

## No. 1316

741.56374/4-254. Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the  
Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

LONDON, April 2, 1954—7 p. m.

4342. Foreign Office handed us today two memoranda (summarized below, text being pouched)<sup>2</sup> outlining tentative interdepartmental thinking here re new proposals on Suez base negotiations. British would like US reaction as soon as possible and would welcome any suggestions.

In discussing matter with Foreign Office we inquired how soon Stevenson could speak to Nasir (Deptel 5106).<sup>3</sup> We mentioned renewed informal approach from Nasir and stressed urgency which US attaches to matters outlined Department's reference telegram. In conversation with Selwyn Lloyd earlier in day I had made same point.

We were assured Department's inquiry would receive urgent top level consideration and reply would be furnished soonest. Working level declined further comment but seemed impressed by suggestion Stevenson might at least give Nasir some preliminary indication in immediate future that new proposals under consideration. Official commented this might have beneficial effect as regards incidents in zone.

Foreign Office current thinking re timing is that as soon as US and UK have completed consideration of documents handed Embassy today, proposals be put to Egyptians, assuming both US and UK agree do so. Foreign Office would welcome Department's views as to whether proposals should be jointly presented to Egyptian Government or by parallel representations. Foreign Office hopes that by time both governments ready make this approach it will be clear Nasir in sufficiently strong position insure necessary stability.

Documents are (1) suggested arrangements between US-UK-Egypt re withdrawal British troops, liquidation of 1936 treaty, availability and maintenance of base; and (2) suggested arrange-

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to Cairo as telegram 116.

<sup>2</sup> The two memoranda were transmitted to the Department in despatch 3321 from London, Apr. 2, not printed. (641.74/4-254)

<sup>3</sup> The Department in telegram 5106, Apr. 1, not printed, instructed Aldrich to inform the Foreign Office that an approach about the Suez base should be made to Nasir within a week, since Nasir seemed so receptive to having negotiations renewed. (741.56374/4-154)