

EGYPT

4460

No. 1297

641.74/3-1054: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom*¹

SECRET

WASHINGTON, March 12, 1954—7:30 p. m.

4699. We concur views expressed by Caffery (Cairo's 1075) and endorsed by Foreign Office (London's 3917)² re importance concluding Suez Base agreement soonest.

Aldrich requestéd urge on Eden resumption negotiations taking advantage meeting proposed by Nasir and on basis acceptance by Egypt of availability formula including Turkey (and possibly Iran) in return for abandonment by UK of insistence on uniforms. Aldrich should stress: (1) Unless agreement concluded quickly we doubt settlement possible foreseeable future because of inevitable injection question in elections campaign; (2) Desirability capitalizing on present straits RCC which may permit UK obtain better terms than in future; (3) Despite present weakness RCC offers best hope for long run constructive approach to Egypt's problems and cooperation with West.

SMITH

¹ Repeated to Cairo as telegram 1081. Drafted by Burdett and approved by Byroade.

² In telegram 3917, Mar. 11, not printed. Ambassador Aldrich reported that he had discussed Nasir's suggestion brought forth in telegram 1075 from Cairo, Document 1295, and the Foreign Office promised to inform the Embassy as soon as a decision had been reached. (641.74/3-1154)