

They clashed again on uniforms, British insisting on British uniforms with slight tab variations; Egyptians insisting technicians could not be in British uniforms or uniforms looking like British uniforms, but they would accept some other uniform.

In view evident strain meeting lasted only 40 minutes. They are to meet together, however, on Wednesday next.

In another conversation with Embassy officer, Nasir repeated what Fawzi told me and added that Egyptians made it clear to British that they would only grant automatic right of re-entry of base in case of attack on one of Arab States. Egyptians declined further discussion on this point and on use of British-type uniforms for technicians. Since they suggested that British produce their word these subjects at next meeting. Nasir alleges there may be early breakdown. I will of course endeavor to prevent this.

CAFFERY

No. 1227

641.74/16-653: Telegram

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

TOP SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, October 6, 1953—7:33 p. m.

1800. Personal for Aldrich from the Secretary. We have refrained since talks here with Salisbury from attempting to act in any way as intermediary in the Suez negotiations. We adopted British thesis that if we would avoid this role and support British, that would produce desired results. Therefore, we have frequently urged Egyptians to modify their position to meet UK position. Last month British asked our support on three specific items which we gave fully because we were led to assume that these issues of "reference to Suez transit", "availability" and "duration" were the only major matters that stood in the way of agreement. Our information is that Egyptians are prepared to meet substantially the British position on those three items. Now we learn somewhat to our dismay that the negotiations may collapse on the issue of what kind of uniform the technicians should wear, namely, whether they should be military uniforms or non-military uniforms.

It is still not our intention to intervene in negotiations. We hope that the information we have received is inaccurate and that an agreement will in fact be reached. We hope that not only because of its bearing on this particular situation but because of the fact

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Cairo as telegram 393. Drafted and approved by the Secretary of State.