

in mufti and even when on duty would probably be dressed in dungarees, or the like. British currently considering their position on this point and Foreign Office hopeful compromise may be reached.

4. Air staging post. UK needs air staging post both for (a) facilities for serving base, and (b) normal transit facilities. Foreign Office states UK most insist on such staging post, and that this and availability most crucial points.

5. Freedom of transit canal. Cabinet most insistent agreement either in preamble or body contain wording by which Egypt recognizes principle of freedom transit Suez Canal. UK wants legal peg on which hang case in event Egyptian violation. Also some such wording necessary if agreement to pass Parliament.

6. Inspectors. Details for final 2½ year period of agreement's duration during which 4000 technicians would be reduced to small number inspectors now being worked out.

7. British assistant to base commander. UK feels British technical assistant must be able give orders to British base technicians. Feels it of utmost importance that relationship between commander and British assistant be clearly understood by both parties.

Foreign Office expects today's meeting in Cairo will cover only minor issues.

ALDRICH

No. 1229

Conference files, lot 60 D 627, CF 165

*The Secretary of State to the Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET

LONDON, October 17, 1953—3 p. m.

Secto 20. Bilateral Foreign Ministers meeting morning October 17 discussed following:

1. Egypt:

Eden showed Secretary in greatest confidence latest draft on availability as approved by Cabinet, providing base would be made available in event (a) attack on Egypt (b) attack on any member ALCSP or (c) recommendation by UN that base should be made available in view aggression or threat aggression. Eden said this wording would be given Egyptians at Monday's meeting.

¹ Repeated to Cairo as telegram 43.

The Secretary was in London primarily for the Tripartite Foreign Ministers meetings in October and November 1953. Regarding the Tripartite Foreign Ministers meetings in London, see the editorial note, vol. v, Part 2, p. 1709.