

3. Salisbury stated did not feel empowered to go further than proposals first made but prepared study Egyptian proposals. Agreed that further discussion would be held after study proposals.

4. Above not to be discussed with British or Egyptian officials without specific instruction.

DULLES

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No. 1204

641.74/2-1053: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

WASHINGTON, July 15, 1953—3:20 p. m.

252. July 14 UK bilateral devoted primarily inconclusive discussion Suez Base although some progress made.

Re Egyptian proposal (Cairo 35, rptd London Deptel 201) British indicated generally satisfactory re treatment technicians except for question civilian clothes which, however, they indicated belief need not become major issue. British, however, felt Egyptian proposals re availability and duration deficient. As to availability British indicated extreme importance to them getting back quickly in event of hostilities to a base which would be in condition to be worth something. On question duration expressed view could not consider proposal limited to duration old treaty under which their rights would be substantially less. Also indicated three years too short a period to permit adequate military planning for area. Stated that should a fixed termination date be necessary ten years would be correct figure.

Secretary pointed out deficiencies British proposals these two subjects. On their provision re availability expressed view reference to threat of aggression could be interpreted very broadly. Therefore, likely to be unacceptable Egyptians. Expressed view provision re duration would appear to Egyptians to open way for an agreement in perpetuity. Secretary indicated our concern re British indication previous meeting their formula as far as they can go. Salisbury reaffirmed as far as he presently had authority to go but that he would be willing seek flexibility in wording under the limitation of the two principles involved. Salisbury indicated not expecting US to support every word but asked for US blessing and support on question of principles. Expressed hope UK could play its own hand this matter with, if possible, our general blessing in order avoid sit-

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Cairo as telegram 63. Drafted by Raynor and approved by Livingston T. Merchant, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs.