

are currently underway. (3) FYI, Embassy Cairo has repeatedly reported Naguib's intention work out peaceful settlement with Israel when Sudan and Canal Zone Base problems settled with UK. As recently as February 7 Bunche asked by Naguib to convey this information to IG which Bunche did February 8.

DULLES

No. 565

974.5301/2-1153: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET

CAIRO, February 11, 1953—4 p. m.

1837. Following are our comments requested A-246 February 3 re joint British-French *aide memoire* on freedom of transit through Suez Canal:

While there would seem to be no objection to the three powers concerting as to joint attitude to be adopted toward Egypt to secure reaffirmation of basic principles re freedom of transit through canal, we believe that third item of agenda set forth in paragraph 12 need not be considered until outcome of forthcoming Suez defense negotiations with Egyptian Government is clear. It would seem logical that if these negotiations succeed Egyptian Government could easily be persuaded to make appropriate statement concerning freedom of transit and that, therefore, "last resort" measures would not be necessary.

We suggest that as interim measure it should not be difficult to intimate to General Naguib advantages to Egypt of making an *ex-parte* declaration reaffirming principles of Constantinople convention. Naguib might conveniently make such declaration on conclusion of base agreement. Once Egypt took this position it might then be easier at a later date to secure Egyptian adherence as an equal partner to some new international convention for freedom of transit through Suez.

Foregoing comments do not ignore fact that US is not party to Convention of Constantinople of 1888 and that US Government for other reasons might wish not to become party to such an instrument. We take it for granted that US policy re Panama Canal will be kept in mind before entering into conversations proposed by British and French.

¹ Repeated to London and Paris.