

No. 1097

774.56/2-1053: Telegram

*The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

LONDON, February 10, 1953—7 p. m.

4430. Following is abbreviated text memorandum dated today from Foreign Office in response Embassy's memorandum February 6 based on Deptel 5220, February 5 transmitting lists contained Deptel 4806, January 19² and Deptel 5221, February 5:³

"1. Her Majesty's Government most grateful to United States Government for reconsidering lists of arms and military equipment which United States Government contemplating supplying Egypt.

"2. They have, however, following further comments on lists annexed United States Embassy's memorandum February 6:

"(1) Her Majesty's Government feel bound record once again their view that supply of armoured cars and tanks in list A (Deptel 4806) would still be objectionable, since they would greatly increase potential of Egyptian force which could be used against Her Majesty's forces in Suez Canal Zone.

"(2) All equipment in list B (Deptel 5221) is open objection on same grounds, though strength of Her Majesty's Government's objection would depend to some extent on timing of deliveries and quantities involved. It would, for example, be deplorable if United States Government were to provide Egyptian Government with machine guns within next 45 days in appreciable quantities, and if those machine guns were subsequently used in action against Her Majesty's forces.

"(3) If, on other hand, delivery of items objected to in lists a and the items in list B could be postponed until such time as our two governments within sight of general settlement on defense with Egyptian Government, Her Majesty's Government would not feel obliged maintain their objections, if however, it should not prove possible withhold these items altogether for time being, Her Majesty's Government's view is that anything sent should be in very small quantities, such as could be justified on grounds they would be used for training purposes only, and such as would not set precedent which might lead to break-down of understanding between signatories of North Atlantic Treaty to withhold lethal weapons from Egypt.

"3. Attention of United States Embassy invited to additional arguments advanced by Her Majesty's Government against supply of lethal weapons to Egyptian Government at this juncture, namely:

¹ Repeated to Cairo as telegram 234.

² Not printed; see footnote 2, Document 1083.

³ Not printed.