

circumstances, caused the Governments of Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain and Turkey (Egypt being legally part of the Ottoman Empire) to sign a Convention at Constantinople on October 29, 1888 respecting the free navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal. Article I of that Convention provided: "The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag. The Canal shall never be subject to the exercise of the right of blockade." (The text of the Constantinople Convention of 1888 is printed in *British and Foreign State Papers, 1887-1888*, volume 79, pages 18-22, and in *The Suez Canal Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956*, pages 16-20.)

2. Telegram From the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State¹

London, July 27, 1956—5 a.m.

481. Lima pass Secretary.² Cairo and Paris eyes only Ambassadors. Reference my telephone call to Acting Secretary Hoover.³ Eden sent for me at eleven o'clock tonight, within a few minutes after the news from Cairo reached here, and I found myself attending a two-hour emergency meeting of the Cabinet attended also by the British Chiefs of Staff and the French Ambassador to discuss Nasser's action in nationalizing the Suez Canal.⁴

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Files, 974.7301/7-2756. Top Secret; Niact. Received at 3:38 a.m. Repeated to Lima, Cairo, and Paris.

² Dulles arrived in Lima, Peru, on July 27 to attend the inauguration of Peruvian President-elect Dr. Manuel Prado y Ugarteche on July 28.

³ No account of this telephone conversation has been found in Department of State files.

⁴ Sir Anthony Eden recalled in his memoirs that on the night of July 26 he received news of the nationalization while dining with King Faisal of Iraq, Nuri el-Said, Selwyn Lloyd, and other Iraqi and British officials. After the Iraqis had left, Eden, Lloyd, and Lord Salisbury met with British Lord Chancellor Viscount David Patrick Kilmuir and the British Chiefs of Staff and decided to invite to their meeting French Ambassador Chauvel and the American Chargé, Andrew Foster. (The Earl of Avon, *The Memoirs of Anthony Eden: Full Circle*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), pp. 472-473) The U.S. Ambassador, Winthrop Aldrich, had left London earlier in the day for a short vacation. (Winthrop W. Aldrich, "The Suez Crisis, A Footnote to History," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1967, p. 541)