

cal committees adjourn to Canal Zone soon thereafter in order facilitate inspection facilities, etc. Foreign Office seems think this is sensible procedure.

Forethought if Stevenson's discharge from hospital delayed much beyond 20, Churchill would probably authorize Creswell open negotiations.

ALDRICH

No. 1143

641.74/4-1453: Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the
Department of State*¹

SECRET

LONDON, April 14, 1953—5 p. m.

5574. Foreign Office has given us following details of plans for opening negotiations with Egypt, some of which modify earlier position as set forth Embtel 5533, April 11:

1. British Embassy Cairo being instructed suggest April 27 as date for opening negotiations. Foreign Office believes this date will be acceptable Egyptians for reasons set forth Cairo's 2238, April 13.²

2. UK delegation will be headed by Stevenson and Robertson is being designated as co-delegate.

3. Robertson leaving here tomorrow night for Fayid. On April 16, Her Majesty's Government will issue statement stating that Robertson relieved as GOC MELF and Stevenson and he appointed conduct talks with Egypt "on outstanding problems" between two countries which are to begin "shortly". Statement will also announce General Festing will be acting GOC until arrival General Nicholson.

4. Foreign Office will try "fob off" further press inquiries re substance conversations and strongly hope Egyptians can do likewise in order avoid situation such as that mentioned first paragraph Embtel 5533. In this connection, Foreign Office aware dangers 11-day hiatus, but feels they are less than those involved in postponing announcement opening negotiations until nearer 27th.

5. Churchill considers it essential there should be full and formal meeting at outset negotiations at which UK delegation would make

¹ Repeated to Cairo as telegram 302.

² Ambassador Caffery reported in telegram 2238 from Cairo, Apr. 13, not printed, that the Egyptians were willing to postpone the start of the conversations for several days until Stevenson had been released from the hospital. (641.74/4-1353)