egypt I have always pointed out that we are very strong because we constitute a limitless strength extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arab Gulf but we took no notice of that strength. In my book "The Philosophy of the Revolution" I have pointed out that we are very strong and that this strength cannot be [? gp. omitted] by cries, shouts or complaints. We must feel that our strength lies in our nationalism which extends from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. With unity and the mutual faith of the Arab countries Arab nationalism can stand in the face of tyranny and imperialism and can liberate the Arab sister countries which have not yet been liberated. This is our nationalism represented in you. I see among you now some from Syria, the Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Tunisia, Libya,

/ Morocco

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Cairo telegram No. 1376 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

Morocco and Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. Had Arab nationalism, which includes North Africa, Egypt, the Sudan, Palestine, Syria, the Lebanon and Jordan, been achieved in the past we would not have encountered the difficulties we had faced. But this nationalism has sprung up now and the Arabs everywhere believe in it. The British threat following the nationalization of the Canal was one of the factors which enabled Arab nationalism to kindle and proved that the Arabs are one nation and that whatever affects one part of it affects all the others. This is the Arab nationalism which has kindled and become a great force, which will prevent imperialism from achieving its objectives and which will achieve the freedom of all the Arab nations from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf, this is our right. Let us avoid dissension so as to achieve nationalism and unity which will enable us to strengthen the pillars of honour and dignity, and restore our land robbed by imperialism. This is the great hope and this is the Arab nation which is now reviving to spread the principles of right and peace after it has done away with the causes of humiliation. The Arab nation will continue to struggle to be one nation and one homeland. Go ahead and may God grant you success.

Ends.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my telegram No. 180.

[Repeated to Washington].

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Trevelyan

No. 138A

August 2, 1956.

D. 8.41 p.m. August 2, 1956.

R. 10.26 p.m. August 2, 1956.

PRIORITY

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 138A of August 2.

Repeated for information to Washington

P.O.M.E.F.

And Saving to Paris	Damascus
Amman	Jedda
Bagdad	Bahrain
Beirut	

My telegram No. 1376.

Press today gave great prominence to Nasser's speeches, Gomhouria's headline "Nasser warns the pirates - We know how to defend our fatherland and how to repulse usurpers and despots" - was typical.

2. Akhbar and Sha'ab gave front page prominence to London reports of proposed international conference to meet on August 15 to discuss future of canal. Participation of Egypt and Soviet Union in proposed conference was highlighted.

3. United States attitude was also front page news. Akhbar carried headline "Eisenhower declares nationalization of Canal does not menace world with any dangers". Gomhouria's headline read "America recognises nationalization of Canal and opposes use of force". Washington reports were carried to effect that United States was ready to renew High Dam offer if Egypt accepted an international body to supervise the Canal.

4. Gomhouria reported that Britain had informed the United States that she was prepared to resort to force if necessary, whether the United States supported her or not. Sha'ab said the Foreign Secretary had threatened at secret meeting of the Conservative Party to use force against Egypt, but retreated after meeting with Dulles and affirmed that Britain would not use force unless Egypt interfered with freedom of navigation.

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Cairo telegram No. 1384 to Foreign Office

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5. All papers reported that Arab League Political Committee would meet next week to draw up united Arab policy towards the Canal problem. Expressions of support from Arab individuals and organizations continue to receive publicity. Workers of Hama allegedly informed Egyptian workers that Syrian workers were ready to destroy pipelines and other installations in case of aggression against Egypt.
6. Ahram prominently reported meeting under chairmanship of Boghdady, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and Planning, yesterday to resume planning of High Dam scheme and associated projects.
7. Various Press items emphasising that the Canal was operating normally appeared.
8. Ahram's editorial said logic, law and justice supported Egyptian case. Lack of strong legal argument had led Britain and France to try and have question removed to political sphere although even from political angle Egyptian argument was strong. For past century navigation had been free because Egypt wanted it to be free. Egypt refused any kind of control international or otherwise. She had promised to ensure freedom of navigation. Economic or military sanctions which might be imposed by maritime States might become real cause of obstructing freedom of navigation. Gomhouria echoed Nasser's first speech (my telegram No. 1375). Akhbar noted that Britain and France were

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/ reluctant.

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Cairo telegram No. 1384 to Foreign Office

-3-

reluctant to bring case before United Nations although such a dispute should clearly be brought before that body. They were trying to settle dispute outside United Nations because they knew they would fail to secure a favourable majority inside. Sha'ab said that, while spokesmen of the free world apparently regarded as permissible the usurpation of Egypt's freedom for seventy years and Zionist's occupation of Palestine, they now tried to convince Egyptians that they were pirates, criminals and usurpers just because they nationalized an Egyptian company offering full compensation to share-holders. This was unreasonable. Kahiras editorial asked what made Britain and France suppose that freedom of navigation in the Canal would not be assured. Britain and France were unnecessarily creating new hostilities for themselves. Author echoed Khrushchev's remark calling on them to behave reasonably.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington and Saving to Paris as my telegrams Nos. 183 and 179 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington and Saving to Paris].

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FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mn Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
DISTRIBUTION

Sir G. Jebb

No.196

August 2, 1956

D. 2.06 p.m. August 2, 1956

R. 2.15 p.m. August 2, 1956

PRIORITY

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.196 of August 2.

Repeated for information Saving to: Cairo

Moscow

Washington

*Jerusalem 167*

My telegram No.195: Suez Canal.

From Reilly.

The remarkable unanimity of French parliamentary and public opinion persists. After having recently given the impression that the French Government were having to make the running in London, the Press now emphasizes the complete solidarity of Britain and France. Prominence is given, not only to reports of British military measures, but also to attacks on Nasser in the British Press, particularly "The Times" and "Daily Express". The Americans continue to have an exceptionally bad Press.

2. There is general approval for the idea of an international conference provided, of course, it is not made the pretext for delay or retreat. The Press is divided as to whether Mr. Dulles has moved towards the Anglo-French position or 'vice versa'.

3. The thoughts of the Assembly were more on Suez than on the French economic situation when M. Mollet yesterday made an important statement on future economic and financial policy, which I am reporting separately. M. Reynaud followed and wasted little time in passing to the Suez situation. He strongly criticized Allied and particularly American hesitations. For six days, he said, the Western Powers had given the impression of hesitation and feebleness. The crisis could have been stifled at birth if the crime had been punished at once, but so far crime had paid. Because of North Africa, France was the most affected of the European countries. What would be done if Nasser did not attend the proposed conference? Finally, Mr. Reynaud reminded the United States that lessons of the pre-war period should not be forgotten and that it was the abrupt American withdrawal of

/help

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Paris telegram No.196 to Foreign Office

-2-

help for the Aswan Dam which had caused the avalanche.

4. M. Reynaud was warmly applauded by the Right, Centre and some Socialists. Subsequently, the chairman of the Assembly's Defence Committee tabled a motion which will be debated today and will certainly be overwhelmingly approved. It calls on the Assembly to express, before adjourning, its indignation at Colonel Hasser's 'coup de force'. "Confident of interpreting the will of the nation, the Assembly appeals to Allied solidarity and confirms its determination not to give way before a 'fait accompli' - it demands that most energetic measures should be taken to this effect".

5. Welcoming the resolution, M. Mollet said that the Government was decided upon an energetic and rigorous reply to the Egyptians in the form of joint action by the Western Allies. The Government knew they were interpreting the will of Parliament and of the great majority of the country. But action was more important than words. He urged deputies to spend less time on denouncing the so-called weakness of the Western Powers and to concentrate on stimulating Governments to strong and effective action.

6. The 'Conseil de la République' will also debate a similar motion today. The Assembly of French Union yesterday adopted by 142 to 12 (Communists) a motion calling on the Government for firm action to preserve the freedom of communication between France and her overseas territories.

7. The Suez crisis has thus much strengthened the Government's position on the eve of the recess.

Foreign Office please pass Saving to Cairo, Moscow, Washington, as my telegrams 41, 57, 288 respectively.

[Repeated Saving to Cairo, Moscow and Washington]

LLL

**J**  
AFRICAN DEPARTMENT

**J** E 14211/210

EGYPT

**FROM**  
  
F.O. Minute  
Research Dept.  
No. ME 180/56  
Dated August 3, 1956  
Received in Registry— August 14, 1956.

Suez Canal Company Nationalisation  
Report on the Suez Canal Convention  
of 1888. (2 copies)

References to former relevant papers

MINUTES

With reference to the last paragraph, I do not see how Art. 8 of the 1954 Agreement (not treaty) could be held to determine Egypt's responsibilities under the 1888 Convention. Its intention was evidently to reaffirm them. In fact the Egyptians are taking the opposite line and claiming that they are upholding the 1888 Convention. Perhaps the Legal Adviser wd comment on this point.

JP [Signature]  
18/8

Mr. [Signature]

The Egyptians are claiming to uphold the 1888 Convention now. This will make it difficult for them in the future to maintain that they are not bound by it. Nevertheless, they could argue in 1961 that their

/ Obligation

(Print)  
  
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[Signature] 15/10	8 29/8/57

References to later relevant papers

Obligation flowed from the 1954 Agreement and came to an end with it. In my view, this would be wrong because the 1954 Agreement was only intended to confirm the existing position. Nevertheless, the point is there and in any settlement we would be wise to extract from Egypt an ~~undefined~~ obligation of independence which would uphold the 1888 Convention.

2. This minute is written without prejudice to the question whether in due course some revision of the 1888 Convention would be desirable.

Handwritten  
2/10

Mr. Shepherd may like to see

Mr. Shepherd ✓  
17/10

Summ -  
8/10

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JE 1421/210

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INDEXED  
The Suez Canal Convention of 1888

On January 5, 1856, the Khedive of Egypt gave a Charter of Concession to M. de Lesseps for the Canal amplifying the earlier Firman of 1854. Article XIV of this Charter stipulated that the canal and the ports "appertaining thereto shall always remain open as a neutral passage to every merchant ship crossing from one sea to another, without any distinction, exclusion or preference of persons or nationalities". This clause, however, had no international force and M. de Lesseps made repeated efforts to obtain a declaration of the Powers affirming the perpetual neutrality of the Canal.

The landing of British troops at Suez in 1882 and British occupation of Egypt dating from that year demonstrated the need for some kind of collective agreement to secure the protection of the canal and in 1883 Her Majesty's Government initiated discussions on the basis that "the Canal should be free for the passage of all ships in any circumstances". At this time it was anticipated - and it was the expressed intention of Her Majesty's Government - that British troops would be withdrawn from Egypt within a very short period, though the right of re-entry "if there are reasons to fear an invasion from without, or if order and security in the interior were disturbed" was reserved in a draft convention concluded with the Turkish Government in 1887. French and Russian protests to Turkey resulted in the dropping of the convention but resulted also in a more accommodating attitude on the part of Her Majesty's Government in regard to an agreement for the protection of the Canal.

On October 29, 1888, a Convention was signed in Constantinople by representatives of Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey and the Netherlands, to establish "a definite system destined to guarantee at all times and for all Powers, the free use of the Suez Maritime Canal". Article I reads:-

The Suez Maritime 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.

Consequently, the High Contracting Parties agree not in any way to interfere with the free use of the Canal, in time of war as in time of peace.

The Canal shall never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

Under the provisions of Articles IX and X the Sultan and the Khedive "in the name of His Imperial Majesty" were responsible for insuring the execution of the terms of the Convention and were permitted to take such measures as they might find necessary "for securing by their own forces the defence of Egypt and the maintenance of public order." Article XIV states:-

The High Contracting Parties agree that the engagements resulting from the present Treaty shall not be limited by the duration of the Acts of Concession of the Universal Suez Canal Company.

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In December 1914, Egypt was declared a British Protectorate and in the Peace Treaties with the enemy Powers who had been signatories of the 1888 Convention they were required to consent to the substitution in the Convention of the name of Great Britain for that of the Ottoman Empire. [Treaties of Versailles (Article 152), St. Germain (Article 107), Trianon (Article 91), Sevres (Article 109), and Lausanne (Article 99)]

The unilateral declaration of the sovereign independence of Egypt by His Majesty's Government in 1922 did not alter the situation as regards the Canal since "the security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt" was one of the matters "absolutely reserved to the discretion of His Majesty's Government."

The Treaty of Alliance of 1936 modified the position considerably. Article 8 reads:-

In view of the fact that the Suez Canal, whilst being an integral part of Egypt, is a universal means of communication as also an essential means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire, His Majesty the King of Egypt, until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal, authorises His Majesty The King and Emperor to station forces in Egyptian territory in the vicinity of the Canal, in the zone specified in the Annex to this Article, with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal. The detailed arrangements for the carrying into effect of this Article are contained in the Annex hereto. The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt.

It is understood that at the end of the period of twenty years specified in Article 16 the question whether the presence of British forces is no longer necessary owing to the fact that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal may, if the High Contracting Parties do not agree thereon, be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for decision in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant in force at the time of signature of the present treaty or to such other person or body of persons for decision in accordance with such other procedure as the High Contracting Parties may agree.

In the negotiations for revision of the 1936 Treaty which began in October, 1946, the emphasis in the discussions about the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt was upon the defence of the Middle East as a whole rather than upon that of the Suez Canal alone. This emphasis was maintained by His Majesty's Government in all the negotiations which followed.

The 1936 Treaty was abrogated by the Egyptian Government in October, 1951, but His Majesty's Government refused to recognize this unilateral action, and the Egyptian Government flatly rejected Four Power (French, Turkish, United Kingdom and United States of America) defence proposals which were put to them in the same month.

/Negotiations

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Negotiations with the new Egyptian Government opened on March 27, 1953, in which the maintenance of the Suez Canal base in peace with a view to its immediate reactivation in war was again declared as a British objective.

The Treaty resulting from these negotiations was signed in Cairo on October 20, 1954. Article 8 of that Treaty reads:-

The two contracting Governments recognize that the Suez Maritime Canal, which is an integral part of Egypt, is a water-way economically, commercially and strategically of international importance, and express the determination to uphold the Convention guaranteeing the freedom of navigation of the Canal signed at Constantinople on October 29, 1888.

Article IX of the 1888 Convention makes the Egyptian Government responsible for "the necessary measures for ensuring the execution" of the Treaty calling upon the Ottoman Government if it had not sufficient means at its disposal. The Khedive was not a signatory of the Treaty but it was provided that, in case of necessity, "the Egyptian Government" should "concert" with the Signatory Powers of the Declaration of London of 1885 (Germany, Austria, Hungary, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia and Turkey). The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1954 is to run for seven years only (i.e. to 1961) unless both Governments agree on an extension. Therefore, in spite of the terms of Article IX of the Convention of 1888 which allots responsibility to Egypt, as a vassal of the Ottoman Sultan, the present Egyptian Government might claim that in 1961 their responsibility under the Convention of 1888 was also terminated.

Foreign Office,  
Research Department

August 3, 1956

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CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, RUSSIA AND TURKEY, RESPECTING THE FREE NAVIGATION OF THE SUEZ MARITIME CANAL

Signed at Constantinople, October 29, 1888

/Ratifications deposited at Constantinople, December 22, 1888/

Au nom de Dieu Tout-Puissant.

(Translation)

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India; His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia; His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c, and Apostolic King of Hungary; His Majesty the King of Spain, and in his name the Queen Regent of the Kingdom; the President of the French Republic; His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, &c; His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias; and His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans; wishing to establish, by a Conventional Act, a definite system destined to guarantee at all times, and for all the Powers, the free use of the Suez Maritime Canal, and thus to complete the system under which the navigation of this Canal has been placed by the Firman of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, dated the 22nd February, 1866 (2 Zilkadé, 1282), and sanctioning the Concessions of His Highness the Khedive, have named as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:-

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, the Right Honourable Sir William White, her Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of Germany, King of Prussia, M. Joseph de Radowitz, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, &c., and Apostolic King of Hungary, M. Henri, Baron de Calice, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the King of Spain, and in his name the Queen Regent of the Kingdom, Don Miguel Florez y Garcia, his Chargé d'Affaires;

The President of the French Republic, M. Gustave Louis Lannes, Count de Montebello, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France;

His Majesty the King of Italy, M. Albert, Baron Blanc, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, &c., M. Gustave Keun, his Chargé d'Affaires;

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, M. Alexandre de Mélidow, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary;

His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, Mehemed Saïd Pasha, his Minister for Foreign Affairs;

Who, having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon the following Articles:-

Article I

The Suez Maritime 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.

Consequently, the High Contracting Parties agree not in any way to interfere with the free use of the Canal, in time of war as in time of peace.

The Canal shall never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

/Article II

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## Article II

The High Contracting Parties, recognizing that the Fresh-Water Canal is indispensable to the Maritime Canal, take note of the engagements of His Highness the Khedive towards the Universal Suez Canal Company as regards the Fresh-Water Canal; which engagements are stipulated in a Convention bearing date the 18th March, 1863, containing an exposé and four Articles.

They undertake not to interfere in any way with the security of that Canal and its branches, the working of which shall not be exposed to any attempt at obstruction.

## Article III

The High Contracting Parties likewise undertake to respect the plant, establishments, buildings, and works of the Maritime Canal and of the Fresh-Water Canal.

## Article IV

The Maritime Canal remaining open in time of war as a free passage, even to the ships of war of belligerents, according to the terms of Article I of the present Treaty, the High Contracting Parties agree that no right of war, no act of hostility, be committed in the Canal and its ports of access, as well as within a radius of 8 marine miles from those ports, even though the Ottoman Empire should be one of the belligerent Powers.

Vessels of war of belligerents shall not revictual or take in stores in the Canal and its ports of access, except in so far as may be strictly necessary. The transit of the aforesaid vessels through the Canal shall be effected with the least possible delay, in accordance with the Regulations in force, and without any other intermission than that resulting from the necessities of the service.

Their stay at Port Saïd and in the roadstead of Suez shall not exceed twenty-four hours, except in case of distress. In such case they shall be bound to leave as soon as possible. An interval of twenty-four hours shall always elapse between the sailing of a belligerent ship from one of the ports of access and the departure of a ship belonging to the hostile Power.

## Article V

In time of war belligerent Powers shall not disembark nor embark within the Canal and its ports of access either troops, munitions, or materials of war. But in case of an accidental hindrance in the Canal, men may be embarked or disembarked at the ports of access by detachments not exceeding 1,000 men, with a corresponding amount of war material.

## Article VI

Prizes shall be subjected, in all respects, to the same rules as the vessels of war of belligerents.

## Article VII

The Powers shall not keep any vessel of war in the waters of the Canal (including Lake Timsah and the Bitter Lakes).

Nevertheless, they may station vessels of war in the ports of access of Port Saïd and Suez, the number of which shall not exceed two for each Power.

This right shall not be exercised by belligerents.

/Article VIII

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#### Article VIII

The Agents in Egypt of the Signatory Powers of the present Treaty shall be charged to watch over its execution. In case of any event threatening the security or the free passage of the Canal, they shall meet on the summons of three of their number under the presidency of their Doyen, in order to proceed to the necessary verifications. They shall inform the Khedivial Government of the danger which they may have perceived, in order that that Government may take proper steps to insure the protection and the free use of the Canal. Under any circumstances, they shall meet once a year to take note of the due execution of the Treaty.

The last-mentioned meetings shall take place under the presidency of a Special Commissioner nominated for that purpose by the Imperial Ottoman Government. A Commissioner of the Khedive may also take part in the meeting, and may preside over it in case of the absence of the Ottoman Commissioner.

They shall especially demand the suppression of any work or the dispersion of any assemblage on either bank of the Canal, the object or effect of which might be to interfere with the liberty and the entire security of the navigation.

#### Article IX

The Egyptian Government shall, within the limits of its powers resulting from the Firmans, and under the conditions provided for in the present Treaty, take the necessary measures for insuring the execution of the said Treaty.

In case the Egyptian Government should not have sufficient means at its disposal, it shall call upon the Imperial Ottoman Government, which shall take the necessary measures to respond to such appeal; shall give notice thereof to the Signatory Powers of the Declaration of London of the 17th March, 1885; and shall, if necessary, concert with them on the subject.

The provisions of Articles IV, V, VII, and VIII shall not interfere with the measures which shall be taken in virtue of the present Article.

#### Article X

Similarly, the provisions of Articles IV, V, VII, and VIII shall not interfere with the measures which His Majesty the Sultan and His Highness the Khedive, in the name of His Imperial Majesty, and within the limits of the Firmans granted, might find it necessary to take for securing by their own forces the defence of Egypt and the maintenance of public order.

In case His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, or His Highness the Khedive, should find it necessary to avail themselves of the exceptions for which this Article provides, the Signatory Powers of the Declaration of London shall be notified thereof by the Imperial Ottoman Government.

It is likewise understood that the provisions of the four Articles aforesaid shall in no case occasion any obstacle to the

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measures which the Imperial Ottoman Government may think it necessary to take in order to insure by its own forces the defence of its other possessions situated on the eastern coast of the Red Sea.

#### Article XI

The measures which shall be taken in the cases provided for by Articles IX and X of the present Treaty shall not interfere with the free use of the Canal. In the same cases, the erection of permanent fortifications contrary to the provisions of Article VIII is prohibited.

#### Article XII

The High Contracting Parties, by application of the principle of equality as regards the free use of the Canal, a principle which forms one of the bases of the present Treaty, agree that none of them shall endeavour to obtain with respect to the Canal territorial or commercial advantages or privileges in any international arrangements which may be concluded. Moreover, the rights of Turkey as the territorial Power are reserved.

#### Article XIII

With the exception of the obligations expressly provided by the clauses of the present Treaty, the sovereign rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, and the rights and immunities of His Highness the Khedive, resulting from the Firmans, are in no way affected.

#### Article XIV

The High Contracting Parties agree that the engagements resulting from the present Treaty shall not be limited by the duration of the Acts of Concession of the Universal Suez Canal Company.

#### Article XV

The stipulations of the present Treaty shall not interfere with the sanitary measures in force in Egypt.

#### Article XVI

The High Contracting Parties undertake to bring the present Treaty to the knowledge of the States which have not signed it, inviting them to accede to it.

#### Article XVII

The present Treaty shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Constantinople, within the space of

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one month, or sooner if possible.

In faith of which the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty, and have affixed to it the seal of their arms.

Done at Constantinople, the 29th Day of the month of October, in the year 1888.

(L.S.)	W. A. WHITE.
(L.S.)	RADOWITZ.
(L.S.)	CALICE.
(L.S.)	MIGUEL FLOREZ Y GARCIA.
(L.S.)	G. DE MONTEBELLO
(L.S.)	A. BLANC.
(L.S.)	GUS. KEUN.
(L.S.)	NELIDOW.
(L.S.)	M. SAID.

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NATIONALISATION OF THE SUEZ CANAL

TRIPARTITE TALKS BETWEEN THE FRENCH, UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES DELEGATION.

Record of the 5th Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Foreign Office, on Tuesday July 31, 1956, at 4.00 p.m.

Delegations were headed by:

<u>France</u>	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>United States</u>
M. Pineau	Mr. Selwyn Lloyd.	Mr. Robert Murphy

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1

August 2, 1956.

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RECORD OF MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, FOREIGN OFFICE,  
AT 4 00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JULY 31, 1956

M. Pineau said that he wished to protest to Mr. Murphy in a friendly way about a United Press message with a Washington date line. This was to the effect that France would be ready to support Britain in military action over the Suez Canal, in spite of French military commitments in North Africa, and it would be possible to supply troops from Madagascar. Mr. Murphy was purported to have said that he was not ready to inform the British Prime Minister of the United States attitude.

M. Pineau said that he hoped that it would have been possible to keep the present proceedings secret. Mr. Murphy regretted M. Pineau's assumption that the United States Delegation had given information to the press. This was not the case and this particular message had first been called to his attention by the press. He fully appreciated the delicacy of the position.

Shipping and Dues

Mr. Proctor gave an account which the Minister of Transport, Mr. Harold Watkinson, had had with a small group of British ship owners the same day. Mr. Watkinson had given advice "in suspense, subject to later clearance by the tripartite meeting". This was:-

- (i) Her Majesty's Government did not recognise the so-called Egyptian Canal Authority.
- (ii) British ship owners were asked to maintain their present method of payment of dues and not to pay to the Suez Canal Authority.
- (iii) Ship owners should try to continue normal transit of the Canal as long as possible.
- (iv) If and when ships were refused transit they should report individually and the necessary currency arrangements could then be made in order to allow them to pay for their passage. They would have to make clear to the Egyptians that such payments were made under duress and subject to reserve.

Mr. Watkinson, after covering the points made by Mr. Proctor, said that the payments, which might be made by ship owners under duress, would not be an act of Her Majesty's Government. If it were found that the Egyptian Government were insisting on payments to their Canal Authority it might then be decided to withdraw all British ships from the Canal. It was to be hoped that if Her Majesty's Government were to ask all British ship owners to cease sending their ships through the Canal, they would be supported by all Maritime Powers. The Foreign Secretary said it was vital that there should be no Governmental action concerning payments at this stage. It was convenient to us to get cargoes through for the moment. Mr. Murphy said the first phase of the action suggested above struck him as a happy solution. He had no detailed

/instructions

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instructions as regards the second phase (i.e. withdrawal of ships from the Canal.) Monsieur Pineau said that he agreed in principle with the United Kingdom ideas. As regards details of payment, he thought this might be made to the Bank of International Settlements in Basle. This would not prejudice the final destination of the funds, which would be left over to international decision. The French Minister of Finance had convened that same day a meeting of the French ship owners at which the Governor of the Bank of France had been present. The ship owners had expressed doubts and concern at having to pay the new Suez Canal Authority. They considered this would be making a free gift to Nasser. If payments were made to the Bank of International Settlements, the Egyptians might not dare to stop the passage of ships. This problem would be studied on the following day by the International Chamber of Shipping. Mr. Watkinson stressed that it was important that all interested parties should take the same action. The Foreign Secretary pointed out that the objection to paying the Bank of International Settlements was that this course seemed to contemplate international litigation. We did not wish to get involved in a long lawsuit on this question.

There was some further discussion on the desirability of payments to the Bank of International Settlements, and no final conclusion was reached.

Mr. Watkinson emphasised the necessity of the United Kingdom, France and the United States acting in concert on shipping. None of the Powers should do anything to recognise Nasser's Canal Authority. The British ship owners were prepared not to do so. Other possibilities for payment, of which Monsieur Pineau's suggestion was one, might be explored. This could be done during the International Chamber of Shipping meeting on the following day. Any payments to Nasser's Canal Authority should be regarded as a temporary expedient to pass ships through the Canal pending a decision, if this should prove necessary, to withdraw all ships from the Canal. He hoped that if it were found necessary to make such a decision it would be taken by the Tripartite Powers acting together. Monsieur Pineau agreed that the problem should be considered by the International Chamber of Shipping. Mr. Watkinson added that, while there was great advantage in the continued use of the Canal, we should like to be able to say, if ships were held up through refusing to pay to Nasser's Canal Authority, that we did not submit to that sort of banditry and would prefer to divert our shipping. The Foreign Secretary then mentioned the question of British nationals in Egypt and read out the instructions which had been sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador in Cairo. These were that British civilians with no compelling reason for being in Egypt should leave, or if they were on holiday should not return to Egypt. Instructions to British civilians should be kept as unobtrusive as possible and Her Majesty's Ambassador had been asked to report other means by which he could reduce the numbers of women and children and non-essential males. Monsieur Pineau and Mr. Murphy agreed generally. The Foreign Secretary said that civilians in the Canal base had already been issued similar instructions by their employers. The Committee then went into restricted session.

Mr. Murphy

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Mr. Murphy said that Mr. Dulles planned to take off from Washington at 2 p.m. Washington time and hoped to arrive in London about 10 a.m. on the next day. He suggested that further discussion should be postponed until Mr. Dulles' arrival, since he had asked Mr. Murphy not to take any decision in the meantime. Mr. Dulles had just had a long talk with President Eisenhower. Monsieur Pineau and the Foreign Secretary welcomed this news.

It was agreed that no further plenary meeting should be held until Mr. Dulles arrived, but that it might be useful to discuss the draft communiqué. Monsieur Pineau said that he had discussed with his Prime Minister and the President of the Republic the draft communiqué prepared by the United States delegation (Annex A). The view both of the President and the Prime Minister had been that this communiqué was far too weak. The French Government could not associate itself with such a communiqué. Paragraph 2 in particular, was far weaker than the draft discussed the previous day. The communiqué also put forward as a principle that the 1888 Convention should be used as a basis for invitations to the proposed conference of powers interested in the Canal. This entailed a number of difficulties. Legal experts in Paris had expressed the opinion that, under these circumstances it would be necessary to invite the East German Government. Furthermore there was the question of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian empire and this would involve inviting the majority of the iron curtain "democracies". This might result in a lively discussion but would hardly lead to the desired result. There was the further risk that the Soviet Union would then propose an international meeting with a membership - different from what would be acceptable to us, which would be embarrassing. As to invitations, he preferred the earlier suggestion that the United Kingdom Government should issue the invitations to the conference. For one thing, if there were three inviting powers the question would arise where the meeting should be held, whereas, if the United Kingdom were the inviting power, it would be held in London, which was desirable. In any case the object of such a conference would not be to settle the whole problem but to draft a suggested settlement which would then be submitted to other interested powers. The French Government could not associate themselves with the communiqué as drafted.

The Foreign Secretary shared Monsieur Pineau's view of the 1888 Convention. It not only got us into difficulties over the successor states, but also excluded the United States. This would be most unfortunate. If this body should be broadened to include other powers with shipping and trade interests it would be difficult to see where the line could be drawn and the logical outcome would be action in the United Nations. In our draft communiqué we had mentioned "the principles of the Convention" and not the Convention itself. We favoured the idea of calling a conference to meet in London. The object of this would be to bring a respectable body of international opinion to support our general proposition. It was for further consideration what we should do with this support. Our other comments on the communiqué were:-

- (i) We wished the wording of the condemnation of Egypt to be as strong as possible.

/(ii)

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- (ii) It must be stated unequivocally that arrangements must be made to bring the administration of the Canal under International Control. The United States text, while not excluding the possibility of such control, implied that there could be a solution without it.

Mr. Murphy regretted that the Foreign Secretary and Monsieur Pineau did not like his language. He did not regard Monsieur Pineau's point about East Germany as being a valid criticism. The United States Government did not recognise the East German Government and they would therefore not be invited to the Conference. Nor did he think that the question of the successor states of the Austro Hungarian Empire raised great difficulties. He said that the invitation would only be issued to Austria. The Anglo-French attitude to the 1888 Convention was that they wished to have their cake and eat it. It was either a valid document in the case or not, and it had many advantages from the United States point of view. He saw no necessity for using strong language in the communiqué such as "retaliation" and the like. He considered that the phrase "threatens the use of the Canal" in paragraph 2 was strong enough. As for paragraph 3, while it was not as categorical as the Foreign Secretary wanted it struck him as being strong enough, since it implied that the present arrangements for the Canal were inadequate. It did not limit the attendance at the proposed conference to signatories of the 1888 Convention but made it clear that users were also concerned. He thought that the difficulty over the place of the meeting could be got over. He undertook to convey the substance of Anglo-French doubts to Mr. Dulles before the next meeting.

The session then adjourned and it was agreed that the next meeting should be in plenary session at 11 a.m. on Wednesday August 1, subject to Mr. Dulles arriving in time.

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ANNEX A

PROPOSED COMMUNIQUE (United States draft)

- (1) The Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States regard the Suez Canal as an international waterway of vital importance and an essential factor in the whole world economy, and consider that it should continue to be operated in accordance with the convention of October 29, 1888.
- (2) They consider that the action taken by the Government of Egypt to nationalize the Universal Suez Canal Company threatens the use of the Canal as contemplated by the convention and that it is necessary that steps be taken to assure that the signatories of the convention and all of the other powers entitled to enjoy the benefits of the convention shall in fact secure such benefits.
- (3) Accordingly, they propose that a conference should be held of the signatories of the convention and of the principal users of the canal to consider what steps should be taken to assure the continued operation of the canal in accordance with the convention of October 29, 1888. Such arrangements would in any event respect the legitimate interests of Egypt, including a fair financial return from the operation of the canal. The invitation to the conference will be made by three governments signatory to the convention in accordance with Article 8 thereof, and the United States of America has indicated that it is prepared to take part in such a conference.

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FROM PARIS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

J 14/11/213  
J

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Reilly

No. 199

August 2, 1956

D:11.15 p.m. August 2, 1956

R:11.22 p.m. August 2, 1956

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

Instructions to Suez Canal Company's Staff in Egypt.

As instructed by telephone I told Director General of the Company this evening that I must ask that instructions should on no account be despatched until Her Majesty's Government had been able to inform the Company of their considered views. I added that I thought it very unlikely that Her Majesty's Government could concur in instructions as drafted, since they were, I understood, at variance with policy now being discussed in London.

2. M. Georges-Picot promised that they would not be sent before board meeting at 11 a.m. tomorrow. He said there would be strong pressure to approve and despatch them not later than tomorrow afternoon, since French Ambassador at Cairo would need to know what had been decided before leaving for his post on August 4. French directors held strongly that they could not acquiesce in their staff in effect transferring their allegiance to Egyptian Canal authority. If Governments wished staff to carry on, they must say so, but the company could not. He added that the French Government had approved draft, subject to minor changes on which he expected to receive their final views tomorrow.

3. M. de Crouy, with whom I had earlier discussed point briefly, told me that draft had been approved by M. Pineau. He said that Quai d'Orsay were not entirely happy about it, but I did not gather that they had strong objections.

4. I have informed Sir F. Wylie of above.

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File 211/214

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP.

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Duke  
No: 1056  
August 2, 1956.

D: Untimed August 2, 1956.  
R: 1.58 p.m. August 2, 1956.

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 1056 of August 2

Repeated for information to: Bagdad. Beirut.  
Cairo. Damascus. P.O.M.E.F..  
and Saving to: Washington. Paris.  
Jerusalem.

Your telegrams Nos: 3419 and 3420 to Washington:  
Suez Canal Publicity Guidance.

With all respect I venture to think that publicity lines suggested will do us little good in this country or in Middle East generally. They tend to emphasize our extreme dependence on Suez Canal and our doubts as to competence of Egyptians to run it efficiently and fairly. The one theme will merely cause jubilation and additional confidence to Arab nationalists, while the second would be indignantly denied and disbelieved.

2. I suggest that a more telling line with the Arabs would be that Nasser's action is misguided and unlikely to produce financial and economic advantages that he claims. I have no information of terms on which Suez Canal would, as I understand, revert to Egypt on expiration of concessions, but it would surely be at much smaller cost than his purported nationalization, if he intends to fulfil his promise to pay for taking over the Canal. In fairness the compensation should include not merely present value of the undertaking but also profits for remaining ten years which shareholders had a right to expect if concession had not been arbitrarily and unilaterally cancelled. Would it not be possible therefore to suggest, with supporting figures, that so far from assisting to strengthen Egyptian economy by his action, Nasser has saddled it with a huge additional burden at very time and over the same period as he is trying to raise large sums necessary for construction of Aswan High Dam? Moreover he has increased difficulty of raising funds for dam by completely destroying Egypt's international credit.

3. Another....

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Amman telegram No: 1056 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

3. Another theme I suggest is weakness of Nasser's claim that profits from the Canal would pay for Aswan Dam in ten years. The figure he quoted (£35 million per annum) is the annual gross profit from the Canal. Taking into account normal running costs and capital investment reserves he would in fact have only £9 million per annum. At this rate the Canal proceeds could not finance the dam in much under 30 years.

4. Egyptian propoganda, that in reality it was Egypt that provided all the labour and most of the capital for the original construction of the Canal, also seems to be making a considerable impression here. It would be helpful if these arguments could be rebutted in our publicity.

5. Finally, and at the risk of emphasizing the obvious, I would stress the importance of intensive publicity by radio from Near East Arab broadcasting stations as well as B.B.C. since wireless publicity reaches a far wider audience than Press in these illiterate countries.

Foreign Office pass Bagdad No: 317, Beirut No: 247, Cairo No: 288, Damascus No: 155, P.O.M.E.F. No: 508 and Saving to Washington No: 165, Paris No: 197 and Jerusalem No: 109.

[Repeated to Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, P.O.M.E.F. and Saving to Washington, Paris and Jerusalem].

ADVANCE COPIES:

Private Secretary.  
Sir H. Caccia.  
Mr. Ross.  
Head African Department.  
Head Information Policy  
Department.

JJJJ