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EISENHOWER AND SUEZ: A REAPPRAISAL OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIVISM AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. EISENHOWER'S STRATEGY MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. BACKGROUND TO SUEZ: THE ASWAN DAM PROBLEM</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE CRISIS INTENSIFIES</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DIPLOMATIC MARATHON: THE LONDON CONFERENCES</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE OUTBREAK OF WAR</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE ALLIANCE IN PERIL</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. THE CRISIS RESOLVED</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIXES</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

No region of the world received as much of my close attention and that of my colleagues as did the Middle East. There against a background of new nations emerging from colonialism, in the thrusts of new Communist imperialism, and complicated by the old implacable hatred between Israeli and Arab, the world faced a series of crises. These crises... posed a constant test to United States will, principle, patience, and resolve.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

During the last quarter century, American historians have produced an avalanche of monographs and literature on the Eisenhower presidency. The majority of contemporary authors portrayed Eisenhower as an aging hero who seldom controlled the daily operations of the White House. In recent years, however, there has been a steady rise in Eisenhower revisionism. Some of the renewed interest stems from the fact that Eisenhower was unique in successfully maintaining the image of a popular chief executive throughout two terms as president. Another explanation originates in what Fred I. Greenstein terms "the nostalgia for the alleged placid, uncomplicated nature of the 1950s," but this trend hardly explains the abundance of revisionist literature that is currently dominating the historiography of the period. Of far greater significance than presidential

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popularity or a yearning for simpler times has been the recent declassification of federal records for the period of the 1950s. The availability of primary sources has generated a total reappraisal of Eisenhower, both as chief executive and commander-in-chief.

There are two major schools of historiography on the Eisenhower era. The first, generally writing before public access to federal documentation on the decade was available, depicts Eisenhower as a weak, fatherly, "chairman of the board" style president who granted considerable latitude to his principal subordinates, particularly in matters of foreign affairs to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Because of the high visibility of Dulles in the conduct of foreign policy, contemporary observers first offered this interpretation, and Sherman Adams confirmed it in his memoirs. According to Eisenhower's assistant, "Eisenhower gave Dulles a free hand and wide responsibility in shaping the administration's foreign policy." Writing in the midst of Eisenhower's second administration, Marquis Childs chastises Eisenhower for his failure to use the inherent powers of the Presidency. Childs states that Eisenhower not only failed to unify and inspire the country, but he also allowed the differences that transcended conventional political boundaries to accentuate. In *America the Vincible*, Emmet Hughes, Eisenhower's aide and speechwriter, attacks the Eisenhower administration for pursuing "static,
timid, vacillating and unrealistic" foreign policy objectives. Hughes states that the administration lost the true perspective on the political realities of the decade and squandered the opportunity to achieve a new world order following World War II.⁵

Other historians have joined Hughes in presenting Eisenhower as a weak chief executive. Contrasting Eisenhower with the extraordinarily active Franklin D. Roosevelt and the extremely vocal Truman, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. characterizes Eisenhower as an opportunist "obsessed with crises, the illusion of 'world leadership', and the obligation of duty."⁶ Although Schlesinger acknowledges some gains in executive influence during the Eisenhower administration, he accepts the traditional view that the President was reluctant to get into conflict with the legislative branch.

Norman Graebner concurs with Schlesinger's assessment and credits Eisenhower's alleged inactivism as a reflection of the President's own perception of his office. According to Graebner, Eisenhower viewed his role as that of a presiding officer who exhorted and proposed, but seldom enforced party discipline. Additionally, Graebner states that presidential aides, chiefly Sherman Adams and James Hagerty (press secretary), isolated Eisenhower from the intricacies of daily operations. Consequently, Graebner charges that Eisenhower's admirers have tended to measure
the President's success by his popularity, not his achievements.  

The majority of these critics, both politicians and historians, share a common disillusionment originating in their perception that Eisenhower was not as active in controlling policy as were some of his predecessors, particularly Franklin Roosevelt, and that the President insisted every foreign crisis gave signs of a Soviet presence. In addition, Eisenhower's low key leadership had a tendency to alienate liberal historians. Thus, these criticisms center on methodology, policy, and ideology.

The second school of historiography, following the current revisionist trend, presents Eisenhower as an active president who skillfully managed the executive branch in order to achieve his domestic and foreign policy objectives. Herbert Parmet, Douglas Kinnard, and Fred I. Greenstein are in the forefront of Eisenhower revisionism. Parmet is one of the first historians who states that Eisenhower, although a novice to party politics, operated behind the scenes to move the mechanism of government. Believing in the power of conciliation and guidance and fully mindful of the contending forces within his party and on the national scene, Eisenhower strove to satisfy the needs posed by bureaucratic politics and national security. In President Eisenhower & Strategy Management, Kinnard presents a similar view of a president who was an
active, skilled, and energetic "practitioner of closed politics." Kinnard asserts that Eisenhower frequently manipulated a very powerful set of political and military appointees. In the formation and management of strategic policy, Eisenhower was an active, strong, and effective chief executive.\textsuperscript{9} Complementing both Parmet and Kinnard is Fred I. Greenstein, who applauds Eisenhower's deliberate "hidden-hand" leadership, his emphasis on teamwork, and his success in upholding the dignity of the Presidency.\textsuperscript{10}

In addition to Parmet, Kinnard, and Greenstein, other scholars have joined the ranks of Eisenhower revisionists. Equally laudatory of Eisenhower's ability to imprint his personality on the Presidency are Richard Immerman, Gary W. Reichard, and Robert Griffith. In "Eisenhower and Dulles: Who Made the Decisions?," Immerman argues that Eisenhower influenced foreign policy to a far greater extent than contemporary authors realized.\textsuperscript{11} In similar fashion, Reichard explores the domestic politics of national security in The Reaffirmation of Republicanism. Reichard cites Eisenhower's skillful manipulation of the executive-congressional balance in achieving foreign policy objectives. By controlling this equilibrium, the President in effect neutralized the constitutional objections of the opposition and deflected the Democratic criticisms of substantive policy.\textsuperscript{12} Robert Griffith lauds Eisenhower for creating a coherent vision of how society
ought to operate in "Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Corporate Commonwealth." This vision represented an attempt to resolve what Eisenhower saw as the contradictions of modern capitalism. Griffith states that the President sought to create a harmonious corporate society without class conflict, unbridled acquisitiveness, and contentious party politics. These authors are but three examples of the increasing number of scholars who are reconsidering the Eisenhower presidency.

* * *

With the recent declassification of Department of State and Department of Defense records and the release of presidential documents at the Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas, there is an opportunity to examine the President's management of the international crises of the 1950s. Specifically, the opportunity presents itself to examine Eisenhower's ability to dominate the decision-making process and how he insured his judgment prevailed. Eisenhower's orchestration of the executive departments in formulating and executing foreign policy during the international crises of the decade is a fertile area of research that is attracting an increasing number of researchers.

Although several historians recently have undertaken the task of examining crisis management, no comprehensive study exists which explores Eisenhower's management of the
Suez Crisis from the presidential perspective. This scarcity of literature is ironic since Eisenhower claimed that no region of the world received as much of his personal attention as did the Middle East.

There has been one serious attempt in recent years to examine the Suez Crisis. In Warriors at Suez, Donald Neff presents the most complete analysis of the crisis since Kennet Love's masterful survey, Suez: The Twice Fought War, appeared in 1969. Indeed, Neff acknowledges his debt to Love in his own work, which he published in 1981. While Love concentrates on the Suez imbroglio from the perspectives of European politics and the Arab-Israeli struggle, Neff concerns himself with Eisenhower's attempt to replace Great Britain and France with the United States as the traditional Western power in the Middle East. Using recently declassified federal documents, Neff makes a valuable contribution to the historiography of the crisis, yet he fails to place the incident within the framework of the broad trends of American international policy, particularly the Cold War, which was the dominant factor in foreign relations since World War II. One literary critic accuses Neff of "forgetting to ponder the meaning of events" in his attempt to examine the crisis.15

A second problem with Neff's study lies in the author's focus. Eisenhower is the center of Warriors at Suez, yet Neff limits himself with the diplomatic repercussions of
the crisis and he largely ignores the President's ability to dominate the decision-making process. Recently declassified records, particularly records of the National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, many to which neither Neff nor other authors were privy, clearly suggest that Eisenhower was a forceful and energetic chief executive.

* * *

The formulation of United States policy surrounding the Suez Crisis will serve as a case study of Eisenhower's ability to dominate the decision-making process during an important international crisis. A study of the crisis will illuminate Eisenhower's perceptions of American interests, the Soviet threat, Arab nationalism, and other international variables, such as the solidarity of the NATO alliance and the United States "special relationship" with Israel. How Eisenhower achieved his policy objectives is the focus of this study.

Suez is an attractive case for this examination because the crisis was important and complex enough to engage the President in a full test of his ability as a crisis manager. Since he decided on a course which not only resulted in an awkward arrangement by which the Soviet Union supported the American position, but also brought the United States into direct confrontation with its traditional allies, Eisenhower faced strong opposition within both the executive
and legislative branches in the execution of his policies. Throughout the crisis, the President ensured his judgments and decisions prevailed amid dissenting allies, disagreeable military chiefs, and political opposition in a presidential election year.

The image of Eisenhower that emerges from the crisis reinforces the revisionist view that the President did not delegate major foreign policy decisions to his subordinates. Rather he maintained tight control of the decision-making process by organizing the security departments within the federal government in such a manner that it was only at the presidential level that all aspects of strategy management coalesced. The evidence suggests that Eisenhower was not the passive chief executive his contemporaries labeled him, but an extraordinarily active president who, as Parmet, Kinnard, and Greenstein portray, utilized a unique style of leadership to achieve his policy objectives.
NOTES


CHAPTER I

EISENHOWER'S STRATEGY MANAGEMENT

During my term of office, unless there is some technological or political development that I do not foresee—or a marked inflationary trend in the economy (which I will battle to the death)—I will not approve any obligational expenditure...for the Defense Department that exceeds something on the order of $38.5 billion. 1

Dwight D. Eisenhower

With the inauguration of Dwight Eisenhower in January, 1953, the country acquired a president who justifiably perceived himself an expert in national security affairs. Eisenhower brought definite ideas on the management of national security to the presidency, primary of which was aligning the defense budget to the well-being of the country's economy. As such, he directed his efforts at limiting defense spending. The 1955 defense budget became the pacing factor of Eisenhower's strategic programs since it had to be complete by December, 1953. From his desire to make a realistic appraisal of what the maintenance of an adequate but not extravagant defense establishment over an extended period of time would cost, the President championed a "new look" at security policy aimed at constructing a viable national strategy.

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Enunciated in NSC 162/2 on October 30, 1953, Eisenhower defined the New Look as "first, a reallocation of resources among the five categories of forces, and second, the placing of greater emphasis than formerly on the deterrent and destructive power of improved nuclear weapons, better means of delivery, and effective air defense units." The five categories were 1) nuclear retaliatory; 2) land forces and tactical air forces stationed overseas; 3) naval and marine forces in the Atlantic and the Pacific, charged with keeping the sea lanes open; 4) continental air defense units; and 5) strategic reserve forces in the United States. The increased reliance on nuclear weapons became the crux of the "massive retaliation" policy. In January, 1954, Eisenhower presented this program to Congress in a series of addresses in which he explained the necessity of curbing defense spending and obtaining "more bang for the buck."

Increased emphasis on advanced nuclear research and technology was not the only tenet of Eisenhower's strategic program. Since NSC 162/2 did not include a particular year of maximum enemy threat, the President sought to improve national security by establishing alliances outside the traditional interests of the United States. The decade of the 1950s witnessed the apogee of alliances. In addition to establishing mutual security treaties with Japan and Korea, the United States made alliances with Australia and New Zealand (ANZUS), various countries in southeast
Asia (SEATO), and moderate Middle Eastern nations (CENTO). None of these alliances, however, had the same force as NATO, which called for immediate defense and a centralized command system. In effect, Eisenhower expanded containment from a European to a global strategy.

Other facets of the New Look included the reduction of conventional forces, greater emphasis on strategic air power and strategic continental defense, and strengthening the nation's reserve forces to balance the shortfall in the active ranks. The costs for this type of national defense were high and would remain so for the next several years, but Eisenhower was convinced that the communist threat would continue indefinitely and the New Look would serve the nation best over the "long haul." Although the New Look faced stiff opposition from certain members of the military establishment and various congressional leaders, it remained the basic defense policy of the Eisenhower era even though the program experienced several modifications.

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To implement his policies, the President developed comprehensive theories of executive leadership that affected his selection of an organized staff and the efficient use of the personalities of that staff. Within this framework, Eisenhower permitted a high degree of latitude for the individual subordinate. This delegation of authority had
its roots in the President's military experience. Eisenhower reflected on his analysis of staff cooperation in a letter in which he stated, "Principal subordinates must have confidence that they and their positions are widely respected, and the chief must do his part in assuring that is so." Although he often relied heavily on his advisors, Eisenhower was very clear and emphatic about retaining the power of decision to himself.

Foremost of his advisors of cabinet status was Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. Dulles remains an enigma today just as he did during the administration. There is no consensus as to the merits of Dulles' diplomacy. As Secretary of State for most of the Eisenhower administration, Dulles has attracted his share of admirers and detractors, foremost of whom are Michael Guhin and Townsend Hoopes respectively. Guhin sympathizes with Dulles' efforts to construct a realistic foreign policy and portrays him as a man responsive to his times, a reflection of the image that characterized the United States during the 1950s. Hoopes, the most comprehensive critic of Dulles, presents an appraisal of the excessively moralistic Dulles whom he charges with widening and institutionalizing the attitudes and structure of the cold war in American life.

Eisenhower's selection of Dulles as Secretary of State was neither a surprise nor a foregone conclusion. Dulles had vast experience in foreign affairs. Born in Watertown,
New York in 1888, Dulles was the eldest of five children. Greatly influenced by his maternal grandfather, John W. Foster, who served as Secretary of State during the last eight months of Benjamin Harrison's administration, John Foster Dulles was also the nephew of Robert Lansing, Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson. Graduating from Princeton shortly after the turn of the century, Dulles first achieved diplomatic renown as a legal consultant to Bernard Baruch, the United States representative to the Reparations Committee at the Versailles Conference in 1919. Following the war, Dulles immersed himself in the law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell. In 1939, he wrote War, Peace and Change, which one critic charged was remarkable for its "high-minded impracticality and excessive moralism."

Beginning in 1944, Dulles served as Thomas Dewey's principal advisor on foreign policy and by the late 1940s, he emerged as the unofficial spokesman of the international wing of the Republican Party. His most notable achievement prior to 1953 was the Japanese Peace Treaty on which he worked as a diplomatic consultant to the Truman administration.

Nominated by Eisenhower to be the nation's chief diplomatic advisor, Dulles reached the pinnacle of a career marked by extensive service and grooming for the office of secretary of state. With his analytical mind, he was able to synthesize conflicting viewpoints and present the most
viable proposal for a given course of action. Indeed it was Dulles who had so eloquently enunciated the "massive retaliation" formula in a speech that he delivered to the Council of Foreign Relations on January 12, 1954.

A theorizer more than an executive, Dulles was not overly popular in diplomatic circles, due primarily to his abrasive character and imprecise language. Biographer Hoopes characterizes Dulles as possessing titanic energy, iron determination, and a tactical guile that did not hesitate to mislead and manipulate his allies. To Winston Churchill, Dulles was the only case the former prime minister knew of a bull which carried his china shop with him. Anthony Eden often referred to the Secretary of State as "that terrible man." An American critic of the New Look states that Dulles was driven by the need to satisfy the right wing of the Republican Party, by his enormous ego, by an insatiable desire to go down in history as a greater secretary of state than his immediate predecessor, Dean Acheson, and finally by an unnatural craving to create an image of forceful, successful leadership.

For his part, Eisenhower respected his secretary of state, but he was not in awe of him. Four months after the inauguration, the President analyzed the performance of each of his associates. Of Dulles, he wrote:

I still think of him, as I always have, as an intensive student of foreign affairs. He is well informed and, in this subject at least, is deserving,
I think, of his reputation as a "wise" man. Moreover, he is a dedicated and tireless individual—he passionately believes in the United States, in the dignity of man, and in moral values.

He is not particularly persuasive in presentation and, at times, seems to have a curious lack of understanding as to how his works and manner may affect another personality. Personally, I like and admire him; my only doubts concerning him lie in the general field of personality, not in his capacity as a student of foreign affairs.

The Eisenhower-Dulles relationship warmed considerably as both men grew more accustomed to the strengths and weaknesses of the other. Dulles emerged as Eisenhower's most influential cabinet member and maintained the President's confidence throughout his tenure due to their mutual view of morality, Eisenhower's recognition of the Secretary's political and diplomatic skill, and Dulles' respect for the President's political acumen.

Unlike the Secretary of State, the office of Secretary of Defense was not as firmly established. Having undergone modification in both 1949 and 1953 (1949 Amendments to the National Security Act and Reorganization Plan #6), the position was still in the transitional phase. Eisenhower's choice for Secretary of Defense was Charles E. Wilson, former president of General Motors. Arriving in Washington with little knowledge of foreign affairs, Wilson did not progress in his position as much as the President desired. Wilson was weak in presenting the administration's policies before Congress, a flaw that prompted Eisenhower to note that it
was the one direction in which he felt Wilson suffered a definite shortcoming.¹³

To complicate matters, Wilson's blunt use of words had caused considerable embarrassment during his confirmation hearings when the appointee allegedly implied that whatever was good for General Motors was good for the country. Such remarks did not endear Wilson to either the President or the members of the executive and legislative branches. On March 10, 1955, Eisenhower counselled Wilson about the casual statements the Secretary was constantly making in press conferences and elsewhere. Eisenhower regretted that although Wilson considered himself a master of public relations, he seemed to have no comprehension at all of what embarrassment his remarks caused the Secretary of State and the President in their efforts to keep the tangled international situation from becoming completely impossible.¹⁴

Another trait of Wilson's that tended to alienate the President dealt with the sessions between the two men in which Wilson tended to bore Eisenhower by discussing the intricacies of operating the Department of Defense. It was exactly the sort of thing that Eisenhower detested and found tedious. He had chosen Wilson due to the latter's bureaucratic and managerial skill. It was the President's intent that Wilson supervise the administrative operation of the Department of Defense, while he, as chief executive,
concentrated on the larger, more complex military and budgetary matters. At one point, Eisenhower chastised his defense chief, telling him, "Charlie, you run defense. We both can't do it, and I won't do it. I was elected to worry about a lot of other things than the day-to-day operations of a department." In actuality, Eisenhower operated as his own defense secretary, thereby relegating Wilson to a purely administrative role.

The President was not the only official who found Wilson burdensome. Colonel Andrew J. Goodpaster, Defense Liaison Officer and Staff Secretary to the President, echoed Eisenhower's increasing dissatisfaction with Wilson and informed the Secretary of Defense that his organization was weak and deficient. According to Goodpaster, there was doubt in Eisenhower's mind whether the Secretary could control the individual services under his jurisdiction. This was particularly true during the Suez Crisis when presidential dissatisfaction peaked over security leaks from the Department of Defense. In no uncertain terms, the President informed Wilson that comments by Department of Defense representatives on matters of political significance should be avoided and that comments on military actions should be carefully restricted to avoid disclosure of matters which should remain classified. As a result of these problems and his occasional inflammatory remarks to the press and Congress, Wilson's
influence gradually diminished during the Eisenhower years.

Aside from the problems with Wilson, there were several other reasons why the Secretary of Defense failed to play a decisive role in strategy management. Eisenhower regarded the Secretary of Defense as a business manager of Pentagon activities. Due to his own extensive expertise in international relations, the President reserved long range policy decisions relating to national defense to himself. In addition, the close rapport the President enjoyed with Admiral Arthur W. Radford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, complicated what would ordinarily have been Wilson's exalted position in the administration.

Like the Department of Defense, the JCS was a relatively new organization. Created by the National Security Act of 1947, the Joint Chiefs lacked direction and coordination until Congress authorized the position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1949. By law, the chairman's responsibilities included the coordination of the activities of the organization and the rendering of advice to the president and other agencies of the executive department on matters affecting national security. During the Suez Crisis, the Joint Chiefs included Radford, Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, the Chief of Naval Operations; General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chief of Staff of the Army; General Nathan Twining, Chief of Staff of the Air Force; and on matters relating to the Marine Corps, General
Radford was Secretary Wilson's personal choice as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Both Wilson and Eisenhower had first met Radford, then the commander of the American Pacific Fleet, on the President-elect's visit to Korea. Radford immediately impressed the President's entourage with his articulation and grasp of the strategic situation in the Far East. In addition, he possessed the credentials that satisfied the Republican conservative element. He was the Navy's leading advocate of air power and supported the formation of a "positive" policy toward Nationalist China. What convinced Eisenhower to select Radford, however, was the latter's commitment to new strategic technology. Radford fully supported the President's military concepts and he became one of the New Look's most vocal advocates.

Maxwell Taylor's selection as Army Chief of Staff succeeded the announced resignation of General Matthew Ridgway. Ridgway was never a strong proponent of Eisenhower's defense policies, and he emerged as one of the leading military critics of the diminishing role of the Army under the New Look. By early 1955, Wilson summoned Taylor from his position as commander of American army forces in the Far East to discuss Taylor's qualifications for the Army's highest post. Questioned by both Wilson and Eisenhower, Taylor indicated a complete
acceptance of the President's views on national security. Once in the job however, Taylor, like Ridgway before him, began questioning the basic assumptions on which Eisenhower based his national security policies. Never in complete accord with the New Look, Taylor began advocating a new defense policy which called for a more "flexible response" to the country's military problems.  

General Nathan Twining was Eisenhower's appointee for Chief of Staff of the Air Force. His selection did not surprise anyone in military circles. Twining was a strong supporter of the New Look since the policy strongly enhanced the role and the mission of the Air Force. A leading advocate of massive retaliation, Twining remained extremely popular with the President and eventually succeeded Radford as chairman of the Joint Chiefs in 1957.

The most surprising selection to the Joint Chiefs was the appointment of Arleigh A. Burke as Chief of Naval Operations. Burke was a relatively junior admiral in 1955 when Eisenhower advanced him over ninety senior officers to the Navy's most exalted office. Like his colleagues on the Joint Chiefs, Burke had to confirm his support for the administration's defense policies before receiving his appointment as Chief of Naval Operations. An exceptional officer who fully enjoyed the President's confidence, Burke remained Chief of Naval Operations for the remainder of Eisenhower's presidency.
In selecting officers to serve as members of the Joint Chiefs, Eisenhower preferred men who would view their duties as members of the nation's highest military council as more important than their command of their respective services. On February 10, 1956, the President met with the Joint Chiefs and reemphasized the necessity of their work as a corporate body. It was Eisenhower's feeling that the Joint Chiefs formed the union between the military establishment and the government. Their greatest asset was as an institution charged with the development of doctrine in its overall terms, not in minute details of tactics and operational procedures. The President desired unanimity from the organization, not proposals based on the requirements of the individual services.

Eisenhower's quest for unanimity did not register well with the individual chiefs. Although the President informed Burke that his principal task was not to run the Navy but to serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs, Burke disagreed with the principle that the Joint Chiefs should render corporate advice. According to the Chief of Naval Operations, it was totally non-productive to demand forced agreement because the minority had very legitimate reasons for believing the way they did. The chief executive needed to know the opposing opinions of the dissenting members. Burke also believed that the president should
meet with the entire Joint Chiefs of Staff, not just the chairman, on a regular basis. This was necessary not so much for the president to hear the views of the individual chiefs as much as for the chiefs to hear the president's views.

Maxwell Taylor echoed Burke's dissention concerning corporate advice. He believed that Eisenhower's desire for unanimity was totally unrealistic. Taylor knew that the defense budget was the "pay-off". One could weave all sorts of theories about the New Look and massive retaliation in an academic context, but it was real business when someone translated strategic theory into dollars needed to produce forces compatible with it. Despite the disagreement with the President over the budget and the role of the Joint Chiefs as an institution, Taylor, as well as Burke, maintained a healthy admiration for Eisenhower.

Only in the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff did Eisenhower find the team player he desired. "Strangely enough," he wrote his friend Everett Hazlett, "the one man who sees this [the breadth of understanding and devotion of country over individual service] is a Navy man who at one time was an uncompromising exponent of Naval power and its superiority over any other kind of strength." Unfortunately Radford was unable to bring the individual chiefs to his way of thinking, and the internal differences
among the military leaders tended to neutralize the advisory capacity they might have enjoyed as a body. However, the President met frequently with Radford at the former's insistence as he wanted to continue the arrangement he had with General Omar Bradley, Radford's predecessor, with whom he met every Monday morning when both were in Washington.26

Relations between the Joint Chiefs and the Department of State remained amicable throughout the Eisenhower presidency. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Murphy met weekly with the chiefs, and no major friction existed between the Joint Chiefs and Secretary Dulles. Indeed, all the chiefs maintained a healthy respect for Dulles throughout their tenure.27

Another institution of increasing importance in the Eisenhower decision-making process was the National Security Council (NSC). Although Truman utilized the NSC as a small advisory board, Eisenhower transformed the body into a highly structured staff system under Robert Cutler.28 Cutler and his successors, Dillon Anderson, William Jackson, and Gordon Gray organized and administered a system of comprehensive policy planning that evolved into a highly efficient advisory body consisting of the NSC Planning Board and the Operations Coordination Board. The NSC Planning Board had the responsibility of developing comprehensive "basic national security policy," area
policies, and functional policies. After the President analyzed the Planning Board's recommendation, the Operations Coordination Board had the task of supervising policy implementation.

Theoretically the NSC was responsible for long term policy guidance and identification of long term policy objectives. Defense Liaison Officer Goodpaster stated that Eisenhower often used the council as a forum within which the President would have the benefits of the comments of those cabinet members who officered the departments with national security responsibilities. During the eight years of the Eisenhower presidency, the NSC met 346 times. Two and a half hours was the typical duration, and Eisenhower presided approximately 90% of the time. In most cases, eleven to twelve people attended the weekly meetings. The participants included the President, Vice-President Richard Nixon, Dulles, Wilson, Radford, Allen Dulles of the Central Intelligence Agency, Lewis L. Strauss of the Atomic Energy Commission, Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey, Cutler, and Sherman Adams, who acted as Eisenhower's unofficial chief of staff. Eisenhower wasadamant about keeping the number of attendees to a minimum. When Cutler informed the President that several officials, including the service secretaries and the individual chiefs, thought they needed to attend the NSC meetings in order to be "kept abreast," Eisenhower stated, "Bobby
[Cutler], I won't have people sitting around just for a free ride. The council is a place for workers with a significant interest."\textsuperscript{31} That ended the discussion.

Despite the theoretical role that the NSC played or the actual prestige the institution enjoyed in subsequent administrations, it seldom was a forum which executed policy decisions in the Eisenhower administration. Indeed, the President often found the sessions burdensome as evident by a letter in which his private secretary remarked that the NSC meetings seemed to be the President's most time consuming task and "he himself complains that he knows every word of the presentations as they are made. However, he feels that to maintain the interest and attention of every member of the NSC, he must sit through every meeting."\textsuperscript{32}

There were two other individuals who played important roles within the executive branch, Allen Dulles and Andrew Goodpaster. Dulles served Eisenhower as Director of Central Intelligence, and Goodpaster performed the dual duties of Staff Secretary and Defense Liaison Officer. Dulles was particularly important during the NSC sessions as he generally opened each meeting with an assessment of the particular topic of discussion. A former Department of State employee, Allen Dulles had earned his reputation as a highly successful agent for the Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the CIA, during World War II.
Following the war, he was instrumental in the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, which the National Security Act of 1947 established.

The Central Intelligence Agency was a totally independent department, responsible to the National Security Council (thus, ultimately to the President), not to the Department of Defense. The CIA had five general functions as outlined by the National Security Act of 1947: 1) to advise the National Security Council on matters relating to national security; 2) to make recommendations to the NSC regarding the coordination of intelligence; 3) to correlate and evaluate intelligence and provide for its appropriate dissemination; 4) to carry out "service of common concern", and 5) to "perform such other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting national security as the NSC will from time to time direct." The last function grew from a deep concern over the inroads the Soviet Union was making in western Europe after World War II. Alarmed that the Soviet-inspired Communists were attempting to control the social and economic aspects of life in destitute France and Italy, the Truman administration thought they ought to have some facility for covert operations to counter the Communists. Two years later, Congress passed the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 which exempted the CIA from all federal laws requiring disclosure of personnel employed by the
agency and permitted the director to account for any expenditures solely by signing a certificate. No additional financial records were necessary.

Upon the resignation of Walter Bedell Smith as Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), Eisenhower promptly nominated Allen Dulles as the agency's new director. Dulles had previously served as Smith's deputy director and was a strong believer in covert operations. When Smith resigned, Dulles was the logical choice to replace him. The Senate immediately confirmed the appointment. Although the relationship between Eisenhower and Dulles was never particularly close, the highly unusual arrangement of having two brothers serving in key positions within the administration insured that Eisenhower was fully aware of the agency's operations. Dulles remained DCI for the entire Eisenhower presidency.

Unlike the visible role Dulles played, Goodpaster often worked behind the scenes. Staff Secretary was Goodpaster's formal title, but he spent the bulk of his time on intelligence and national security liaison. MacGeorge Bundy, Kennedy's national security adviser, described Goodpaster and his role as "tending the door and handling urgent messages silently—a wise and good man."^5 Constantly at the President's side, he quickly established links to all the senior departmental and White House officials and emerged as an effective conduit through whom
information reached Eisenhower. In Goodpaster, Eisenhower had a man who was a focal point who handled the flow of material and information pertaining to those daily operations in the international arena in which the President was personally involved. The accent was on day-to-day operations. In that capacity, the Defense Liaison Officer briefed the President on intelligence substantially every morning and coordinated the ad hoc meetings demanded by Eisenhower.

In addition to the executive agencies in the federal government, the President spent considerable effort in cultivating congressional support. In the first off-year election (1954), Eisenhower traveled over ten thousand miles and made over fifty speeches in support of his fellow Republicans. Unfortunately for Eisenhower, the Republicans lost control of both houses to the Democrats. In spite of these losses, Eisenhower continued to pursue the goal of budgetary restraints in the period 1955-1956. Throughout his administration, he made it his practice to meet every Monday with congressional leaders of both parties. In addition, he instructed each cabinet member to establish contacts with the members of every congressional committee with which he had dealings. Lastly, the President established a staff section under General Wilton B. Persons with the mission of maintaining effective liaison with Congress. For the most part, the Eighty-fourth
Congress and the administration worked together harmoniously, due mainly to the cordial relations with House Speaker Sam Rayburn and Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson. Although bipartisanship did not exist in the exercise of foreign policy, Eisenhower averted confrontations with members of Congress by avoiding confrontational rhetoric and urging the need for unity in the face of Cold War dangers.

* * *

In summation, the office of the presidency and that institution alone, was the coordinating agency of the Eisenhower era. On complex matters, the President drew together the people who had competence and responsibility in those areas, had the analytical preparatory work completed, and then deliberated on those matters. During his collaboration with his subordinates, Eisenhower relied directly on his agency chiefs to take responsibility and exercise their authority within their respective areas. In the final analysis, however, the power of decision rested not on any committee but on Eisenhower. This was a clear principle of his operation. By dealing actively with his departmental chiefs, Eisenhower insured that it was only at the presidential level that all aspects of strategic management coalesced.
NOTES


3The President addressed Congress in the State of the Union Address (January 7), the annual Budget Message (January 21), and the Economic Report (January 28). See Public Papers of the President: 1956 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1958) pp. 6, 79, 215 respectively. Other phrases that proponents of the New Look used to sell their program included "security through solvency," "massive retaliation," and "the long haul."

4Eisenhower to Luce, DDE, August 8, 1960, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.


Ibid., p. 296.


AJG Papers, pp. 48-49.

L. Arthur Minnich Series of Office of the Staff Secretary in folder marked "Actions by the President, November 12, 1956," White House Office Files, Eisenhower Library. Hereafter the White House Office Files will be cited WHO.

For an excellent institutional study of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, see Kinnard, *The Secretary of Defense*.

For the history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, see Lawrence Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976). See also the Historical Division, Joint Secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's publication, *Joint Chiefs of Staff, Special Historical Study* (Washington D.C., 1980).


Memorandum For Record, Conference of the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 10, 1956, Office of the Staff Secretary, Department of Defense Subseries, WHO, Eisenhower Library.
23Oral interview with Admiral Arleigh A. Burke by the author, June 18, 1981. Transcript of interview is in Appendix C.

24For Taylor's view on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, see his autobiography, Swords and Plowshares (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972) pp. 164-178.

25Eisenhower, Mandate For Change, p. 455.


27See oral history transcripts of Maxwell Taylor and Nathan Twining at the Dulles Oral History project, Princeton University. See also oral interview with Burke by the author, June 18, 1981.

28For an insider's view of the National Security Council, see Robert Cutler, No Time For Rest (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965).

29See Index to NSC, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

30All names are at the time of the Suez Crisis.

31Cutler, No Time For Rest, p. 403. The service secretaries' authority had begun to diminish as early as 1949 when they lost their cabinet status as a result of the 1949 Amendments to the National Security Act of 1947.

32Ibid.


34Ibid., p. 166.


36Eisenhower, Mandate For Change, p. 194.
For an analysis of Eisenhower's relationship with Congress, see the following works by Gary W. Reichard: The Reaffirmation of Republicanism (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1975); "Divisions & Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy," Political Science Quarterly 93 (Spring 1978): 51-72; and "The Domestic Politics of National Security, 1945-1960."

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND TO SUEZ: THE ASWAN DAM PROBLEM

When Washington sheds every decent principle on which foreign relations are based and broadcasts the lie, smear, and delusion that Egypt's economy is unsound, then I look them in the face and say: Drop dead of your fury for you will never be able to dictate to Egypt.

Gamal Abdel Nasser

During the years 1953-1956, the Eisenhower administration made a concerted effort to develop a consistent, comprehensive policy toward the Middle East. The dominant factor of international politics in the 1950s was the Cold War, as evident by the fact that American strategic planners had formulated policy to counter expected Soviet expansion into the area. Fearing Soviet excursions into the Arab world, Eisenhower and Dulles initiated diplomatic forays to achieve the major American foreign policy objectives, chief of which was the desire to keep the Middle East independent of Communist domination and oriented to the West. As late as November 4, 1958, NSC 5820/1 stated that the primary American objective was the denial of the area to Soviet domination. Of secondary importance to American strategists was the continued availability of sufficient
Near Eastern oil to meet vital Western European requirements.

Numerous obstacles confronted the Eisenhower administration's attempts to construct a viable Middle Eastern policy. Throughout his presidency, Eisenhower was particularly sensitive to the Soviet Union's efforts to foster revolutions in the already unstable Arab states. Although he perceived the Soviet challenge to be fundamentally military in nature prior to the mid-1950s, the President was keenly aware of increasing political and economic incursions into the area by 1955. By the following year, the Soviet bloc had technicians operating in fourteen countries in the Middle East and southern Asia. In addition, the Soviet Union extended financial credit amounting to $600 million, a considerable increase over the previous year. Clearly, this was a challenge that Eisenhower was determined to confront if he wished to deter the Soviets from extending their influence in the Third World.

In addition to the perceived Soviet threat, several additional factors made the Middle East especially difficult for American policy planners during the 1950s. Rivalry among the various Arab states forced complicated decisions upon policy makers. Any show of support for Iraq, for example, might antagonize Egypt, whose leaders viewed their country as the dominant Arab state. Secondly,
the existence of Israel created a seemingly insurmountable problem. The United States had been the first state to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation in 1948. Since the Arab nations were intent on the destruction of Israel, any lasting American treaty of friendship between the United States and the Arab world was virtually impossible. What the Arabs desired most, the elimination of Israel as a Zionist state, was beyond Eisenhower's ability to grant, even if he was so inclined.

Beyond these diplomatic complexities loomed the presence of American Jewry. This potent domestic lobbying group operated primarily through Congress, subjecting every administration to close scrutiny and complaining bitterly when it felt Israel's interests were jeopardized.

* * *

In an early attempt to prevent the instability that might result in radical revolutions, the United States joined Great Britain and France in signing the Tripartite Declaration of May 25, 1950, in which the United States set forth its deep interest in promoting the establishment and maintenance of peace and stability in the Middle East. Chief provisions of the declaration included the recognition by the Western powers of the necessity of Middle Eastern countries to maintain adequate armed forces for national defense, opposition to an arms race among the states in the area, and the statement of their unalterable
opposition to the use of armed force in the Middle East. In addition, the signees declared that they would submit all matters of international dispute to the United Nations.

Prior to 1955, however, Eisenhower was reluctant to make a major diplomatic foray in the Middle East. He believed that Great Britain and France had far more experience in dealing with the troublesome Arabs, and his focus centered more on Europe and East Asia than the eastern Mediterranean. The President's only significant involvement into the area occurred in 1953 when Eisenhower confronted the ardent Iranian nationalist, Mohammed Mossedeq. Mossedeq had created economic chaos by nationalizing the Iranian oil fields and refineries in 1951. By 1953, Mossedeq assumed dictatorial powers and forced the pro-Western shah to abdicate "for reasons of health." When the Iranian prime minister began courting the Communist Tudeh Party, Eisenhower reasoned that the time had come to remove Mossedeq and restore the ousted Iranian leader, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlevi. By use of the President's "good offices" and a Central Intelligence Agency sponsored coup, code name AJAX, the United States succeeded in placing the shah back on the peacock throne.5

AJAX was actually a cooperative effort between the United States and Great Britain. In August, 1954, Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA and a five man team entered Iran clandestinely to organize special military units and armed
mobs to remove Mossedeq from office. Financed by $1 million in Iranian currency, Roosevelt was completely successful and on August 22, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlevi returned in triumph to Teheran.

For the remainder of the Eisenhower era, relations between the United States and Iran remained cordial. Washington continued to support the shah financially, although never to the shah's satisfaction. In addition, Eisenhower promised assistance in the event of a Soviet attack, but the administration generally attempted to encourage the shah to initiate plans for economic and social reforms. Only through such programs would domestic tranquility prevail. In the interim, the United States avoided provoking the Soviet Union into harassing the country.6

Eisenhower viewed his role in resolving the Iranian crisis favorably and listed it among the successes of his first administration. Although the morality of his intervention in the domestic affairs of a sovereign nation was highly questionable, Eisenhower sacrificed morality for expendiency. Determining that the chaotic political and economic situation in Iran would lead to increased Soviet influence, he acted resolutely to prevent internal anarchy and Russian expansionism.

Although the Soviet threat during the Mossedeq crisis was dubious at best,7 Eisenhower remained convinced that
he had saved Iran from communism and overthrown Mossedeq's "Communist-dominated regime." His decision to interfere in Iran however, became the foundation on which future generations of Iranian nationalists based their strong anti-American sentiment.

Having prevented the Soviet Union from benefitting from the economic crisis in Iran in 1954, Eisenhower made a strong effort the following year to increase American influence in the Middle East. His objectives were two-fold: first, to bolster containment by constructing a Middle East Treaty Organization comparable to NATO and SEATO; secondly, to settle the Arab-Israeli dispute. Complicating any United States diplomatic initiative in the area however, was President Gamal Nasser of Egypt. An extreme pan-Arab nationalist who viewed himself as the dynamic leader of the Arab community, Nasser possessed ambition that transcended his position as president of Egypt.

In 1955, Iraq and Turkey concluded an agreement aimed at extending co-operation "to insure the stability and security of the Middle East" and stated their conviction that it would be useful if other states would join the agreement. With the urging of the United States, several other nations joined the newly constructed Baghdad Pact to include Great Britain (April 4, 1955), Pakistan (July 1, 1955) and Iran (October 9, 1955). The
official American reaction to the formation of the "northern tier" was somewhat peculiar. On October 13, the Department of State welcomed the Iranian decision to join the pact as "further evidence of the desire and ability of nations of the Middle East to develop regional arrangements for collective self-defense." In spite of the priority that the United States attached to the formation of the Baghdad Pact, the United States balked at membership. Citing the inability of obtaining the necessary two-thirds majority in the Senate required for formal accession, Dulles confused the British by shying away from active participation. In response to repeated British appeals to join the pact, Dulles dispatched Ambassador Waldemar Gallman, serving in Iraq, as an observer to the Baghdad Pact. According to the Secretary of State, the United States would join "if and when it seemed in doing so, it would be a contribution to the general stability of the area."\(^{11}\) Actually, Eisenhower and Dulles preferred to maintain their diplomatic options since it was well known that Nasser was vehemently opposed to the formation of any pact in which an Islamic state joined with a Western nation.\(^{12}\)

The American military establishment's view of the Baghdad Pact mirrored that of Dulles. The Joint Chiefs did not clearly support adherence to the organization
because such adherence would affect American influence in bringing about a reduction in Arab-Israeli tensions and constitute a new commitment, implying a willingness to provide a substantial increase in military and economic aid. In any event, the United States remained "sympathetic" toward the formation of the Baghdad Pact, but balked at outright membership, while maintaining continuous liaison with the organization through Loy Henderson, Deputy Secretary of State.

Unfortunately, American tacit acceptance of the formation of the Baghdad Pact misjudged the actual temper of the Arab Middle East. In 1956, the dominant figure in Arab politics was Nasser, but Nasser's strong nationalistic policies angered American policy makers, who viewed his actions as anti-Western and pro-Soviet. Initially, Eisenhower and Dulles sought to sway Nasser to join the Western bloc. Indeed, Dulles has been instrumental in persuading Great Britain to sign the Anglo-Egyptian accord of 1954, in which British troops were to be withdrawn from the Suez Canal zone by 1956. However Nasser became increasingly bellicose in Dulles' eyes in 1955.

On February 28, 1955, an Israeli raid into the Gaza strip left twenty-eight slain Egyptians. Shocked by the carnage and vowing that the attackers would not get away unpunished, Nasser attempted to obtain an arms agreement
with the United States. When this effort failed due to the American desire to preserve the status quo in the area and political pressure from the Jewish lobby, the Egyptian president made overtures to the Soviet Union. This demand for arms made the Middle East a chief area for superpower confrontation.

To the United States, Nasser's flirtation with the Soviet Union was the first evidence of Soviet penetration into the unstable Middle East since the Iranian crisis of 1953. Eisenhower immediately dispatched George V. Allen to the region to discourage the proposed arms deal, but Allen was unsuccessful. On September 27, 1955, Nasser announced that he had concluded an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia in which Egypt would exchange its domestic cotton production for Soviet arms. With its cold war mentality, the Eisenhower administration was legitimately concerned about the incursion of the Soviet Union, albeit by proxy, into the Middle East. At a dinner with the Egyptian ambassador, Ahmen Hussein, on March 24, 1956, Chief of Naval Operations Burke expressed concern about Nasser's ties with the Communists which had the appearance of being much stronger than the Egyptians claimed. Hussein stated that his country had to obtain arms to protect itself and since the United States had been unwilling to supply the necessary munitions, Egypt had
gone to the only other country willing to provide arms. Still these assurances did not assuage American fears, but an alternative to secure Nasser's friendship and hopefully block Soviet influence was at hand.

For several years, Nasser had contemplated the construction of a high dam at Aswan that would increase the arable land of Egypt by one-fourth. Visualized as a reservoir of 23,000 million cubic meters of water over an area of 739 square miles, the project was of primary importance to Nasser's economic program. If Nasser was the key to Egypt, the dam was the key to Nasser's good will.\(^\text{14}\) The problems involved in building the project however, were immense and resulted in another confrontation between the superpowers and led to the deterioration of relations between Egypt and the Western states.

The chief obstacle involved in the construction of the dam was the immense cost of the project, which was estimated at $1.3 billion, of which the World Bank would lend Egypt $200 million and the United States and Great Britain would make initial grants of $54 million and $14 million respectively while Cairo provided $900 million in local currency.\(^\text{15}\) Eugene Black, the president of the World Bank, was extremely optimistic about the project and had visited Egypt early in 1953 to examine the feasibility of joint financing the dam.\(^\text{16}\) On November
21, 1955, negotiations to secure Western aid for construction began in Washington with Black, American Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover Jr., British ambassador Sir Roger Makins, and the Egyptian financial minister, Abdel Kaissouni. By December 16, the quartet had reached a tentative agreement in which they decided that after an initial allocation of funds by the United States and Great Britain, the Western nations would consider supporting the later stages of the development "subject to legislative authority." Nasser's immediate reaction to this phased economic support was not encouraging, but following Black's sojourn to Cairo in January, he accepted the negotiated settlement.

The reluctance of Nasser to accept the Anglo-American financial offer seemed to confirm the suspicions that he was courting the Soviet Union and playing one side against the other. To Eisenhower, the entire episode hinted at blackmail. In addition, congressional support for the Aswan project was lukewarm at best. In late December, Dulles approached Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson, an avowed anti-Nassirite, and informed him that the Department of State "placed special emphasis on the economic aspects of foreign policy, particularly in view of the stepped-up Soviet campaign in this field." However, Dulles' insistence on supporting the project did
not persuade many congressional leaders, and support from Capitol Hill remained less than enthusiastic. Democratic leaders expressed dissatisfaction with the magnitude of the loan and the long term (10-14 years) aid authorization. Richard Russell, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, complained that the Department of State was "so sterile of ideas that the only answer they have to the Russians is to ask for more money." Louisiana representative Otto Passman, chairman of the House Appropriations Sub-Committee that handled foreign aid, bitterly denounced the package as "unwarranted by the facts." In the Senate, both Oregon senators, Wayne Morse and Richard Neuberger, attacked the administration, stating that they would not support Eisenhower unless the president supported their efforts to build a dam on the Snake River in their home state. In addition, senators from the Southern cotton states were generally unenthusiastic to support a project that would inevitably lead to greater cotton production by one of their chief economic competitors. During the next few days, the Washington Post stated that Passman's and his colleagues' opposition seemed to signal a Democratic drive to cut the foreign assistance program for Egypt.

To complicate the administration's efforts at obtaining congressional support, many legislators had
written off Egypt as a result of the Czechoslovakian arms deal. House Leader John McCormick wanted "to throw the fear of America into Nasser to dissuade him from buying more Soviet weapons." Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee viewed the arms deal as a turning point in the Middle East because it brought the cold war into the region, and Nasser's chief aim was the destruction of Israel. Fellow Democratic senator Hubert Humphery expressed dismay as to why the administration was not contemplating increasing arms shipments to Israel to counter Nasser's recent acquisitions. Soon congressional opposition to the Aswan Dam project was coming from both sides of the aisle as Senate Minority Leader William Knowland put himself on record as opposing any long term aid commitment. Despite strong pressure by the President and the Secretary of State, the administration was totally unsuccessful in obtaining congressional support for the Aswan project, and by mid-July, the Senate Appropriations Committee barred further aid to Egypt for construction of the Aswan Dam without prior approval of the committee.

Mounting congressional opposition and pressure from the strong Israeli lobby convinced Eisenhower to abandon the project, but the United States did not immediately withdraw its offer. According to Mohammed Heikal, Nasser's
most intimate counselor, the Egyptian president came to
the conclusion that the United States was serious for
possibly one month at the beginning of 1956 about
helping to finance the High Dam. 26 Although Nasser
failed to comprehend the difficulties Eisenhower
encountered in his efforts to push unpopular legislation
through a recalcitrant Congress, he was probably correct
in his conviction that the administration's enthusiasm
for the project cooled markedly by the spring. And then
in May, 1956, Nasser committed the unforgivable sin of
recognizing the People's Republic of China. Such action
doomed any possibility of congressional support for the
Aswan Dam.

Nasser's action should have prompted Eisenhower and
Dulles to withdraw the formal American financial offer,
but the administration procrastinated throughout the
early summer. By that time, Anthony Eden, Prime Minister
of Great Britain, began expressing serious doubts about
the wisdom of upholding the British end of the financial
package. 27 Following King Hussein of Jordan's abrupt
dismissal of Sir John Bagot Glubb, commander of the
Jordanian Legion, an action that Eden attributed to
Nasser's influence, Eden decided "the world was not big
enough to hold him and Nasser." 28 Reinforcing his
distaste for Nasser were reports that Egypt was diverting
funds earmarked for the dam's construction for additional arms for the Soviets. Gradually Eden and Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd decided they "could not go on with a project likely to become increasingly onerous in finance and unsatisfactory practice." In other words, Great Britain was looking for an escape from a difficult situation.

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By the middle of June, Eisenhower and his associates were becoming increasingly doubtful of the wisdom of American participation in the Aswan project. The deterioration of relations between the United States and Egypt was most obvious in Nasser's vehement criticism of Western attitudes toward the Arab-Israeli dispute. These denunciations, coupled with Egyptian objections directed against Great Britain for its encouragement of Jordan to join the Baghdad Pact, convinced Dulles to terminate the pledge of financial support. In spite of several diplomatic missions to the Middle East in June and July, Dulles prepared a one page draft of the official cancellation of the American offer and submitted it to the President on July 19, 1956. Eisenhower, who had recently returned from Gettysburg where he had been recovering from a short illness, made a few editorial revisions and returned the draft to the Secretary of State. At noon of the same day, Dulles met with Ambassador
Hussein and formally withdrew American support. The Egyptian minister was incredulous as he had just agreed to all the formerly announced American restrictions on the aid package. Unfortunately, he indicated to Dulles that if American assistance was not forthcoming, he had a Russian offer in his pocket. That indiscretion gave Dulles the opportunity he needed. In stating that the United States was not subject to international blackmail, Dulles addressed Hussein in abrupt terms, to which Hussein justifiably took personal affront. In explaining the American position, Dulles stated:

Developments within the succeeding seven months [since December when the initial offer of support was negotiated] have not been favorable to the success of the project, and the United States had concluded that it is not feasible in present circumstances to participate in the project. Agreement by the riparian states has not been achieved, and the ability of Egypt to devote adequate resources to assure the project's success has become more uncertain than at the time the offer was made.  

For his part, Eisenhower never doubted the wisdom of withdrawing the Aswan offer, but he was concerned about the manner in which Dulles had handled the situation. In a total lack of diplomatic etiquette, Dulles had released the news to the American newspapers prior to Hussein having the opportunity to inform Nasser of the American withdrawal. As a result of this diplomatic discourtesy, Eisenhower wrote Dulles and asked him to
justify the withdrawal of the American offer of financial assistance. Dulles answered:

There had for some time been mounting congressional opposition. The Senate Appropriations Committee had already passed a resolution directing that there should be no support for the Aswan Dam without the approval of the Committee—an action which, while it was probably not constitutional, indicated a Congressional attitude, in the face of which it would have been impossible to finance the Dam. If I had not announced our withdrawal when I did, the Congress would certainly have imposed it on us, almost unanimously. As it was, we retained some flexibility.

Of course Egypt, with its flirtations with the Soviet Union, had itself consciously jeopardized our sharing in this project, and they had tried to bluff us by pretending to accept Soviet "offers."

The outcome was not in fact anything in the nature of a "shock" or "surprise" to the Egyptians.33

Dulles never addressed the discourtesy of releasing the information prematurely to the press.

By withdrawing the American offer, Eisenhower and Dulles took the step that Congress had urged since February. Senator Mike Mansfield noted there was little opposition to the Secretary's action. Mansfield stated:

I believe that Secretary Dulles did the right thing in finally turning down the Aswan Dam proposal, with it would have meant the creating... of a moral commitment to the tune of hundreds of millions of United States dollars to build the project.34

Mansfield's comments were representative of both the Senate
and the House of Representatives. By July, there was virtually no support in Congress for the Aswan Dam. Minnesota Republican Senator Edward Thye stated that "it is not feasible for us to participate in the project," and Democrat Daniel Flood of Pennsylvania lauded Dulles' action, stating "the Secretary of State...is to be complimented on this point."\(^{35}\) George Mahan, a Texas Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, declared that Dulles "deserves to be complimented for assuming this position." Summarizing the attitude of his committee, Mahan concluded:

I am willing for our government to help other people when such efforts also promote our welfare and defense. But we have no business undertaking to underwrite even in part the proposed gigantic Aswan Dam in Egypt.\(^{36}\)

In spite of Dulles said publicly, there were other reasons why the United States withdrew its offer. Nineteen fifty-six was a presidential election year, and pro-Israeli lobbying groups had been exerting pressure on the executive and legislative leaders in the federal government. In addition, the administration was reluctant to alienate Southern congressmen representing the cotton-producing states, who were fearful of supporting the huge financial package to a potential competitor in the textile market.\(^{37}\) Moreover, many leaders were still irritated over Nasser's recognition of the People's Republic of China. Others viewed Egypt's so-called
neutralist stance as an invitation to the Soviet Union to enter the Middle East. Regardless of the reasons for the American withdrawal, the Times of London reported that Dulles had taken a "calculated risk" that might drive the Arab states farther into the Communist camp.\textsuperscript{38}

With the withdrawal of American financial support, Great Britain quickly followed suit. Eden claimed he had been informed about Dulles' action beforehand, but he had not been consulted. As such he had no prior opportunity to comment on the matter. The British cabinet met on July 20 and decided to join the United States in withdrawing from the project because "both governments had come to doubt Egypt's capacity to meet the cost of so grandiose a scheme."\textsuperscript{39} According to the Foreign Secretary, the decision was taken on strictly economic grounds, principally the perception that Egyptian industrialization and arms expenditures prevented the degree of priority necessary to insure the dam's success.\textsuperscript{40}

As predictable as was the British reaction, the Egyptian response was totally unexpected. The New York Times reported that a "gasp of surprise and anger swept the city of Cairo at the news that the United States and Britain had withdrawn their offers to aid in the project."\textsuperscript{41} As Hussein hurried to call Nasser and Foreign Minister Fawzi in Cairo, he learned that Fawzi already knew as he
received a cable after Dulles had released the news to the American press before notifying the country concerned. For his part, Nasser was extremely angry and claimed that Dulles and Eden had been deceiving him all the time.\textsuperscript{42}

On July 23, Nasser met with members of Egypt's Revolutionary Command Council and proposed nationalization of the Suez Canal to offset the lost Anglo-American revenue. The following day he delivered a vitriolic attack against the United States in which he castigated the United States for violating every decent principle of foreign relations. On July 26, he addressed a throng estimated at a quarter of a million people in the Manchia Square in Alexandria. In a three hour speech that delighted the crowd, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company.\textsuperscript{43} Even while he was speaking, Egyptian forces were occupying the various company installations. In one momentous step, Nasser had seized the world's foremost public waterway.
NOTES

1Neff, **Warriors at Suez**, p. 267.

2File CCS 381-EMMEA, Section 35, Records of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, Record Group (RG) 218, National Archives of the United States, Washington D.C. Hereafter this record group will be cited Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.

3Burton I. Kaufman, **Trade and Aid** (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982) p. 58.

4Department of State Bulletin #869, February 20, 1956, pp. 285-286. A copy of the Tripartite Declaration is located in 091 Palestine, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.

5For the account of the CIA involvement, see Ambrose, *Ike's Spies*, pp. 189-214.


7Richard Cottam, **Nationalism In Iran** (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979) p. 230.

8Rubin, **Paved With Good Intentions**, p. 88.


10Section 381 EMMEA SCC 27, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.
11Department of State Bulletin #865, January 23, 1956, p. 121.

12M. Perlman examines Nasser's opposition to the Baghdad Pact in "Egypt Versus the Baghdad Pact," Middle Eastern Affairs 7 (December, 1956): 432-457.

13Memorandum For Record, March 24, 1956, CJCS 091 Palestine, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.


15Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, p. 479.

16See 102 Congressional Record 12208 (1956).


18Department of State Bulletin #861, December 26, 1955, p. 1049.


21102 Congressional Record 1443-1445 (1956).


23102 Congressional Record 195, 1817, 2671 (1956).

24Ibid. p. 195.


26Heikal, The Cairo Documents, p. 61.


28Hoopes, The Devil and John Foster Dulles, p. 335.

Eugene Black attributed the change of Dulles' attitude toward financing the Aswan Dam to congressional dissatisfaction, Nasser's recognition of the People's Republic of China, Nasser's alleged support of Algerian rebels, and the dismissal of Glubb from Jordan. See Black's oral history on file at the Dulles Oral History project at Princeton University.

Department of State Press Release 401, July 19, 1956, in Department of State Bulletin #892, July 30, 1956, p. 188. See also Magnus, Documents on the Middle East, p. 103. The complete text outlining the American withdrawal of financial support is in the New York Times, July 20, 1956.


102 Congressional Record 15571 (1956).

Ibid., 13086, 14179. See also Klingaman, Congress and the Middle East, pp. 62-71.

102 Congressional Record 13837 (1956).

George Allen, Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East and Africa, places the Southern senators at the heart of the opposition to financial aid to Egypt in his oral history on file at the Dulles Oral History project at Princeton University, p. 30.


Ibid., July 21, 1956.


For Nasser's reaction, see Heikal, The Cairo Documents, p. 85.
Dekmejian states that Nasser's actions were dictated by political and psychological reasons, the latter being inherent in revolutionary systems. See his *Egypt Under Nasir*, p. 45. For the complete text of the nationalization order, see Magnus, *Documents on the Middle East*, pp. 167-169 or CCS 092 Egypt SCC. Appendix C, JCS 2105/38, *Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, RG 218.
CHAPTER III

THE CRISIS INTENSIFIES

The riposte left the West agape.¹

Herbert Feis

The Western powers greeted Nasser's unilateral expropriation of the Suez Canal with incredulity and astonishment. Neither Eisenhower nor Eden had any advanced warning from their respective intelligence agencies of Nasser's plan. Eden received the news of the seizure on the evening of July 26 when he was entertaining King Faisal of Iraq and Prime Minister Nuri-es-Said. Interrupted by a private secretary, Eden immediately adjourned the dinner and withdrew to a private study with Selwyn Lloyd, Lord Salisbury, who was the Lord President of the Council, and Lord Home, the Minister for Commonwealth Relations. Shortly thereafter, the Lord Chancellor and the military chiefs of staff joined them, quickly followed by the French ambassador and American chargé d'affaires, Andrew B. Foster, whom Eden summoned because Ambassador Winthrop Aldrich was in the United States.

61
Getting underway at midnight, the meeting lasted two hours as Eden contemplated Great Britain's response. Clearly infuriated by an act that he termed international piracy, Eden demanded immediate and strong action. Speaking in vitriolic terms, he directed his attention to Foster and charged that the "Egyptian has his thumb on our windpipe. Tell Mr. Dulles I can not allow that." A legal adviser then informed Eden that Nasser's action had certain precedence in law, but this did not diminish the Prime Minister's ire.

Long determined upon a policy to weaken and possibly topple Nasser, Eden directed the chiefs of staff to work through the evening and prepare plans to militarily seize the Suez Canal. According to Lord Louis Mountbatten, First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, Eden had become "very fierce" and insisted that the chiefs commence military operations immediately. Such insistence failed to comprehend the logistics and training necessary to initiate full scale maneuvers. Only when all three military leaders, including Chief of the Imperial General Staff Sir Gerald Templer and Chief of the Air Staff Sir Edward Boyle, in addition to Mountbatten, threatened to resign did Eden come to his senses.

The following morning, July 27, Eden addressed the House of Commons:
The unilateral decision of the Egyptian Government to expropriate the Suez Canal Company, without notice and in breach of the Concession agreements, affects the right and interests of many nations. Her Majesty's Government is consulting other Governments immediately concerned with regard to the serious situation thus created. 4

Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labor opposition, joined Eden in condemning Nasser's action.

The conservative British press, like Her Majesty's Government, sharply protested the seizure of the Suez Canal. The Times of London called Nasser's act "international brigandage" and "the biggest blow so far dealt against the West by a so-called neutralist country."

The Conservative Daily Mail gave Nasser the sobriquet "Hitler of the Nile" and insisted that British troops must reoccupy the Suez Canal. The Conservative Daily Telegraph likened Nasser to Hitler and Mussolini. 5

Winston Churchill best summarized the national sentiment in stating, "We can't have that malicious swine sitting across our communications." 6

France, like Great Britain, was aghast at the seizure of the canal and reacted with expected militancy. The French Government was decidedly anti-Nassir since it attributed its problems in Algeria with Nassir's influence. Foreign Minister Christian Pineau was due in London on July 29 on routine business, but rumors were already rampant that the French preferred immediate military
action to resolve the crisis. As early as July 30, French sources disclosed that Colonel Prieur of the French Army Staff had arrived in London and indicated that France was prepared to commit two divisions in any action against Egypt. Pineau believed that any other action, such as debate by the United Nations or the International Court of Justice, would be too slow and detrimental to the immediate solution of the problem.

The official condemnation of Nasser by French officials was remarkably similar to that of Great Britain. Premier Guy Mollet chastised Egypt's "would be dictator who addressed the Western democracies in insulting terms." With the support of the French Assembly, which had urged an energetic and severe riposte by a vote of 416-150, Mollet and Pineau advocated the immediate use of force to seize the Suez Canal and topple the Nasser regime. American Ambassador Douglas Dillon transmitted the French government's emotional response to Eisenhower on July 27. In short, the British and French attitudes did not relate solely to the Suez issue itself. Both nations were seeking a solution to their problems with the Egyptian president. The French viewed Nasser as the instigator of Algerian resistance, and the British considered Nasser's action as a threat to their vital national interests.
The American response to Nasser's unilateral proclamation was in sharp contrast to that of Great Britain and France. Unlike his NATO allies, Eisenhower's surprise was much more controlled and certainly less bellicose. Having received Foster's cable outlining the somber British cabinet meeting on the evening of July 26, Eisenhower contemplated his courses of action. Even at its incipient stage, the Suez Canal crisis had the potential of a major international dispute. Confronting Eisenhower was a problem which, if not taken seriously nor evaluated carefully, might disrupt the foundation of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Since the beginning of his administration, the President had sought to preserve tranquility in the region lest the Soviet Union take advantage of a chaotic situation. Now America's principal allies were contemplating the use of force to restore the privileged position they had once enjoyed in the Middle East. By opposing Great Britain and France, Eisenhower realized he was risking alienating his European partners, and such action might damage the solidarity of the Western alliance. If he sought to placate Great Britain and France and condemn Nasser, the United States might lose any credibility it had among the Arab states.

As was his custom when confronted with a major
diplomatic dilemma, Eisenhower summoned a small group of advisors to the White House for consultation. Since Dulles was currently in Lima, Peru on the last leg of a Latin American tour and Admiral Radford was in the Far East, the President met with Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover Jr., Allen Dulles, and Staff Secretary Goodpaster. Eisenhower voiced grave concern over the situation and instructed Hoover to challenge the invectives of Nasser's condemnation of the United States. Next, he charged Hoover with the responsibility of supervising all press releases on the subject of Suez since the subject was so delicate. Consequently Hoover met with Egyptian Ambassador Hussein the following day and stated that the United States was "shocked by the many intemperate, inaccurate, and misleading statements made with respect to the United States by the President of Egypt."10

Shortly after his initial meeting with his inner circle of advisors, Eisenhower received an urgent telegram from Eden in which the Prime Minister called for a firm stand on the part of the United States and Great Britain lest the influence of the countries would be "irretrievably undermined." The bellicose tone of Eden's dispatches startled Eisenhower as Eden had informed him that the British Chiefs of Staff were currently preparing
contingency plans for military operations to seize the Canal. Lastly, Eden urged a tripartite meeting of the Western powers in London.

Upon receipt of the cable, Eisenhower directed Goodpaster to summon Hoover and Allen Dulles to another meeting to discuss the ramifications of Eden’s dispatch. With respect to the London meeting, there was mutual agreement. Eisenhower then returned a cautionary reply to Eden in which he stated:

Your cable just received. To meet immediate situation we are sending Robert Murphy to London to arrive there Sunday [July 29]. We are of the earnest opinion that the maximum number of maritime nations affected...be consulted quickly in the hope of obtaining an agreed basis for understanding.11

Joining the ad hoc meeting in the White House, Murphy received his instructions. His principal mission was to "see what it's all about," and Murphy departed for London that evening with no other formal instructions than to "go over and hold the fort."12

In the interim between Murphy’s departure and the commencement of the tripartite negotiations, Under Secretary Hoover, having consulted with the President and the Secretary of State by telephone, informed the embassy in London that the United States favored the holding of a tripartite meeting initially and wider meeting later, the latter conceivably by the NATO countries. Insofar
as the actual seizure of the Suez Canal Company was concerned, the Department of State's preliminary view was that it was very different from the expropriation of an institution such as an oil company and that possibly Nasser had a legal foundation for his action. The American charge reported these points in a meeting with Foreign Secretary Lloyd and French Ambassador Chauvel on July 27.13 Douglas Dillon stated the American position to Mollet in identical terms the following day. From the outset, Eisenhower felt that there was no justification for military intervention on the part of Great Britain and France. Murphy's mission was to buy time, to allow British and French tempers to cool.

* * *

Keenly aware of European dependence on the Suez Canal as a conduit for oil shipments, Eisenhower could nevertheless afford to take a more relaxed attitude than his Allied partners since only a small percentage of American shipping used the waterway. In addition, American investments in the Suez Canal Company were negligible. Clearly, the Suez Canal was not as vital a national interest from the American standpoint as it was from the European perspective. This was not to say that Eisenhower did not realize the gravity of the situation, but he considered the problem serious only insofar as it
affected American interests of tranquility in the Middle East and the denial of the region to Soviet incursions. As a result, the President handled the situation as a routine diplomatic matter and did not recall Dulles from his Latin American tour. Eisenhower also decided not to reconvene Congress, which had just adjourned for its summer recess. With the absence of his principal diplomatic and military advisors, Eisenhower relied on Goodpaster and an inner circle of consultants to implement presidential directives.

Whether or not the President regarded the seizure of the Suez Canal as detrimental to the vital interests of the United States, the Eisenhower national security apparatus immediately went into action. Instructing Vice President Nixon to keep congressional leaders informed of all diplomatic actions on-going in London, Eisenhower summoned Dulles, who returned to Washington on July 29 to the White House for lengthy consultation. Reviewing Eden's dispatches, both leaders felt that the British and the French were anxious to start a war and to get the United States involved. Eisenhower expressed his concern that the Russians might seize the opportunity to increase their influence in the area, and Dulles agreed that there was a definite possibility that might occur. In any event, the United States should prepare
for such an emergency.

Turning his attention to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Eisenhower directed them to study the situation. Consequently, the Joint Chiefs initiated a study to determine what type of support the United States should render to its allies if the President decided to aid his European allies. Since two of the members of the military tribunal, Burke and Taylor, favored military assistance to Great Britain and the President instructed them to plan for the greatest emergency, the Joint Chiefs did not consider non-cooperative options. Rather they concentrated on three alternatives: participation of American forces with the United Kingdom's forces in direct military action, American support of the United Kingdom without actual military support, and American diplomatic and economic support of the Great Britain. In addition, Admiral Burke notified northern Atlantic and Mediterranean commands to be prepared for the evacuation of American nationals from the Middle East.  

Within five days of receiving Eisenhower's directives, the Joint Strategic Planning Committee, a sub-committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recommended that the United States should only provide diplomatic and economic support to the European allies. Although Burke and Taylor were initially in favor of offering
landing craft and other items for Britain's use, they supported the chairman's position that the exigencies of the situation did not warrant immediate material support.

For the next two weeks, while British and French military leaders were laying the foundation for what ultimately would be the Anglo-French invasion force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff prepared contingency plans in case diplomatic endeavors failed to relieve the escalating tension in London and Paris. On August 8, the Joint Chiefs proposed the allocation of one reinforced division from the Army, one fast carrier task force and one amphibious task force and a regimental landing team from the Navy and the Marine Corps, and an air division headquarters, a fighter-bomber wing and a tactical reconnaissance wing from the Air Force for use in the Middle East. The following day the National Security Council studied the JCS memorandum and by presidential directive formed a joint military-civilian committee from personnel from the Departments of Defense and State. This newly instituted panel was the Middle East Policy Planning Group (MEPPG). On August 15, Eisenhower supported the Joint Chiefs in that he accepted their views for thorough planning for all contingencies as prescribed in the JCS memorandum of July 31.
Robert Murphy arrived in London late Saturday, July 28, and quickly became aware of the bellicose British mood. Following a meeting with Lloyd and Pineau, he discovered that Great Britain and France had resolved to use military force to seize the Suez Canal if necessary. Murphy immediately informed his European counterparts that the United States approach to the problem was a legalistic one and under no circumstances did Eisenhower contemplate the use of force. During a dinner with Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold MacMillan, Murphy confirmed that the British Government believed that only military action could resolve the crisis and that the French saw eye to eye with the British. When he departed the meeting, Murphy dispatched a telegram directly to Eisenhower in which he stated that Great Britain and France were openly discussing armed intervention "to chase Nasser out of Egypt."

The following day, the Department of State cabled new instructions to Murphy in which Hoover outlined the official American position. The basic view was that Nasser should not be presented with an ultimatum because the Egyptian president would probably stand firm and war would be inevitable. Eisenhower could not commit the United States to military action without congressional
approval, and Congress was not in session due to the presidential conventions. Since there was no evidence that Nasser intended to halt traffic through the Suez Canal, the President saw no reason for requesting congressional authority to use military forces. At present, the United States preferred to act on a "more moderate though firm basis to achieve the desired results...therefore the United States believed that the best procedure would be to call a conference of the signatories of the 1888 convention"\(^\text{18}\) which had negotiated the original settlement by which the Suez Canal would be operated. Murphy submitted a proposed communique based on these instructions to Lloyd and Pineau on July 31 and promised to present the Anglo-French view to Dulles who was scheduled to arrive in London the following day.\(^\text{19}\)

Concerned with Murphy's reports outlining proposed military actions by the British and the French, Eisenhower summoned Dulles, Hoover, Secretary of the Treasury Humphery, Burke, and Gordon Gray to an ad hoc meeting on July 31. Later Allen Dulles joined the group. There was no unanimity among the advisors as to the best course of action. Chief of Naval Operations Burke stated his conviction that the United States should support Great Britain and France. The naval chief felt that
Nasser had insulted the United States too often, and it was time to teach the Egyptian leader a lesson. Secretary Dulles, who had spoken to Senator Mansfield on July 30, informed the President that Mansfield hoped that the United States would not give in to Nasser as he had all the attributes of an unstable dictator. Weighing the alternatives and not prone to rash action, despite the bellicosity of some of his advisors, Eisenhower decided that the American response would be cautionary. The President's actions reflected a deep desire to prevent bloodshed and solve the crisis at the negotiating table.

Later that evening, Eisenhower wrote a long personal letter to Eden in which he acknowledged the importance that Eden attached to the Suez Canal. In addition, he sought to dissuade Eden from the use of military force. Dooming any hope that Eden entertained about the United States supporting Great Britain in a joint military operation, Eisenhower stated:

...I have given you my personal conviction, as well as that of my associates, as to the unwisdom even of contemplating the use of military force at this moment...I personally feel sure that the American reaction to the use of force before more peaceful resolutions were sought would be severe and that the great areas of the world would share that reaction.

To highlight his growing apprehension, Eisenhower directed
Dulles to carry his letter to Eden and personally deliver it.

* * *

Before Dulles departed Washington, British and French military leaders conducted preliminary discussions for armed intervention. It was evident due to the distances involved that Cyprus would have to be the staging base for any assault against Egypt, and the British Government began preparations in that sector. On August 2, the Government issued a royal proclamation in which it summoned a large number of reservists to active duty. In addition, Whitehall announced that the return of national servicemen from overseas might be delayed by extensive troop movements and precautionary measures in the Mediterranean area. The Times reported the debarkation of the aircraft carrier HMS Theseus from Portsmouth with the 16th Independent Parachute Brigade Group.²² British newspapers also carried accounts of movements of French troops to Malta. The French had already alerted two divisions, the 10th Parachute Division and the 7th Mobile Mechanized Division, both of which were stationed in Algeria, for the upcoming invasion.

By August 11, the initial operational plans were complete, to include the formation of the command
structure. General Sir Charles Keightley, Commander-in-Chief, British Land Forces Middle East, received the appointment as Supreme Allied Commander. His deputy was Vice Admiral Pierre d'Escadre, Commander-in-Chief, French Mediterranean Fleet. The operation envisioned a total of eighty thousand troops, the majority of whom were British. In spite of the bellicose rhetoric of the French and British diplomats however, both nations were woefully unprepared to conduct immediate offensive operations. The British chiefs of staff had made this painfully clear to Eden during their meeting on July 26. Still the planning continued.

* * *

Serious negotiations began immediately with Dulles' arrival in London on August 1. For the next two days, Dulles, Eden, and Pineau laid the foundation for what eventually led to the first London conference on August 16. Although Eisenhower had informed Dulles that the British and the French had discussed the military option, the Secretary was surprised at the bellicose tone that prevailed in London. Communicating this fear to Eisenhower, Dulles informed him that Great Britain and France had already frozen Egyptian financial assets, an act that the United States followed, pending determination of the existing situation. Harold MacMillan argued that
the crisis was as important as Munich had been in 1938. When Dulles failed to share the anger that permeated Whitehall and the British community, the conservative British press vehemently attacked the United States and criticized American caution. To the Times, the main anxiety was that the American desire for conciliation might prevail over Anglo-French boldness and take the edge off effective action. An editorial the following day claimed that if Nasser was allowed to get away with his coup, all the British and other western interests in the Middle East would crumble. Taking offense at the legalistic stand of Eisenhower and Dulles, the editorial stated that "quibbling over whether or not he [Nasser] was legally entitled to make the grab will delight the finicky and comfort the faint-hearted, but entirely misses the point."

In spite of this rhetoric and his known sympathy for Great Britain and France, Dulles urged calm. Unfortunately, he confused the issue by occasional references of the necessity to "disgorge" Nasser from the Suez region. Such remarks were typical of the Secretary who was prone to issue inflammatory statements. Understandably, Eden and Lloyd were somewhat confused by this contradictory position, and they later cited this statement as proof that the United States had not
eliminated the resolution of the dispute by military force.

In any event, the tripartite conference terminated on August 3, and the members proposed to call an international conference to be held in London on August 16 to initiate steps toward establishing operating arrangements of the Suez Canal under an international system. The foreign ministers agreed to invite twenty-four nations to participate, the eight surviving parties to the Convention of 1888 and sixteen other nations "largely concerned in the use of Canal either through ownership of tonnage or pattern of trade." The eight surviving parties to the 1888 agreement were: Egypt, France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union. The sixteen other nations that received invitations were: Australia, Ceylon, Denmark, Ethiopia, West Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Sweden, and the United States.

Nasser's attitude toward the conference was soon clear. Having predicted the violent reaction to his nationalization of the waterway, he played for time since he felt that if Great Britain and France failed to attack by the end of September, Egypt would be relatively safe and world opinion would side with Egypt.
When news of the tripartite conference reached him on August 3, Nasser informed American Ambassador Henry A. Byroade that he would not accept international control of the canal, but he would guarantee free and unrestricted use of the waterway for ships of all nations, the sole exception being Israel which had not been permitted use of the Suez Canal prior to the nationalization order. Nine days later, Nasser issued a lengthy statement in which he rejected the invitation to the London conference on the grounds that the body was attempting to interfere in Egypt's domestic affairs.

In spite of Nasser's rejection of the London conference, it was apparent that Eisenhower had succeeded in purchasing precious time in which he hoped to defuse the volatile situation. Totally unaware of the details of the Anglo-French military planning that were in progress, both Eisenhower and Dulles felt that the American insistence on precautionary measures and less bellicose solutions than those contemplated by Great Britain and France would lead to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. What troubled Eisenhower was a report from Allen Dulles in which the Director of Central Intelligence informed him that the French Defense Minister, Maurice Bourges-Maunoury, had met Israeli Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan in late June. The result of
the meeting was the French agreement to increase arms shipments to Israel to counter Nasser's alleged build-up of arms. What was needed by Eisenhower was time to prepare for the international conference, time to muster congressional support for the administration's stand, and time to monitor Anglo-French war preparations.
NOTES


2Terrence Robertson, Crisis: The Inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy (New York: Atheneum, 1965) p. 73.

3For accounts of this meeting, see Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 276; Hoopes, The Devil and John Foster Dulles, p. 347; Eden, Full Circle, p. 473; and Lloyd, Suez 1956, p. 82.


6Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 277.

7New York Times, August 1, 1956.

8For Dillon's assessment of the French reaction to Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, see transcript of the interview of C. Douglas Dillon by the author, New York City, June 29, 1982, Appendix D.


10Department of State Press Release #413, August 6, 1956, in Department of State Bulletin #893, August 6, 1956, pp. 221-222.


13 Historical Division, Department of State, The Suez Canal Problem, 1954-1958, Retired Office File 71D411, pp. 23-24. This project is on file at the Department of State in Washington D.C. Access may be gained by way of the National Archives of the United States or directly to the Department of State. Hereafter, this source will be cited Suez Canal Problem.

14 Telephone Conversation to Vice President Nixon, July 30, 1956. See Telephone Conversation Memoranda, 1956, Box 5, Papers of John Foster Dulles, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University. Hereafter these papers will be cited as Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers.

15 Joint Chiefs of Staff action 2105/38. See 092 Egypt 7-28-56 Section 1, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218. See also Kenneth Condit, The History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy, 1955-56 (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1981) pp. 315-345. Parts of this manuscript are classified Top Secret and not open to the public.

16 Ibid.

17 For accounts of the meeting, see Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 380; Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 284; and Lloyd, Suez 1956, p. 91.

18 Telegram 574, July 30, 1956, top secret file 974.7301/7 3056 as quoted in Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, p. 31.

19 Throughout the crisis, Dulles conferred often enough with Lloyd and Pineau that the burden of conveying Eisenhower's views rested on the Secretary of State, not the ambassadors of the respective countries.

20 Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, July 30, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Library.

21 For complete text, see Eisenhower, Waging Peace, pp. 664-665.

22 The Times (London), August 3, 1956.
23Ibid., July 31, 1956 and August 1, 1956.

24For a copy of the declaration calling for the London conference, see Donald C. Watt ed., Documents on the Suez Crisis (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957) p. 500. See also Selected Correspondence and Related Material, Suez Canal, 1956, Box 110, Papers of John Foster Dulles, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

CHAPTER IV

DIPLOMATIC MARATHON: THE LONDON CONFERENCES

While I am not going to comment on the action of any other government, for ourselves, we are determined to exhaust every possible, every feasible method of peaceful settlement, and we believe it can be done.1

Dwight D. Eisenhower

A number of diplomatic attempts to reconcile Anglo-French interests with the vigorous nationalistic policies of Nasser characterized the first three months of the Suez Crisis, August-October, 1956. Eisenhower and Dulles had taken the lead in proposing and organizing meetings and conferences in which they sought to soothe Great Britain and France by assuring them that Nasser would not be allowed to get away with his unilateral seizure of the Suez Canal, while on the other hand, pressuring the allies to refrain from any diplomatic or military action that would deepen the crisis.

The divergence between the Anglo-French approach and that of the United States was rather unfortunate because there were several points on which all agreed. Both sides abhorred the manner in which Nasser had seized the waterway. Both preferred the Canal be placed
under the supervision of an international board of control, and both feared the increasing influence of Nasser within the Arab world. The difference lay in the interpretation of Nasser's motives and the methods by which the West should respond to the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Great Britain and France perceived Nasser pursuing interests inimical to their own vital interests. Both Eden and Mollet felt the United States was not taking the Suez affair sufficiently in earnest. According to Eden, the Suez "for them [United States] is not a matter of survival as it is to us and, indeed to all Europe and many other lands." Pineau and Mollet concurred with Eden's assessment of the American position.

Contrary to Eden's perceptions, Eisenhower viewed the situation as irksome, but perhaps not as simple as Great Britain and France portrayed it. First, Eisenhower doubted the validity of the legal position that Britain and France were using to justify the talk of resorting to force to settle the crisis. Secondly, he questioned the Anglo-French denial of the inherent right of any sovereign nation to exercise the right of eminent domain within its own territory provided that just compensation was paid to the owners of the expropriated property. Thirdly, Eisenhower was an avowed anti-colonialist and non-interventionist. Just as he had balked in 1954 during
the Indo-China crisis when France had requested large-scale American intervention to bolster their position at Dien Bien Phu, Eisenhower desired no part of a plan that had as its objective the re-establishment of European control over Egypt.\(^4\) Lastly, the President firmly believed that any action should be taken within the framework of international law, specifically in the forum of the United Nations if direct negotiations failed. Eisenhower strongly opposed the use of force until all other means were exhausted. To implement this policy, Eisenhower used adroit diplomacy both on the international and domestic fronts to obtain support for his convictions and defuze the explosive situation.

Although he had received only limited reports on the status of Anglo-French military preparations, Eisenhower was extremely uncomfortable with the bellicose statements from London and Paris. His primary objective in dispatching the Secretary of State to the tripartite meeting in London was to divert the European allies from war by a series of diplomatic initiatives aimed at settling the crisis without bloodshed. Since the chief result of the tripartite conference was the London conference of August 16, Eisenhower had succeeded in buying time to try to obtain a peaceful resolution of the dispute.
The President's next move was to muster domestic support for his stand against the use of force. Ever mindful of the importance of maintaining harmonious relations with the legislative branch and the American public during an election year, Eisenhower held a press conference on August 1, during which he refused to give definite details of the American position until Dulles returned from London. Marshalling congressional support proved to be an easy task. Although Congress was in summer recess, Dulles called Vice President Nixon, who was in charge of monitoring relations with the legislators, on August 8, and informed him that Eisenhower wanted bipartisan representation at the London conference. The leading Democratic senators, to include Johnson, Mansfield, George, and Fulbright, declined, however since it was an election year and the issue had the potential to be too volatile. The next day, Eisenhower informed Dulles that he wanted Congress to share full responsibility in the crisis "particularly if there should be any hostilities." This quest for joint responsibility was again reminiscent of the Indo-China crisis in which the President made a concerted effort to obtain congressional authorization before he committed any American forces into the conflict.

As part of his effort to obtain congressional
sanction for the administration's position, Eisenhower held a full scale bipartisan meeting to discuss Suez on August 12. Twenty-two legislative leaders joined the President, Nixon, Dulles, Arthur Flemming of the Office of Defense Mobilization, Gordon Gray, and Admiral Radford, who had just returned from a trip to East Asia. During the conference, Eisenhower stated that the American position in London would be to contribute to a solution of the Suez crisis with the objective of safeguarding the interests of those states dependent on the Canal as well as recognizing the legitimate interests of Egypt. Most attendees immediately recognized the gravity of the situation and expressed appreciation to the President for soliciting their views on such an important subject. Democratic senators Johnson and George listened attentively while Eisenhower and Dulles briefed the congressional leaders on the British and French reactions to Nasser's action and they left the briefing fully aware that the United States' NATO allies were contemplating military intervention. Republican senator Styles Bridges was convinced that Great Britain and France would not back down, and war might develop. Following the meeting, Eisenhower dispatched Dulles to London to prepare for the upcoming conference.

Eisenhower's careful cultivation of congressional
support was a vital component of strategy management. Prior to the meeting with the legislators, the President had relied solely on a small group of intimate advisors in formulating American policy. Neither the cabinet nor the National Security Council played significant roles in the decision-making process. Due to the ramifications of the Suez dispute with respect to the solidarity of the Atlantic alliance and the perceived threat of Soviet opportunism should violence erupt, Eisenhower preferred to control the formation of foreign policy from the presidential level. The intricacies of election year politics made this procedure all the more imperative since Eisenhower had no intention of presenting an image of an executive who was unable to control foreign policy.

* * *

In the interim between the end of the tripartite meeting on August 3 and the beginning of the London conference, Eden tried to persuade Eisenhower and the British public that Nasser had to be destroyed. The British position was clear:

No arrangements for the future of this great international waterway could be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government which would leave it in the unfettered control of a single power which could... exploit it purely for purposes of national policy.10

The Prime Minister then turned his attention to the
British public in a radio broadcast on August 8 in which he defiled Nasser by again comparing him to Hitler. Eden stated:

The pattern is familiar to many of us, my friends. We all know this is how fascist governments behave and we all remember, only too well, what the cost can be in giving into fascism.  

Unfortunately for Eden, his political opposition became aroused at his public utterances and the continuous military movements which the Times continuously publicized. The Labor Party began moving away from enthusiastic support of Eden's Conservatives, and a complete break occurred on August 14. Alfred Robins, a Labor spokesman, stated: "Neither the threat of force nor the use of force will solve the problem of the Suez Canal. This is not the time for banging drums or rattling sabers." Labor Party leader Hugh Gaitskill joined the fray the following day and demanded assurances that the government's military measures "were precautionary...and not preparations for armed intervention outside and inconsistent with our obligations under the Charter of the United Nations." By the time the London conference began, Eden had witnessed the disintegration of his position in Parliament.

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Of the twenty-four nations invited to the London
conference, all but Egypt and Greece accepted. Nasser had planned to attend the conference but changed his mind when he received reports of Eden's vitriolic attack on him through the communications media. Nasser did, however, send Ali Sabry to act as an observer while relying on the Soviet Union and India to represent Egypt's interests. Greece declined the invitation because Greek public opinion was inflamed against Great Britain over the Cyprus issue.

The London conference began on August 16 in Lancaster House with British Foreign Secretary Lloyd as chairman. The conference considered two principal proposals, one by the United States, the other by India. The American proposal stressed the establishment of a public international authority to operate the Suez Canal. The plan accorded equal recognition to the sovereign rights of Egypt and to the safety of the Suez Canal as an international waterway. In addition, the proposal provided for negotiation of a new convention with Egypt to establish "international arrangements" under which all parties would participate in a Suez Canal Board responsible for operating the Canal. The Indian proposal differed from the American plan in that it gave primary place to the "recognition of the Suez Canal as an integral part of Egypt and as a waterway of
international importance." India then called for free navigation for all nations, and due recognition of the Canal users, but instead of prescribing a Suez Canal Board with real powers, it suggested a "consultative body of user interest" with advisory and liaison functions only.

On August 18, Dulles cabled Eisenhower, who reviewed both proposals. Considering the merits of the Indian proposal, Eisenhower stated he would be satisfied to have the Suez Canal Board occupy a supervisory rather than an operating role, but he uncharacteristically gave Dulles a blank cheque and assured the Secretary of State his support in whatever action the latter decided. This was a mistake for Dulles rejected the Indian proposal, which was considerably more flexible and acceptable to Egypt, and he began mustering support for his own proposal.

In permitting Dulles such broad latitude on a major foreign policy decision, Eisenhower let a golden opportunity slip through his grasp. Whether or not Dulles could have convinced Great Britain and France to support the Indian proposal is unclear, but Egyptian acceptance was almost a certainty, since Nasser had approved the Indian plan in advance. The only suitable explanation for Eisenhower's lack of initiative is that
he simply deferred to the man who was on the scene in the hope that Dulles would make the proper decision.

Despite Soviet opposition, eighteen of the twenty-two nations supported the American proposal as amended with minor revisions. The conference attendees then agreed to call upon Nasser to present the eighteen nation proposal. Eden attempted at great lengths to suggest to Dulles that the Secretary of State head the five man delegation charged with presenting the London proposal to Nasser, but Dulles prudently declined. Writing to Eisenhower on August 20, he stated, "I think it is preferable that we should become less conspicuous."15 As a result, Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies journeyed to Cairo on September 3 to discuss the proposal with Nasser.

Although the Menzies mission ultimately ended in failure, Eisenhower and Dulles were satisfied that they had halted any immediate use of military force by Great Britain and France. What both statesmen failed to realize was that Admiral Barjot, the French deputy commander for the proposed Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, had contacted the Israeli military attache in Paris on September 1 and had invited Israel to take part in the operation.16

In the period between the termination of the London
conference on August 23 and Menzies' arrival in Egypt, Eisenhower's personal direction of national security policy reflected his growing fear that the British and French were intent on military action. On August 29, he met with Dulles and Radford to discuss the London conference and American military preparations in the event of hostilities in the Middle East. Radford informed the President that he had alerted Chief of Naval Operations Arleigh Burke to initiate planning for the possible evacuation of American nationals and the protection of American interests. In addition, Radford discussed with Eisenhower the JCS meeting of August 29, in which the chiefs examined the current status of their contingency plans pertaining to the Middle East.

Convinced that the Joint Chiefs were preparing for all necessary alternatives should the United States become militarily involved in the Suez region, Eisenhower presided over the NSC meeting on August 30, during which the Suez issue was the principal topic of discussion. The meeting lasted over three hours and included lengthy presentations by both Dulles and Radford. Dulles initiated the discussion by summarizing the events in London. He emphasized that the British and French were feverishly continuing their own military preparations
and seemed to be serious about using military force if no other acceptable solution was found. Dulles stated that French public opinion was more "wrought-up and more united" than was that of the British. In short, the French would rather fight at the center of their African trouble, namely Nasser, than on the periphery of Egypt, where they were already engaged in Algeria. With the exception of the French Communist Party, the French were united in favor of military action against Egypt. British public opinion, on the other hand, was not so solid, for Hugh Gaitskell had already put the Labor Party on record as opposing the use of force outside the aegis of the United Nations.

At the conclusion of Dulles' remarks, Radford briefed the Council on the various courses of action outlined by the Joint Chiefs in early August and forwarded to the State-Defense study group. The general conclusion reached by the Joint Chiefs of Staff was that the most desirable course of action for the United States would be strong public, political, and logistical support for Great Britain and France. The chiefs also recommended that the United States should not become militarily involved with their Atlantic partners against Egypt unless a third party, namely the Soviet Union, intervened in the hostilities. Such a course of action, Radford
believed, would be most likely to prevent a war over Suez from escalating.

When Radford concluded his presentation, Eisenhower added his own view that the Suez situation was so grave that it had to be watched hourly. It seemed to the President that the limit of what the United States could do was to take the necessary steps to prevent the enlargement of the war if hostilities actually erupted. There were several questions from individuals from the State Department about the evacuation of Americans from the Middle East, but Radford assured them that the Joint Chiefs had developed emergency evacuation plans should the cause arise. Arthur Flemming, Director of Defense Mobilization, then concluded the discussion on Suez by assuring the Council that he was moving ahead with plans for dealing with the oil situation in the event of trouble in the troubled region. Dulles then turned to Acting Secretary of the Treasury W. Randolph Burgess and informed him that he better have his checkbook ready.

Congressional support for the administration's stand against the use of force remained solidly behind the President through late August. Moderate Democrats praised Dulles for his conciliatory efforts in London. Apparently convinced that Eisenhower and Dulles had
restrained the bellicose allies, Senator Walter George declared that "while the danger of an actual collision of force is not entirely removed, it is more remote." Representative James Richard, George's counterpart in the House, told newsmen that "our leadership at the London conference was good." Mike Mansfield also applauded the Secretary of State for "stopping the rush toward aggressive action on the part of France and England." Although the Democratic leadership was definitely anti-Nasser, most members were content to support the administration if there was a chance to avoid violence.

In September, Eisenhower moved to reinforce this Democratic support with a series of meetings with the opposition, the most highly publicized being a ninety minute briefing on September 6 in which Dulles presided. The Secretary repeatedly stressed Eisenhower's insistence that military force must be avoided in solving the problem. The Democratic leadership, knowing that Menzies was currently in Cairo to negotiate with Nasser, generally lauded Dulles' efforts at finding a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Even Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson was reluctant to criticize Eisenhower while the administration was working to solve the Suez imbroglio.
In spite of all their efforts, Eisenhower's and Dulles' first attempts to end the crisis met with total failure. The Menzies mission that arrived in Cairo on September 2 never had a chance of success. Loy Henderson was the American representative to the Suez Committee, the official designation of the mission. In selecting Menzies to head the delegation, the London conference had selected an individual who was an avowed anti-Nasserite and a strong Anglophile. Meeting with the Egyptian president throughout the first week of September, Menzies was unable to arrive at a common understanding with Nasser. Since the basic premise of the mission was that the Egyptians were unreliable and unable to operate the Canal without international supervision, it was doomed to failure. At one point, Menzies informed Nasser that the refusal of an international administration would be the beginning of trouble. Nasser immediately closed the file on his desk and replied, "You are threatening me. Very well, I am finished. There will be no more discussions. It is all over." Thus ended the first serious attempt to negotiate with Nasser.

In retrospect, the Menzies committee did not enjoy uniform support from the Western allies. Eden and Lloyd felt that Eisenhower's statements of September 5, when
the President had disavowed the use of force, had destroyed any chance of success and had made the mission futile. With Eisenhower on record against military intervention, Eden never entertained any hope that Menzies would change Nasser's mind. Indeed, British and French military leaders had scheduled the invasion for September 15, but logistical problems repeatedly forced them to postpone the operation. From the American point of view, Robert Murphy felt that Nasser had "burnt his bridges" and could not retreat from his intransigent position. He had staked his reputation on seizing the Suez Canal and any weakening in the face of Western pressure would jeopardize his prestige within the Arab community.22

Unwilling to let the diplomatic initiative slip from his grasp and aware of the evacuation of British and French nationals from the Middle East, Eisenhower decided upon a new plan to buy time in the hope that he might achieve a settlement of the problem. Following a conversation with the President, Dulles called for a second conference at London. Dulles proposed that the eighteen nations that had supported his earlier proposal would form a user's association. The Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA) called for collective bargaining by the users, the employment of their own pilots, and the payment of a "fair share" of fees to Nasser for the use of the waterway. The Egyptian
president immediately dismissed the idea as ludicrous and countered with a proposal of his own which called for the formation of an association of users of the port of London.23

Great Britain and France received Dulles' plan with trepidation because this new scheme threatened to postpone their military invasion, now scheduled for October 9. Incredulity on both sides of Parliament greeted the announcement of the SCUA proposal. Selwyn Lloyd had serious misgivings about the plan, but Eden was willing to listen, particularly after he received a letter from Eisenhower in which the latter informed him in no uncertain terms that the United States would not tolerate the use of aggression to settle the dispute. Eisenhower wrote:

As to the use of force or the threat of force at this juncture, I continue to feel as I expressed myself in the letter Foster carried to you some weeks ago. Even now military preparations and civilian evacuation exposed to public view seem to be solidifying support for Nasser which has been shaky in many quarters. I regard it as indispensable that if we are to proceed solidly together to the solution of this problem, public opinion in our several countries must be overwhelming in its support. I must tell you frankly that American public opinion flatly rejects the thought of using force, particularly when it does not seem that every possible peaceful means of protecting our vital interests has been exhausted without result. Moreover, I gravely doubt we could here secure Congressional authority even for the lesser support measures for which you might have to look to us.
I really do not see how a successful result could be achieved by forcible means. The use of force would, it seems to me, vastly increase the area of jeopardy. I do not see how the economy of Western Europe can long survive the burden of prolonged military operations, as well as the denial of Near East oil.  

British public opinion was mixed, the *Times* and the *Spectator* taking opposing views.  

Although Eisenhower's letter caused Eden alarm, the French remained intractable. Mollet and Pineau viewed the SCUA scheme as a tool intended to postpone the inevitable showdown with Nasser. Even the British were unaware of the true extent of French hatred of Nasser. Viewing Nasser as the root of their problems in North Africa, the French had made overtures to the Israelis as early as September 1 for the possibility of joint political and military action against the Egyptian president, with or without British support. Barjot, the principal French representative at a secret meeting with one of Moshe Dayan's staff on September 7, discussed the possibility of a joint attack on Egypt. Although Barjot stressed the purpose of the talks was strictly exploratory, within a week, Shimon Peres, the director-general of the Israeli Ministry of Defense, flew to Paris to visit his French counterpart to discuss Franco-Israeli cooperation against Egypt. When Eden advised Mollet that
he was postponing Operation Musketeer\textsuperscript{27} because he was accepting Eisenhower's proposal to establish SCUA, the French premier regarded this decision as Britain's abandonment of its former readiness to take military action against Egypt. As such, France was turning to Israel, hinting at the desire "to do something" in defense of the interests of both countries against Egyptian aggression.\textsuperscript{28}

In any event, the second London conference convened on September 19 and lasted for three days. Tempers flared among the three largest Western powers as Dulles vetoed an Anglo-French proposal of an association that would effectively operate the Suez Canal. Britain and France still demanded forceful action, this time economic action, against Nasser, but Dulles stated that representation in any action by SCUA should be strictly voluntary. This statement, coupled with Dulles' frank admission to a Washington reporter two weeks later that there were never any "teeth" in the users association, destroyed any credibility Dulles enjoyed with the British and the French. The conference limped to an unproductive conclusion on September 21 with the members agreeing that the initial meeting of the new Suez Canal Users Association would open in London on October 1.

On September 14, the Western pilots walked off their
jobs at the Suez Canal. The next day Egyptian pilots successfully brought through a convoy of thirteen ships. By week's end, traffic was proceeding through the waterway at a normal pace. The assumption on which the SCUA had been based had proven groundless. Since the Egyptians were allowing the free flow of traffic through the Canal, Eisenhower remained convinced that not only was the use of force unwise, it was unnecessary.

The failure of the second London conference to produce a resolution of the crisis did nothing to ingratiate Dulles to either Eden or Pineau. By late September, the constant pressures of the situation made Eden gravely ill. Dulles himself was suffering from cancer and would enter the hospital in early November. At a time when the situation demanded calm nerves, both Eden and Dulles were suffering from maladies that would eventually force their resignations.

On September 23, Great Britain and France were successful in putting the Suez crisis on the agenda of the United Nations. The proposed resolution sought to have the Security Council reaffirm freedom of navigation and urged Egypt to negotiate a "system of operation" for the Suez Canal in cooperation with SCUA. The Security Council initiated three days of deliberation on the Anglo-French resolution on October 5. This action met with wide
acceptance in the British press. The Manchester Guardian exclaimed, "We are going to the United Nations at last!"
The Economist shared the Guardian's views and praised Dulles for what it considered his ceaseless efforts to obtain a solution of the crisis in the United Nations. The Times had already concluded that the best thing to do was to take the problem to the Security Council, but the paper accused Dulles of distorting the issues of the Suez question and vacillating in his support of Great Britain and France. The periodical concluded that whatever difficulties might develop between the European and American partners of the Atlantic alliance would be the result of Dulles' inconsistent conduct.  

The reasons why the British and French decided to submit the problem to the United Nations at this time mystified Eisenhower. Dulles had hoped to defer the discussion until a later date because he felt that the problem could be resolved outside the United Nations and prevent an embarrassing situation. Believing that the text of the proposed resolution was too strict, Dulles was successful in deleting the reference that called for international control of the Suez Canal.

Like Dulles, Eisenhower wondered if Britain and France really intended the United Nations to reach a solution. The European allies had not consulted him prior to
submitting their resolution to the Security Council. In fact, very little intelligence reached Washington from the other side of the Atlantic. The Central Intelligence Agency had reported an increase in radio traffic between France and Israel and the fact that several meetings between British and French military officials had taken place, but the specifics of the conversations were unknown. In addition, Lloyd's and Pineau's remarks to Dulles on October 5 heightened Eisenhower's concern that the United Nations action was merely a "smoke screen" to mask the militant intentions of Great Britain and France. When Dulles had asked his counterparts if they intended to use the United Nations for war or peace, they allegedly replied that no peaceful solution to the crisis existed. Like Dulles, Eisenhower preferred private talks to settle the dispute because such talks allowed a freer exchange of views. Private talks would also minimize publicity in the United States as the presidential campaign entered its crucial month. Both the President and the Secretary of State were becoming alarmed at being kept in the dark with respect to Anglo-French plans.

In spite of the increased buildup of forces on Cyprus, Nasser continued to act with constraint during September and October. Becoming concerned as forces continued to arrive on the Mediterranean island, Nasser
instructed Egyptian Foreign Minister Fawzi to accept an international advisory board, even a panel organized by SCUA if it would avoid confrontation with British and French forces. On October 9, Lloyd, Pineau, and Fawzi met in private conference in advance of the formal Security Council meeting. The foreign ministers agreed upon six points to implement the administration of the Suez Canal. The "Six Principles" called for free and open transit through the Canal without discrimination, respect for the sovereignty of Egypt, and the use of arbitration to settle any disputes between Egypt and the Suez Canal Company. Although Eden, in telephonic communication with Lloyd, had the word "principles" changed to "requirements" in the introductory paragraph, the Egyptians proved to be surprisingly accommodating. The negotiations were seemingly acceptable to all the concerned parties, and the Security Council adopted them on October 13. The Security Council's resolution, however, disrupted the planned military expedition against Egypt. Knowing that Nasser would survive if the crisis was resolved peacefully, Great Britain and France attached a rider to the Six Principles which required Egypt to promptly submit detailed implementing proposals in advance of any future negotiations. This ultimatum was totally unacceptable to Fawzi, and the Soviet Union exercised its
right of veto in the Security Council to kill the rider and leave the Six Principles to stand alone.

Despite the futility of the Security Council negotiations, Eisenhower entered the last weeks of October confident that his efforts had succeeded in averting war. Heavily involved with the election campaign, the President relied on Dulles to keep him informed on British and French actions. During the month, the Suez problem definitely took a back seat to the election, but by mid-October, Adlai Stevenson began attacking Eisenhower's foreign policy, attributing the spread of Soviet influence to the "dangerous drift in foreign affairs" resulting from the lack of a firm policy for Suez. Other Democratic candidates criticized Eisenhower and Dulles for their delaying tactics which had not solved the impasse. Republican supporters were content to allow the President to defend his policy himself.

Democratic criticism did not phase Eisenhower in his attempts to bring the crisis to a peaceful solution. Exercising the power of the incumbent, Eisenhower was successful in presenting him image as a man of peace to the American public. As expected, the President's public statements made few concessions to the possibility of American military involvement in the Middle East. In numerous press conferences and speeches, he repeatedly
urged a peaceful resolution to the dispute and disclaimed any intention of committing American troops should the situation deteriorate. In so doing, Eisenhower played to the domestic audience who was solidly against sending American troops into the troubled region. A Gallup poll conducted on September 28 asked Americans what they thought was the most serious problem facing the United States. Forty-six per cent stated that the threat of war over Suez constituted the most serious threat to the country, and fifty-five percent were against the dispatch of American armed forces to the Middle East if war erupted.

With respect to the security agencies of the government Eisenhower kept tight reins on all issues affecting his re-election campaign. Expanding the decision-making process to include the National Security Council and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, principally Radford, Eisenhower presided over all three National Security Council sessions in October. In addition, Radford kept him informed daily of evacuation plans for American nations and the activities of the Sixth Fleet operating in the Mediterranean. In the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge reported directly to the President on ensuing negotiations.

As he embarked on the last leg of the campaign, Eisenhower believed that the numerous diplomatic attempts to reconcile differences between the European and the
Egyptians that he and Dulles had implemented since the seizure of the Suez Canal had averted war in the Middle East. He firmly believed that the two London conferences, SCUA, and the American stand in the United Nations had removed the immediate danger of hostilities. He told a New York audience that "it looks like...a very great crisis is left behind us."35

Unfortunately, two new crises erupted on October 20. CIA Director Allen Dulles reported ominous rumblings in Hungary and U-2 flights brought the first hard intelligence of a mobilization of Israeli ground forces on the Jordanian and Egyptian borders. For the last several months, Eisenhower had sought to separate the Arab-Israeli conflict from the Suez situation. To complicate matters, Douglas Dillon, the American ambassador to France, cabled Dulles about a conversation the former had with Chaban Delmas, the mayor of Bordeaux. According to Dillon, the Frenchman informed him that time was running out on the various alternatives that Dulles was pursuing to settle the Suez dispute. What was needed was some very strong action by Eisenhower or else military action would ensue. Delmas informed Dillon that without such action by the President, the French would commence armed hostilities within forty-eight hours of the American election.36 This news, coupled with the U-2 reports and NSA monitoring of the traffic
between Paris and Tel Aviv, heightened the President's concern over the increased buildup of British and French forces on Cyprus.
NOTES

1Presidential address to the American people as quoted in the New York Times, September 1, 1956.


4Although the French were initially against any united action with the United States against the Viet Minh, the rapidly deteriorating situation around Dien Bien Phu prompted France to ask Washington to implement Operation Vulture, a plan that called for massive American airstrikes consisting of conventional and small atomic bombs to save the beleaguered garrison. Eisenhower questioned the effectiveness of such airstrikes in a jungle environment, and strong congressional opposition and British reluctance to become involved in the war convinced the President to abandon the project and limit American aid to munitions and technical assistance. See Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, pp. 353-372 and Eisenhower, Mandate For Change, pp. 332-357.

5Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, August 8, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. For specific reasons why Democrats refused the invitation to join Dulles in London, see Dulles to Eisenhower, White House Memoranda Series, Meetings with the President, 1956, Box 5, Papers of John Foster Dulles, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library. See also Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 45.


When asked if he would send American troops into Indo-China, Eisenhower responded that Congress would have to
sanction any such move. See also Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, p. 363 and Eisenhower, Mandate For Change, p. 347.

8Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 292. See also Ann Whitman Diary Series, Ann Whitman File, Box 8, Eisenhower Library.

9For the reaction of the legislators, see CQ Weekly Report #33, August 17, 1956, p. 1044.

10Eden, Full Circle, p. 483.


14Watt, Documents on the Suez Crisis, pp. 52-53. See also Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, p. 53.

15Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War, p. 412. See also Hoopes, The Devil and John Foster Dulles, p. 355.

16Dayan, Moshe Dayan: Story of My Life, p. 231.

17Admiral Radford's Personal File, Safe A. Drawer 1, entry for August 17, August 21, 1956, at Operational Naval Archives, Washington Naval Yard. Hereafter, this file will be cited Radford's Personal Log.

18See Discussion of the 295th Meeting of the National Security Council, Box 8, National Security Council Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

19For the extent of French reaction to the nationalization of the Suez Canal, see interview with C. Douglas Dillon, June 29, 1982, Appendix D.

20Nashville Banner, August 29, 1956; Louisville Courier Journal, August 30, 1956; Great Falls Tribune, August 29, 1956, all quoted in Klingaman, Congress and the Middle East, p. 87. See also Mike Mansfield's oral history at Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

21Heikal, The Cairo Documents, p. 102.
22Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 387.

23Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 318. See also Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, pp. 90-95.

24Eisenhower to Eden, September 2, 1956. For complete text, see Eisenhower, Waging Peace, pp. 666-668.

25Times (London), September 18, 1956; Spectator, September 14, 1956.

26Dayan was the chief of staff of the Israeli Army.

27Musketeer was the code name for the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt.

28See Dayan, Moshe Dayan: Story of My Life, pp. 231-236.

29Manchester Guardian, September 27, 1956; Economist, October 6, 1956; Times (London), September 24, 1956, October 2, 1956, and October 6, 1956.

30Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 52. See also Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 328.

31For complete text of the Six Principles, see Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War, p. 445.


34During international crises, Lodge worked directly with the President. See Henry Cabot Lodge, The Storm Has Many Eyes (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973) pp. 130-137. See also Memorandum For Record, Telephone Conversation, the author to Lodge, July 6, 1981, Appendix A.


36Interview with Douglas Dillon by the author, June 29, 1982, Appendix D.
CHAPTER V

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

Bombs, by God. What does Anthony think he's doing? Why is he doing this to me?¹

Dwight D. Eisenhower

The dual crises surrounding the events in Hungary and the Middle East could not have come at a more inopportune time for the President. With Stevenson attacking the administration's foreign policy record and the election less than three weeks away, Eisenhower was engaged in a full test of his ability as a crisis manager. The weeks that followed were the most demanding of his entire Presidency and posed a serious threat to American prestige. Not only did he find himself interwoven in the Arab-Israeli conflict, but Eisenhower also risked alienating his principal Western allies. Aside from Hungary, an area in which the President felt powerless to influence events, Eisenhower demonstrated that he would not retreat from his position against the use of armed aggression to settle international disputes, even in the face of deteriorating relations with traditional partners. His performance marked him as a
skillful chief executive who was tremendously effective in managing several crises in the most difficult circumstances.

Nothing bothered the Eisenhower team more than the lack of intelligence surrounding the intentions of Great Britain, France, and Israel with respect to the Middle East. Although he was aware of the numerous meetings between military officials that his allies had been conducting since late July, the President had received little information from his Atlantic partners. On October 14, Eden met with General Maurice Challe, who had recently headed a French military mission to Israel, and Albert Gazier, the French Minister of Labor and close confidant of Mollet. Having been briefed concerning the clandestine Franco-Israeli negotiations for a joint strike against Egypt, Eden endorsed a plan that not only set the stage for the Israeli invasion of Egypt followed by the intervention of an Anglo-French expeditionary force, but also approved additional consultations among representatives of the three nations. According to Eden's private secretary,

The Prime Minister had...made up his mind to go along with the French plan...and we were to ally ourselves with the Israelis and the French in an attack on Egypt designed to topple Nasser and to seize the Suez Canal. Our traditional friendships with the Arab world were to be discarded; the policy of keeping a balance in
arms deliveries as between Israel and the Arab States was to be abandoned; indeed...we were to take part in a cynical act of aggression, dressing ourselves for the part as fireman or policeman, while making sure that our fire-hoses spouted petrol and not water and that we belabored with our truncheons the assaulted and not the assaulter.²

As soon as Eden approved collusion with France and Israel, open communication across the Atlantic ceased.

As the Middle East situation deteriorated, Eisenhower met Dulles and Hoover on October 15 to discuss reports of a heavy Israeli concentration on the Jordanian border. For weeks, Israeli patrols had violated Jordanian territory. Eisenhower directed Dulles to summon Israeli Ambassador Abba Eban and inform him that the United States would condemn any attack against Jordan. Convinced that Prime Minister Ben Gurion's bellicose behavior was partially due to the Israeli belief that the current political campaign in the United States would prevent him from taking a strong stand against a preemptive strike in the region, the President directed Dulles to advise Eban that it was a grave error to believe that winning a domestic election was as important to him as preserving and protecting the interests of the United Nations and other nations of the free world in that region.³

Not only did the Israeli troop concentrations disturb Eisenhower, but he also received reports that high flying reconnaissance planes revealed the presence of
sixty French Mystere pursuit planes on Israeli airfields. French military officials had reported the transfer of only twenty-four aircraft. Dulles expressed his concern to his brother, but the Director of Central Intelligence could not provide any information aside from the fact that French military officials had recently met with their British counterparts. Next he called Lodge at the United Nations, but all Lodge told him was that British Ambassador Sir Pierson Dixon was reticent and more concerned with deteriorating Anglo-American relations. To confront Great Britain and France, Eisenhower contemplated inviting Eden and Mollet to the United States but decided to postpone the invitation until after the election lest the opposition view it as an election ploy.

What Eisenhower failed to understand was the exact extent of the conspiracy against Egypt. From the moment when the British decided to go along with the Franco-Israeli plan, Eden took the most elaborate precautions to preserve absolute secrecy, even to the point of misleading the United States Government. After his initial confession that he favored war, Eden treated Eisenhower as an unreliable ally. The more the President warned the Prime Minister that the American public would not tolerate wanton aggression, the more determined Eden became in concealing his intentions from the Americans. After the
secret meeting with Challe and Gazier, Eden told Eisenhower nothing at all. It was a deliberate attempt to dupe the American president, and Eden took the additional precautions of not informing the British chargé d'affaires in Washington of his plans lest he inadvertently disclose details of the collusion. So appalled by the immorality of the British role in the conspiracy was Anthony Nutting, Eden's protege and personal secretary, that he submitted his resignation.

Not swayed by the departure of his trusted adviser, Eden met Mollet and Ben Gurion at Sévres, midway between Paris and Versailles, from October 23-24. It was the first time the chief conspirators met face to face. Reaching an accord, the heads of state agreed that Israel would initiate hostilities at dusk on October 29 with a para-drop at the Mitla Pass to create the appearance of an immediate threat to the Suez Canal. When Great Britain and France learned of the threat, they would issue an ultimatum calling for a "temporary occupation" of the canal zone and a buffer zone of ten miles on each side of the Canal. Egypt and Israel would have twelve hours to respond to the ultimatum. If either nation rejected the demand, British and French troops would land at Port Said at the mouth of the waterway and move down its length to block the Egyptian army's withdrawal from the Sinai.
Then Britain would help Israel win an advantageous peace. Lastly, the conspirators drafted the ultimatum before they departed to their respective capitals.

* * *

The final weeks of October were extraordinarily busy for Eisenhower and his secretary of state. Political speeches and campaign appearances dominated the President's agenda, but he still found time to manage the crises of Hungary and Suez. On October 20, he presided over the 301st meeting of the National Security Council at which Hungary was the chief topic of discussion. Until October 29, Eastern Europe, rather than the Middle East, dominated the news. Still, Eisenhower sought to penetrate the Anglo-French screen, but Eden and Mollet had woven their web of conspiracy too well. On October 25, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria announced the signing of the Pact of Amman to increase their military cooperation. Ben Gurion immediately announced that Israel was in direct danger, and he issued a call for Israeli mobilization three days later. Allen Dulles relayed this information to Washington, along with additional news of heavy concentrations of Israeli troops in the border regions.

By now it was evident to both Eisenhower and Dulles that chances for a peaceful resolution of the Middle East crisis were evaporating quickly. On October 28, Dulles
recommended that the United States Navy commence the evacuation of American citizens from the region. Eisenhower asked Dulles if the Secretary thought that, by starting the evacuation, the United States would exacerbate the situation, but Dulles said no since the British and the French had already withdrawn their nationals from the trouble area. Assured by the Secretary of State, the President ordered the evacuation. Thereupon Dulles announced that "as a matter of prudence...persons not performing essential functions will be asked to depart until conditions improve." Upon receipt of the Department of State's message, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Radford notified the chiefs that the situation in the Middle East was becoming so serious that the President was contemplating the declaration of a Stage III alert. Admiral Burke immediately notified Admiral Walter F. Boone, Commander-in-Chief, Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, and instructed Vice Admiral Charles Brown, the Sixth Fleet commander, to be ready to evacuate personnel. Next Burke dispatched Brown's force to the eastern Mediterranean where the Sixth Fleet would be in position for other missions if the Chief of Naval Operations so ordered. Burke's foresight was to prove invaluable in implementing American policy during the upcoming weeks.
Convinced that the evacuation would proceed according to plans, Eisenhower remained concerned with the increased radio traffic between Paris and Tel Aviv. On Dulles' recommendation, he sent an urgent dispatch to Ben Gurion in which he warned against taking any "forceful initiative" in the Middle East.\(^9\) Somewhat smugly, Ben Gurion replied that the Israeli mobilization was for defensive purposes only and that Israel would never start a war with its Arab neighbors. The President, however, remained unconvinced and expressed his fears to Dulles that the Israelis were contemplating an immediate solution to their problems with Egypt. The Secretary of State was more optimistic, but promised to keep the President informed on any new developments.

At precisely 1630 hours, October 29, the date agreed upon at Sévrès to commence hostilities, the Israeli assault on the Egyptian forces in the Sinai began. When the attack began, Eisenhower was in the middle of a campaign tour of the South. Forty minutes after the initial assault, Dulles phoned Lodge at the United Nations and informed him of the outbreak of hostilities. Unsure of Israeli intentions, Dulles instructed Lodge to "smoke out" the British and the French to see where they stood; meanwhile, he would confront the British and French ambassadors. Shortly thereafter, Senator Knowland called,
and Dulles stated that the French, and possibly the British, had conspired with Israel. Soon Richard Roundtree, Deputy for the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs, was on the line to inform Dulles that the Sixth Fleet was proceeding with contingency plans outlined by Radford and Burke for the evacuation of American nationals. Eisenhower did not receive word of the Israeli aggression until he landed in Richmond, the last stop on his tri-city tour. With customary calmness, he delivered his speech and returned to Washington.

Awaiting the President on his return to the White House were the Dulles brothers, Hoover, Charles Wilson, Radford, Goodpaster, and several minor officials. Eisenhower was absolutely livid with Ben Gurion and instructed Dulles to send him a scathing cable condemning the unwarranted attack. Speaking in an irate tone, Eisenhower stated, "Foster, you tell them, goddamn it, we're going to the United Nations. We're going to do everything that there is so we can stop this thing." Following this emotional outburst, Eisenhower presided over the meeting, which considered the American response to the outbreak of war.

Dulles began the conference with an account of French military assistance to Israel prior to October 29.
Next Allen Dulles reviewed the intelligence reports regarding Egyptian military forces, which caused the President to inquire as to what was the best method to support the victim of aggression in accordance with the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. Radford expressed his conviction that Israel would be on the Suez Canal in three days and there was little the United States could do before that time except in the diplomatic realm. He then informed the President that the Sixth Fleet was proceeding with the evacuation plans and that Burke had moved the fleet to the vicinity of Cyprus if Eisenhower desired to use the fleet for any other purpose.

Upon hearing the recommendations of his civilian and military advisers, Eisenhower made the decision to bring the matter before the United Nations before the Russians did so the following morning. Staking his reputation, as well as his country's, on a principled approach to the problem, he stated that the United States must make good on its word [Tripartite Declaration]. Although he did not fancy allying himself with Nasser in the present circumstances, he believed that the United States must stand on principle. The President then instructed Dulles to explain to the British, whom Eisenhower suspected were more knowledgeable of the Israeli intentions than they professed, that the United States recognized
that there was much on their side in the dispute with the Egyptians, but nothing justified double-crossing him. Considering reconvening Congress, the President deferred until he learned more about the military situation.  

Immediately following the meeting, Eisenhower summoned J. E. Coulson, who in the absence of the British ambassador was serving as chargé d'affaires, to the White House for another meeting with Secretary Dulles and Goodpaster. In no uncertain terms, he informed Coulson of his intention to proceed to the Security Council and go on record to condemn Israel and to redeem the American pledge of supporting the victims of aggression. Lacking proof of Britain's role in the collusion, of which Coulson was totally unaware, Eisenhower invited Great Britain to join the United States before the United Nations. That evening Dulles called Lodge to give notice to the President of the Security Council regarding Eisenhower's desire to inscribe an item on the Israeli attack during the next morning's agenda. The United States had beaten the Soviet Union to the United Nations.  

When he arrived at the White House the following morning, Eisenhower immediately summoned Dulles, who related a rather bizarre conversation Cabot Lodge had had with his British counterpart. Lodge reported that
while Sir Pierson Dixon was normally an agreeable fellow, "last night it was as though a mask had fallen off; he was ugly and not smiling." When Lodge informed Dixon that Eisenhower was taking the matter to the Security Council, Dixon turned white and stated that London regarded the Tripartite Declaration as ancient history and without current validity.  

Confused by Dixon's response, Eisenhower asked Under Secretary of State Hoover to join Dulles and himself to discuss courses of actions available to the United States and to examine a letter he had drafted to Eden, in which the President expressed his dismay at Dixon's statements. Pleading for Anglo-American cooperation, Eisenhower wrote:

...I should like to ask your help in clearing up my misunderstanding as to exactly what is happening between us and our European allies, especially between us, the French, and yourselves...When on Monday [October 29] actual military moves began, we quickly decided that the matter had to go immediately to the United Nations, in view of our Agreement of May, 1950, subscribed by our three governments.

After summarizing Lodge's conversation with Dixon, Eisenhower continued:

It seems to me of first importance that the United Kingdom and the United States quickly and clearly lay out their present views and intentions before each other...I think it important that our two peoples, as well as the French, have this clear understanding of our common or several viewpoints.
The President's cable crossed one sent by Eden, in which the Prime Minister labelled Nasser a dictator who had brought the Israeli attack upon himself. It was increasingly obvious to Eisenhower that Eden was neither being candid nor sharing his views with Washington.

Later that day, Eisenhower called Dulles, who informed him that Eden was addressing the House of Commons to obtain approval for dispatching British troops to Egypt. Although Dulles' report was erroneous, it infuriated the President, who was finally beginning to understand British intentions. What Eden was actually announcing was the ultimatum upon which the conspirators agreed at Sevrès. Eden's cabinet had already approved the text, pending final consultation between Eden and Mollet, who had arrived in London the afternoon following the Israeli attack. Both Eisenhower and Dulles felt that the Anglo-French ultimatum was unduly harsh and totally unacceptable. Dulles termed it about as crude and brutal as anything he had ever seen. Confronted with the first real evidence of collusion, Eisenhower cabled stern warnings to Eden and Mollet about the inadvisability of taking such action independently of the United Nations. Aside from another meeting at the White House, which Arthur Flemming of the Office of Defense Mobilization attended to discuss the repercussions
of delayed oil shipments to Great Britain and France, the President shifted his efforts to the United Nations in the hope of defusing the crisis.

The Eisenhower administration was not the only political body confused by British and French intentions. In spite of the bellicose rhetoric from Paris and London since July, Nasser and his cabinet were reluctant to believe that either the British or the French would actively support Israel. The receipt of the Sévrès ultimatum convinced Nasser of the hypocrisy of the Anglo-French leaders, and he immediately rejected it.

Eden anticipated the Egyptian rejection of the order to withdraw from the Canal, but he did not expect the sharp criticism he encountered from the Labor Party in the House of Commons. When he submitted his proposal outlining the temporary occupation of the Suez Canal by Anglo-French forces, the Laborites, led by Gaitskell, launched a vicious attack on the government's policies. Had Eden consulted the United States? Was Eden planning to submit the matter to the United Nations? Gaitskell demanded details of Eden's plan of operation. If Egypt rejected the ultimatum, would British and French forces actually intervene?

In defense of their policies, Eden and Lloyd presented conflicting testimony, which prompted Gaitskell
to state:

We are still left to some extent in the dark as to what her Majesty's Government has done. I must ask the Prime Minister...to tell us 'yes or no' whether on the expiry of the ultimatum, instructions were given to the British and French forces to occupy the canal zone.19

Eden would not divulge any details, leaving Gaitskell to conclude:

All I can say is that taking this decision, it is the view of the Opposition that the Government have committed an act of disastrous folly whose tragic consequences we shall regret for years because it will have done irreparable harm to the prestige and reputation of our country.20

The House then took a vote of confidence, which Eden barely won along straight party lines, 270-218. In France, the National Assembly gave Mollet a majority of 368-182, the chief dissenters being members of the Communist Party.

Not only did Eden meet opposition in the House of Commons, but he also fared poorly in the British press. The Manchester Guardian considered the Anglo-French action "an act of folly without justification."21 The Times expressed a feeling of "deep disgust" and was astonished that Eden had committed himself without the support of the Commonwealth and the United States. No possible reasons of speed or expediency could necessitate a situation in which the President of the United States
had to hear about actions of his British ally from press reports. The Economist questioned Eden's motives and criticized the strange union of cynicism and hysteria that gripped the Prime Minister and his followers.

The public support that Eden had enjoyed when the crisis began was rapidly deteriorating. That Eden would risk committing British forces without unqualified support from Parliament and the British public was inconceivable to Eisenhower, who felt that the Prime Minister was making a major error.

On October 30, the United Nations Security Council convened to consider the American resolution calling upon Israel to withdraw from Egyptian territory and asking all members of the United Nations to refrain from using force in the Middle East. Reports that Washington was contemplating restricting economic aid to Israel reinforced the impact of the American position. Throughout the day, Eisenhower was in telephonic contact with Cabot Lodge. This close communication was not uncommon in times of extreme crises and afforded the President the opportunity of dictating policy directly to Lodge. In effect, this practice permitted Eisenhower to avoid the Department of State and confer directly with Lodge when time was of the essence. Before the second session
of the Security Council convened, the British and French ambassadors addressed the forum and informed the assembly of the ultimatum, which their respective countries had just delivered to Egypt and Israel.

As expected, Great Britain and France vetoed the American resolution as well as a similar resolution sponsored by the Soviet Union to substitute a United Nations force for the Anglo-French expeditionary force. This was the first time that Great Britain and France had exercised their option of veto since the establishment of the United Nations. The end of the debate found the United States curiously aligned with the Soviet Union against America's traditional allies. Eisenhower was uncomfortable with this arrangement, but totally convinced of the righteousness of his cause.

* * *

With the election less than a week away, the President sought to have his administration present a calm and united front to the American public. Eisenhower, unlike Eden, realized the importance of maintaining strong public support for his cause. The initial step was to rein in Vice President Nixon, who called Dulles early on October 31. Nixon wanted to "hit" the Suez issue during the final week of the campaign, but the Secretary of State urged a more moderate approach.
Turning his attention to the election, Nixon said that the administration's stand against Israeli aggression would probably cost Eisenhower some votes, but in times of crisis, the country did not want a "pipsqueak" for president. Dulles agreed and lauded the President for not sacrificing foreign policy for political expediency.

By this time, Eisenhower decided to cancel the remainder of his campaign appearances to prevent events from getting out of hand. Adlai Stevenson had begun attacking the administration's policy, labelling the President's assurances that there would be no war as "tragically less than the truth." Continuing his attack, Stevenson stated, "Our Middle East policy is at absolutely dead end. The hostilities going on... reflect the bankruptcy of our policy." On November 2, he criticized the "lack of principle" in the administration's foreign policy and claimed that Eisenhower and Dulles were responsible for the Middle East fighting and the decline of the Atlantic alliance. Appealing for support from a Detroit audience, Stevenson even went so far as to question if Eisenhower was actually in charge of foreign policy. He ended his verbal tirade by accusing the President of "getting in bed with Communist Russia and the dictator of Egypt."

In addition to Stevenson, Democratic senators,
including Kefauver of Tennessee, ridiculed the absurd situation in the United Nations where the United States was allied with the Soviet Union against Great Britain and France, blaming Eisenhower's "confusion and inconsistency." Although the Senate Foreign Relations Committee did not meet in formal session from July 26 to November 12, six Democratic senators, namely Mansfield, Green, Fulbright, Humphery, Sparkman, and Morse, joined the attack by accusing the administration's Middle East policy of producing the worst diplomatic disaster in memory.29

The President was certainly aware of how the volatile events in the Middle East might influence the election, but he refused to alter his position that naked aggression was immoral. Speaking to one of his aides, Eisenhower stated that if the American people did not support him, "let them get someone else."30

The week preceding the election demonstrated the powers of the incumbent. Remaining in Washington to maintain control over a rapidly deteriorating situation, Eisenhower delivered a nationally televised address to the American people during prime time viewing hours on October 31. The speech, which he read with calm and strong assurances, reiterated his basic rejection of force. Summarizing the events of the previous days, he
emphasized that American's allies had not consulted the United States before attacking Egypt. Aware that the British and the French had begun bombarding Egyptian airfields, Eisenhower demanded a cessation of hostilities. Under the present circumstances, the President said:

There will be no United States involvement in these...hostilities. I therefore have no plan to call the Congress in special session. Of course, we shall continue to keep in contact with Congressional leaders of both parties...At the same time, it is—and it will remain—the dedicated purpose of your government to do all in its power to localize the fighting and to end the conflict.31

Outlining the activities at the United Nations, he continued:

The processes of the United Nations, however, are not exhausted. It is our hope and intent that this matter will be brought before the United Nations General Assembly. There, with no veto operating, the opinion of the world can be brought to bear in our quest for a just end to this tormenting problem. In the past, the United Nations has proved able to find a way to end bloodshed. We believe it can and that it will do so again.32

The speech was a tremendous success for the President. By appealing directly to the American public and presenting the image of calmness in the midst of chaos, Eisenhower in effect disarmed his political critics and maintained his popularity. A New York Times poll conducted after the address concluded that Eisenhower was still the right man in time of crisis.33
The Anglo-French ultimatum expired on Wednesday, October 31, at 0600 hours, Cairo time. British and French bombs began falling on Egyptian airfields by early evening and continued for several days. Israel's allies had fulfilled their part of the Sévres accords.

Both Eisenhower and Dulles were aghast when they received notification of the unprovoked attack. The news totally unnerved Dulles, who had been ill for a week. He appeared "almost completely exhausted, ashen gray, and heavy lidded." Befuddled at the rashness of his allies' aggression, Eisenhower exploded, "Bombs, by God, what does Anthony think he's doing? Why is he doing this to me?" The White House crackled with barracks-room language said one observer as the President immediately called Eden and administered a "tongue-lashing" that allegedly reduced the Prime Minister to tears. Privately, Eisenhower expressed his amazement that Britain had made "such a complete mess and botch of things." Confiding in associate Emmet Hughes, he confessed that it was "the damnedest business I ever saw supposedly intelligent governments get themselves into."

The intervention of his allies created new demands for the President and prompted him to renew his efforts.
to end the crisis as rapidly as possible lest the Soviet
Union use the opportunity to increase its influence
with the Arab states. The involvement of British and
French combat units also weakened the solidarity of the
Atlantic alliance since Eisenhower had repeatedly
informed Eden and Mollet that he opposed such action.
How to end hostilities while soothing frayed relations
with traditional allies over a policy, which Eisenhower
diametrically opposed, presented new challenges for the
President as he entered the final week of the presidential
campaign.
NOTES

1Cooper, *The Lion's Last Roar*, p. 171.


4Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, October 18, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.


7Dulles Papers, Telephone Calls Series, Box 11, Eisenhower Library. See also DDE, October, 1956 Phone Calls, Box 18, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.


10Transcripts of telephone messages between Dulles and Lodge, Knowland, and Roundtree are in Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, October 29, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Library.


12For a complete transcript of the meeting, see Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 29, 1956, DDE, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

136
137

13 DDE, October, 1956 Phone Calls, Box 18, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

14 Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 371. See also Lodge, The Storm Has Many Eyes, p. 131.

15 Memorandum of Conference with the President, October 30, 1956, DDE, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

16 Copy of the letter is in Eisenhower, Waging Peace, pp. 678-679.

17 The best primary sources of the motives behind the Anglo-French ultimatum are Eden, Full Circle, pp. 587-589, and Lloyd, Suez 1956, p. 196. For an opposing view of the British government's position, see Nutting, No End of a Lesson, p. 115.


19 Hansards Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 558, pp. 1273-1298. The Times (London) also carried the full text of the parliamentary debate, November 1, 1956.

20 Ibid.

21 Manchester Guardian, November 1, 1956.

22 Times (London), October 31; November 1, 1956.

23 Economist, November 3, 1956.

24 Memorandum For Record, Telephone Conversation with Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. and the author, June 24, 1981, Appendix A.

25 Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, October 31, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.


28 Ibid., p. 1354.

29 Great Falls Tribune, November 3, 1956, as quoted in Klingaman, Congress and the Middle East, pp. 99-101. Due to the summer recess and the presidential campaign,
the Foreign Relations Committee did not meet in formal session from July 26 to November 12, when the committee reconvened for an emergency session on developments in Egypt and Hungary.

30Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, p. 485.


32Ibid.


34Cooper, The Lion's Last Roar, p. 171. See also Robertson, Crisis: The Inside Story of the Suez Conspiracy, p. 171.

35Divine, Eisenhower and the Cold War, pp. 85-86.

CHAPTER VI

THE ALLIANCE IN PERIL

It has always been true that the British and French can not get along whenever they try to combine forces.1

Dwight D. Eisenhower

When Great Britain and France intervened militarily on October 31, Eisenhower's critics pointed out that the administration's Middle East policy had collapsed completely. It was one thing for Israel to attack Egypt, but the entry of America's most trusted allies into the conflict seemed to make a mockery of the President's effort to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis. The British and the French had conspired with Israel, deliberately misinformed the United States, and initiated hostilities at a time when they felt Eisenhower would be powerless to act due to the presidential election.

Both Eden and Mollet knew Eisenhower would resist the attack on Egypt. The President had made it quite clear in all his statements since July that he did not believe the situation warranted the use of military force. In this regard, the European leaders correctly
calculated the American response. Unfortunately, they did not gauge the intensity of Eisenhower's reaction. Eden hoped the United States would remain neutral; at best, he and Mollet expected passive resistance. What the Europeans failed to comprehend was that Eisenhower did not consider his policy a shambles, and election or not, he was intent to stand on principle against military aggression to settle an issue that less violent action might resolve.

During the weeks following the Anglo-French invasion, Eisenhower doubled his efforts to end the crisis and prevent the Soviet Union from exploiting an opportunity to send its own forces into the Middle East. To accomplish his goals, Eisenhower employed diplomatic and economic pressure against the nations that had committed the aggression. At the same time, he used American military forces to underscore verbal and diplomatic expressions of American foreign policy. By his bold actions in the face of opposition by his allies and domestic Democrats, the President was successful in securing a cease-fire in the Middle East and enhancing the prestige of both the United States and the United Nations within the Arab world and the developing Third World nations.

The immediate problem confronting Eisenhower on
November 1 was the official response to the introduction of British and French military forces in Egypt. Since the General Assembly was meeting in the afternoon to discuss the situation, the President met with the National Security Council to formulate a clear policy outlining the American position. Present were not only the regular members of the NSC, but also the service secretaries and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Upon entering the Cabinet Room, Eisenhower informed the attendees that he wished to concentrate on the Middle East. Allen Dulles opened the discussion with a summary of events during the preceding weeks and stated that Eden had not received wide support from the British Commonwealth for his actions. Indeed, grave disorders during the House of Commons debate on Suez had recently led to a suspension of discussion. In addition, London witnessed numerous demonstrations calling on the Prime Minister to cease the aggression. Deferring discussion on the American military posture in the Middle East to Admiral Radford, Dulles concluded his briefing by stating that from reports received to date, the Israelis appeared to have gained a substantial victory over the Egyptians. Eisenhower interrupted to say that he did not wish to discuss the military situation at that time, but desired to concentrate on the policy problem.

Accordingly, Secretary Dulles brought the Council up
to date on the diplomatic developments. By this time Eisenhower and Dulles had been able to discover the details of the Anglo-French-Israeli conspiracy, due primarily from reports from Ambassador Dillon in Paris. Dulles described the collusion as a series of concerted moves among the aggressors, the French actually conducting the planning with the Israelis, the British generally acquiescing. Moreover, the French had for some time been supplying the Israelis with far more military equipment that the United States had been aware, thus violating an agreement among the Western powers that each was to inform the others of the extent of assistance each was providing Israel. Following this indictment, Dulles stated that the matter was now before the General Assembly because both Great Britain and France had vetoed the American resolution to end the fighting in the Security Council. Summarizing, the Secretary said that the American position against the use of force had evoked greater international support for the United States than any time in history, and the entire world was looking toward the United States for firm leadership in this critical situation.

Dulles based his assessment of international support on a phone call that Eisenhower received from Lodge at the United Nations, in which Lodge had given the President
a first-hand report of the "flavor of reaction" at the international forum. Lodge confirmed that Ambassador Urrutia of Colombia reported that twenty-one Latin American republics were behind the President. The Secretary General had handed Lodge a note, in which he stated, "This is one of the darkest days in post-war times. Thank God you have played the way you have." In addition, an Afro-Asian delegation had met and endorsed the moral courage of the United States. Even the busboys, typists, and the elevator operators, said Lodge, had been offering their congratulations.6

Following Dulles' comments, Eisenhower stated that the issue had become extremely political and read a statement by Adlai Stevenson, in which the Democratic candidate for president cautioned Eisenhower about introducing American forces in the troubled region. Although Eisenhower never considered dispatching American ground forces into the Middle East to halt the fighting, Stevenson was appealing to a recent Gallup poll in which fifty-five per cent of the people polled were against sending American troops into Egypt.7 Returning to the primary purpose of the meeting, the President inquired if it was necessary for the United States to introduce the resolution demanding a cease-fire, and Dulles declared that the Soviet Union would do so if the United States
procrastinated.

For the next hour, various members of the Council debated the contents of the proposed resolution, differing widely on the intensity of the condemnation of the aggressors. Eisenhower then terminated this phase of the discussion by requesting Radford to present his report on the military situation and the status of the evacuation of American citizens from the region. Radford stated that the United States forces had largely completed their mission regarding the evacuation. Additionally, the Sixth Fleet was on station in the eastern Mediterranean. Satisfied with the Chairman's analysis of the American military state of readiness, the President brought the meeting to a conclusion by declaring that the United States would do what was decent and right, but it would not condemn Great Britain and France more bitterly than was necessary. The Council then directed Dulles to draft appropriate action papers in the light of the discussion for subsequent consideration by the President.

* * *

The military evacuation of American citizens, to which Radford referred, was an unqualified success and reflected immense credit on the planning of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Sixth Fleet. Ever since the Department of State had notified Radford of the
deteriorating situation (October 28), the Chairman had held daily meetings with the Joint Chiefs. Radford not only finalized plans for the evacuation operation, but he also directed Burke to ready the Sixth Fleet for possible engagement. On October 29, the Joint Chiefs agreed to take the following steps to increase American readiness in the area: alert two Army regimental combat teams and one Marine battalion landing team in the United States for emergency deployment, alert one C-124 Air Force wing for movement to the Middle East from the United States, issue instructions for loading one Marine battalion landing team from the Far East, order one Navy hunder-killer group consisting on one anti-submarine carrier, six destroyers, to submarines, and an oiler to report to the Sixth Fleet, cancel the Sixth Fleet's participation in NATO exercise "Beehive," and direct Admiral Boone, the Commander of Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, to establish his command headquarters on the USS Pocono by November 2. Boone's normal headquarters was in London, but the Chief of Naval Operations felt he should be on station in the eastern Mediterranean. 8

The evacuation commenced two days later with USN and USAF aircraft evacuating citizens from Tel Aviv, while two naval task forces extracted American nationals from
Alexandria and Haifa. A total of eight ships participated in the actual exercise:

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The carrier strength of the Sixth Fleet remained in position to cover the two evacuation groups. As of November 2, the military evacuated 2,857 American citizens from the Middle East as well as the United Nations observer team at Gaza, but the multi-national team returned to Gaza on November 4. On November 3, Vice Admiral Brown cabled Burke that the evacuation was complete.

Meanwhile, Burke gradually increased the strength of the Sixth Fleet. Unable to project what might occur amid the confusion and concerned that the Soviet Union might attempt to disrupt the Anglo-French amphibious forces steaming toward Egypt, he prepared for all contingencies. On October 30, he cabled Brown: "Situation tense, prepare for imminent hostilities." The Sixth Fleet Commander, who was as confused as his superior in Washington, answered: "Am prepared for imminent hostilities, but which side are we on?" Unsure of who the enemy actually was, Burke responded: "If U.S. citizens are in danger, protect them: take no guff from anyone."
was taking no chances that the Navy would be unprepared for any exigency.

Throughout the crisis, Burke was the most vocal of the chiefs in presenting his view that the United States should provide landing craft and other support to the Anglo-French expeditionary force. Well aware of the logistical problems from which the European force was suffering, due to his conversations with First Sea Lord Mountbatten, Burke remained a vigorous proponent of military cooperation with Great Britain and France. He failed, however, to convince Eisenhower, who continued to oppose the use of force to settle the dispute.

In opposing the advice of Burke and to a lesser degree General Taylor, the President found himself in a position similar to the Quemoy-Matsu crisis in 1954-1955, in which he rejected the advice of his military advisers concerning the defensibility of the off-shore islands. Just as he had done in the earlier crisis, Eisenhower carefully evaluated the political and military options available to the United States in the current crisis in the Middle East and rejected the use of American military resources to assist allies whom he felt were pursuing an erratic policy.¹¹

At Eisenhower's insistence, Dulles went to the United Nations on November 1 to present the American
position to the General Assembly. Speaking before the international forum, Dulles appeared ill and feeble. Addressing the assembly in tones that frequently revealed his anger at allies whom he felt had betrayed him, he declared:

I doubt that any delegate ever spoke from this forum with as heavy a heart as I have brought here tonight. We speak on a matter of vital importance, where the United States finds itself unable to agree with three nations with whom it has ties, deep friendship, admiration and respect, and two of whom constitute our oldest, most trusted and reliable allies.

The fact that we differ with such friends has led us to reconsider and reevaluate our position with the utmost care, and that has been done at the highest levels of our government. Even after that reevaluation, we still find ourselves in disagreement. Because it seems to us that that disagreement involves principles which far transcend the immediate issue, we feel impelled to make our point of view known to you and through you to the world.

The proposed resolution demanded an immediate cease-fire, withdrawal of all forces behind the 1949 armistice lines, a ban on all military aid to the belligerents, and action to reopen the Suez Canal, which the Egyptians blocked at the beginning of the war. Egypt immediately accepted the cease-fire and after exhausting debate, the General Assembly passed the resolution 64-5, Great Britain, France, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand dissenting. Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Laos, the Netherlands,
and Portugal abstained. Eden had lost the support of a large portion of the Commonwealth.

As Great Britain and France considered their formal response to the General Assembly resolution, Eisenhower delivered his last campaign address in Philadelphia. Attempting to prevent the further deterioration of the Atlantic alliance, he soothed Anglo-French feelings, but maintained his unequivocal stance against aggression as he stated:

We cannot—in the world, any more than in our own nation—subscribe to one law for the weak, another law for the strong. There can be only one law, or there will be no peace.

We value—deeply and lastingly—the bonds with those great nations, those great friends, with whom we now so plainly disagree. And I, for one, am confident that those bonds will do more than survive. They can, my friends, they must, grow to new and greater strength.

But this we know above all: There are some firm principles that cannot bend—they can only break. And we shall not break ours.¹⁴

The President then took leave from more important business and wrote letters to two close associates, General Alfred M. Gruenther and "Swede" Hazlett, a boyhood friend from Abilene. To Gruenther, he expressed his dismay at Eden's persistence in employing military force. As he stated:

I believe that Eden and his associates have become convinced that this is the last straw and Britain simply had to react in the manner of the Victorian period. I don't see the point
in getting into a fight to which there can be no satisfactory end, and in which the whole world believes you are playing the part of the bully, and you do not even have the firm backing of your entire people.15

Writing to Hazlett, Eisenhower expressed similar fears concerning the inadvisability of military intervention as he wrote:

I think France and Britain have made a terrible mistake. Because they had such a poor case, they have isolated themselves...and it [may] take them many years to recover. France was perfectly cold-blooded about the matter. I think the other two countries [Great Britain and Israel] have hurt themselves immeasurably and this is something of a sad blow because Britain not only has been, but must be, our best friend in the world.16

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The majority by which the General Assembly passed the American-sponsored resolution calling for a cease-fire left Britain and France in an awkward and embarrassing position. The debate had revealed the hypocrisy of their cause; there was obviously no justification for their "peace action" to separate the combatants by introducing their own forces along the Canal. Within the United Nations, Lodge reported to Dulles that the British and the French were in a very emotional condition and worried that there would be a bad impression at home if the United States was in a hurry to condemn while procrastinating on the Hungarian issue. The European ambassadors approached Lodge with
a proposal that the Western nations act in concert to condemn the Soviet Union, but Dulles instructed Lodge to have no part of the scheme, replying that it was a mockery for them to come in with bombs falling over Egypt and denounce the Soviet Union for perhaps doing something that was not quite as bad. By Eisenhower's direction, both Dulles and Lodge continued to pressure their Western allies to accept the cease-fire.

On November 2, Eisenhower met with Dulles and Under Secretary Hoover. During the meeting, he received a cable from Assistant Secretary William Roundtree in the State Department, outlining a conversation between Ambassador Douglas Dillon and French Foreign Minister Pineau, in which Pineau disclosed the collusion in detail. When Dulles asked if the British were involved, Roundtree informed him, "Oh yes." This was the first positive information the administration had regarding the actual extent of Britain's role in the conspiracy with France and Israel. Dillon's previous cable, outlining Mollet's intent to initiate hostilities if Eisenhower failed to find an acceptable solution to the crisis, did not mention Eden's role in the collusion. Although this disclosure did not seriously affect American policy toward the conflict, it increased Eisenhower's wrath.
In spite of American pressure, Eden and Mollet refused to cancel their proposed amphibious and airborne invasion, now scheduled for November 5. The burden of alienation, however, was affecting Eden, who had encountered an extremely hostile reception in the House of Commons when he announced that he intended to reject the cease-fire proposed by the General Assembly. In sharp contrast to the wavering British, France remained adamant in its conviction that the invasion must proceed on schedule. Mollet and Ben Gurion both foresaw the weakening of British resolve, and Mollet and Pineau flew to London to obtain assurances that Eden would uphold his commitments to the invasion. Although they were successful, Pineau stated that Eden was no Churchill. The Prime Minister had neither the tenacity nor the steel nerves, and the test was beginning to exhaust him. Summarizing Eden's deplorable state, Pineau said, "It is not yet a 'breakdown,' but we are not far from it."19

By November 3, the danger in the Middle East continued to escalate. Syria severed diplomatic relations with Great Britain and France, and saboteurs destroyed three pumping stations along the Iraqi Petroleum Company pipeline. The ARAMCO pipeline across Saudi Arabia was still in operation, but no one knew how long it would remain so. In Britain, Eden formally rejected the United
Nations cease-fire proposal, but agreed that the British and the French would stop firing as soon as 1) both Egypt and Israel agreed to accept a United Nations force to maintain peace; 2) the United Nations decided to constitute and maintain such a force until the Arab-Israeli peace settlement could be achieved and until the international body guaranteed "satisfactory arrangements" with respect to the Suez Canal; and 3) Israel and Egypt agreed to accept limited detachments of Anglo-French troops until the United Nations force arrived.\(^{20}\)

To complicate matters in the Middle East, the Soviet Union prepared to launch a full scale assault to crush the Hungarian uprising. In the United Nations, the Soviets vetoed and American resolution calling on the Russians to withdraw from Hungarian territory. Eisenhower now found himself in a peculiar situation. In eastern Europe, he was aligned with Great Britain and France against the Soviet invasion of Hungary, while in the Middle East, he opposed the entry of British and French ground troops into Egypt. Upon careful reflection, he decided to direct his efforts toward halting the Anglo-French expeditionary force gathering at Cyprus before it reached Egypt and mending the Atlantic alliance with the utmost speed. With respect to Hungary, he did everything possible to aid the refugees fleeing from Budapest and
to condemn the Soviet aggression.

The President's critics immediately chastised Eisenhower for not taking a more aggressive stand against the Soviets, but the President correctly analyzed the logistical nightmare involved in attempting to move American troops across eastern Europe. Not only would the United States have to act alone, it would violate the territorial sovereignty of several nations. According to Eisenhower, Hungary was as inaccessible to American forces as was Tibet.\textsuperscript{21}

Unfortunately, Eisenhower lost the able services of Secretary Dulles during this critical stage. Dulles entered Walter Reed Hospital on November 3 for abdominal pains, which the physicians diagnosed as intestinal cancer. Dulles did not return to the Department of State until January. In the interim, Under Secretary Herbert Hoover Jr. assumed control of the Department of State.

On Saturday, November 3, the General Assembly met in emergency session to consider resolutions to the twin crises of Suez and Hungary. Although the forum postponed a debate on the Hungarian issue at the request of the Soviet ambassador, Eisenhower and Lodge were successful in convincing Lester Pierson, the Canadian Minister for External Affairs, to sponsor a resolution requesting the Secretary General to develop a plan within forty-eight
hours, to introduce a United Nations police force into the Middle East. Under ordinary circumstances, the United States would have sponsored the resolution, but Lodge convinced the President that the United States should avoid the embarrassment of condemning its allies. In addition Lodge felt that the Canadian resolution would give the smaller countries a depth of responsibility in helping obtain a lasting peace.22 The General Assembly subsequently passed the resolution on November 4 by a vote of 55-0, with 19 abstentions. An Indian resolution calling on the Secretary General to report in twelve hours whether the belligerents were complying with the cease-fire also passed by a vote of 59-6, seven nations abstaining.

By November 4, Eisenhower realized he was waging a losing battle in his attempt to convince Eden to halt the Anglo-French armada moving toward Egypt. Eden had met with his cabinet twice during the day to consider the two United Nations resolutions and the next stage in military operations.23 With respect to the Indian-sponsored resolution, Eden had to reply within twelve hours to Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold. The military issue was more complex, but following a lengthy discussion with his advisers, Eden decided to proceed with the invasion and shoulder the political risks inherent in
unilateral aggression. Later that day, he explained his rationale to Eisenhower:

If we draw back now chaos will not be avoided. Everything will go up in flames in the Middle East. You will realize, with all your experience, that we cannot have a military vacuum while a United Nations force is being constituted and is being transported to the spot. That is why we feel we must go on to hold the position until we can hand over responsibility to the United Nations.24

At 0715 hours, November 5, the invasion that Eisenhower had feared since the Israeli assault on October 29 occurred as British and French paratroopers landed in the vicinity of Port Said.25 The crisis had entered a new and more critical stage.

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Eisenhower began the morning of November 5 with a meeting with Vice President Nixon and Acting Secretary Hoover.26 Hoover seemed particularly concerned about the possibility that the Soviets would send "volunteers" to Egypt. Eisenhower, however, wanted to concentrate on the oil shortage that Great Britain and France would soon be facing. Hoover informed him that oil supplies from the Middle East were non-existent with the exception of the Saudi Arabian tap-line. The Arab states fully supported Nasser and prevented the shipment of petroleum products to Nasser's enemies. Since this cut-off potentially endangered NATO, the President instructed
Hoover to coordinate with the Office of Defense Mobilization to work out arrangements with the Navy to prepare heavy tankers for immediate use. With respect to the oil problems faced by Great Britain and France, Eisenhower continued to apply economic pressure, stating that for purposes of peace and stability in the Middle East, the United States would not attempt to render extraordinary assistance to the Europeans.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union broke its silence on the Middle East situation and vehemently condemned the British and the French for their unprovoked attack on Port Said. Premier Nikolai Bulganin sent sharp warnings to Eden, Mollet, and Ben Gurion. Condemning the "bandit-like aggression," Bulganin warned that the conflict in Egypt might spread to other countries and lead to the Third World War. Unless the recipients of the correspondence came to their senses, he warned:

I believe it is my duty to inform you that the Soviet Government...[is prepared] to use the Naval and Air Forces to stop the war in Egypt and to curb aggression. The Soviet Government is fully determined to apply force in order to crush the aggression and to restore peace in the Middle East.27

Simultaneously, Bulganin wrote Eisenhower and proposed that the United States and the Soviet Union combine forces and march into Egypt to end the fight.
Meeting with Hoover and the White House staff later that afternoon to consider a reply to the Soviets, Eisenhower dismissed the invitation as "unthinkable," but he delayed sending a formal reply until he increased the size of American military forces in the region. In the interim, the White House released a statement informing Bulganin that the introduction of new forces in Egypt would be contrary to the United Nations resolution calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Egypt and that the United States would oppose any such effort. Instead the President recommended that the Soviet Union take the first and most important step to insure peace and stability by observing the United Nations resolution calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary and the curtailment of Soviet repression of the Hungarian people.

* * *

Not far from the Anglo-French armada sailing toward Suez was the powerful American Sixth Fleet that had recently evacuated American citizens so successfully. On full combat alert, Admiral Brown stood prepared to intercept the amphibious force before it reached Egypt. Brown's orders from Burke were to stand by for any contingency. In the case of submarine attack, Burke authorized immediate counterattack utilizing every
available means to destroy the submarine. In the event of air attack by planes identified as Egyptian, Israeli, British, or French, he authorized only immediate and aggressive defensive action. Only if Soviet warplanes attacked the Sixth Fleet did Burke authorize aggressive pursuit into enemy airspace, but he forbade prolonged pursuit or deliberately and systematically organizing a pursuing force. In addition, the Chief of Naval Operations instructed Brown to make all preparations for retaliatory attacks in the event of a Soviet attack on British and French units, but to take no further action without orders from Washington. Burke's directives signalled no shift in American policy, he was merely preparing for various contingencies. Since Brown received no instructions from Burke to intercept the Anglo-French armada, he permitted the bi-national force to proceed to its destination.

At exactly 1430 hours, November 6, the first wave of the main assault force landed at Port Said and Port Fuad. The operation was totally successful; the British and the French seized their initial objectives within a few hours. In terms of human life, the cost to the Allies during all phases of Operation "Musketeer" was light. British casualties numbered 22 killed, 97 wounded; French losses totalled 10 killed, 33 wounded.
Egyptian losses were proportionately greater. From a military standpoint, "Musketeer" was an unqualified success, but even before his forces consolidated their gains, General Kneightly, the expedition's commander-in-chief, received word from Eden that a cease-fire was to take effect at midnight, November 6, London time. The operation was over almost before it began.

* * *

Tuesday, November 6, was Election Day, and Eisenhower planned to spend a few hours at his Gettysburg farm. Before departing from Washington, he sent a cable to Eden, expressing his concern about the temporary but admittedly deep rift that had occurred between the two nations with respect to the situation in the Middle East. The President cautioned the Prime Minister about sending British troops into heavy concentrations of civil population. Avoidance of urban centers would prohibit the need for an increased police function that the British might not be able to relinquish easily. Turning his attention to the dangerous fiscal problems confronting Eden as a result of financing the war, Eisenhower agreed that it was indeed serious and ought to be an incentive for terminating the hostilities as soon as possible. Extending the olive branch, he closed the letter by stating:
In the meantime, no matter what our differences in the approach of this problem, please remember that my personal regard and friendship for you, Harold [MacMillan], Winston [Churchill], and so many others is unaffected. On top of this, I assure you I shall do all in my power to restore to their full strength our accustomed practices of cooperation just as quickly as it can be done.32

Finishing the letter, the President met with Hoover and Allen Dulles. Dulles showed Eisenhower the latest intelligence reports indicating that the Soviets had informed Egypt that they would "do something" to end the conflict. Maintaining his characteristic calm, Eisenhower authorized high reconnaissance flights over the Middle East to determine if Russian aircraft had landed on Arab airfields. The situation was serious enough to warrant increased vigilance by American forces, for "if the Soviets attacked the French and British directly," the President said, "we would be in war, and we would be justified in taking military action even if Congress were not in session."33 Shortly thereafter, he departed from Washington.

Without the President at the helm, anxiety gripped the White House. Radford and Goodpaster conferred twice on recent reports of Soviet aircraft flying over Turkey. With the Middle East in a state of turmoil and the Anglo-French expeditionary force on the beaches, Goodpaster contemplated summoning Eisenhower back to
Washington, but Radford's calmer approach prevailed. However, Goodpaster did schedule an emergency meeting of Eisenhower's advisers in the Cabinet Room at 1230, when the President was due to return.

Shortly after noon, Eisenhower met with Hoover, Allen Dulles, Deputy Secretary of Defense A. Willis Robertson, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Military preparedness was the chief topic of discussion, and the President concurred with the chiefs' recommendations to improve the military state of readiness in the region. To avoid creating a stir, however, he disapproved the recommendation to recall all servicemen on regular leave, restricting his approval to alerting regional forces and increasing the number of ships and aircraft on ready status.

During the conference, Radford remarked that it was difficult to decipher Bulganin's intentions in connection with the Premier's proposal for a joint American-Soviet force to police the Middle East. Reflecting on the intelligence at hand, he surmised that it was virtually impossible for the Russians to intervene unless they did so with long range nuclear weapons, which seemed totally improbable. Radford's reasoning proved sound, but his naval colleague, Admiral Burke, remained skeptical. By his own admission, Burke had never seen the world
situation as confused as it was at the present. He particularly hoped that the Soviet Union did not believe it could take unilateral action against Great Britain and France without a severe and violent retaliation from the United States.\textsuperscript{35} In any event, he intended to keep the Sixth Fleet on combat alert.

During the meeting, Eisenhower received word that Eden had ordered a cease-fire. The French were reluctant to agree to the cessation of hostilities, but without British support, Mollet and Pineau had no recourse but to acquiesce. On November 5, Mollet had summoned Ambassador Dillon to his office. When Dillon arrived, an emergency meeting of the French cabinet was in progress, so Dillon waited in the anteroom. After midnight (November 6), Mollet entered and handed Dillon a ticker-tape quotation from TASS, which implied a very clear threat that the Soviet Union would use rockets against the French and the British, possibly against France and Great Britain unless the invasion of Egypt stopped. Obviously concerned with the TASS statement, Mollet inquired about the United States reaction if the Soviets entered the conflict. Dillon simply replied that the language of the NATO treaty dictated that the United States would support its European allies even though Eisenhower currently disagreed with what the
British and French were doing.

Somewhat mollified, Mollet returned to the cabinet meeting, but within a few minutes, he came back to the ante-room to take a telephone call from Eden. Eden discussed the Soviet threat and informed Mollet that the British Government had decided to order a cease-fire. Clearly agitated, Mollet protested vehemently, but the British were in command of the operation, and there was little he could do to sway the Prime Minister. Aghast, Mollet returned to his meeting and informed the cabinet of Eden's decision.

Eden claimed that he had ordered the cease-fire because the British had achieved all their objectives, but political and economic pressures were equally important. Aside from the obvious importance that he attached to the statement from TASS, Eden realized that domestic support for his policy of aggression had disintegrated. The Economist raised the question whether the Prime Minister should "go or stay." The Times criticized Eden for sabotaging the three principles on which Great Britain had based its foreign policy since World War II: solidarity within the Commonwealth, the Anglo-American alliance, and the charter of the United Nations. In addition, the Observer and the Manchester Guardian were calling Suez "Eden's War."
In Parliament, Gaitskell chastised the Prime Minister for his veto of the initial Security Council resolution demanding an immediate cease-fire. Gaitskell also assailed Eden for abstaining from the Canadian resolution that established the peace-keeping force. It was increasingly obvious to the opposition that Eden's actual purpose was not the separation of the combatants, but the conquest of the Suez Canal. At one point, James Griffith, a Laborite who opposed the government's Suez policy, stated:

I say to the Prime Minister that he forfeited the trust of millions of our people. For the first time in the history of this House, it has been left to the leader of the Opposition to speak for Britain.

By November 6, the entire Labor contingent of the House of Commons demanded the termination of the hostilities.

To complicate his political predicament, Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold MacMillan informed Eden that the run on the British sterling that had begun in September had reached critical proportions. In September and October, reserves fell by $279 million. As such, MacMillan was the first cabinet member to withdraw his support from the government's policy toward the Middle East. In order to keep British industry from collapsing, MacMillan told Lloyd that it was necessary to import aid from abroad until the Suez Canal was clear and the oil
pipelines operational. With dwindling financial reserves, Great Britain did not have enough hard currency to pay for the oil unless the United States agreed to furnish credit, and both Eden and Lloyd realized that Eisenhower had no intention of rescuing his European allies while the fighting continued.\(^\text{42}\)

When Eden addressed the new session of the House of Commons on November 6 to announce the cease-fire, the Laborites were jubilant. Gaitskell praised his opposition for finally coming to their senses. After the session, he addressed an audience organized by the National Council of Labor. In extolling the virtues of his party, Gaitskell said that the announcement of the cease-fire marked the greatest triumph of democracy the world had ever seen and attributed the cessation of hostilities to the "passionate, determined protests of the British people against the policy of the Eden Government.\(^\text{43}\)"

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Now that the fighting was over, Eisenhower called Eden and expressed his satisfaction that the Prime Minister had seen fit to order the cease-fire. Calling Eden's attention to the United Nations resolution establishing a peacekeeping force, the President hoped that the British would go along with it without imposing any conditions. Eden asked Eisenhower if the United
States intended to provide any troops to the force, but the President declined, stating that he would prefer the contingent be composed of troops of the less powerful nations to avoid the introduction of the "Red boy" into the area. Eisenhower's reluctance to send American troops to the Middle East was due to his fear that the Soviet Union would demand the "lion's share" of the multinational force. Accordingly, he preferred to have no troops from the permanent members of the Security Council, relying on Secretary General Hammarskjold's judgment regarding the composition of the force.

Eden, however, remained reluctant to accept a United Nations force without the presence of American forces. Moreover, he was unclear as to whether Eisenhower's phrase "without imposing any conditions" meant the immediate evacuation of British, French, and Israeli military units from Egypt. Ambassador Dillon cabled the Department of State from France the following day to express similar fears and misconceptions. Both Eden and Mollet were ready to accept the United Nations force, but they refused to withdraw their own forces until the multi-national peace-keeping unit was on station.

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That evening Eisenhower received an overwhelming endorsement from the American people as evident by the
fact he carried forty-one states and accumulated fifty-eight per cent of the popular vote. His re-election was by no means a referendum on his Suez policy, but on his calm leadership and the general prosperity that the majority of Americans enjoyed. The President's triumph was even more impressive than his landslide victory in 1952. Even in heavily populated Jewish areas, Eisenhower did not fare badly despite his firm stance against the use of force in the Middle East. The President was clearly the "man of the hour." Although the loss of both houses of Congress tempered his personal victory, Eisenhower remained the man around whom Americans rallied in time of crisis.
NOTES


2Peis, Suez Scenario: A Lamentable Tale, p. 606. See also Harlech, Suez Snafu, Skybolt Saber, p. 44.


4Discussion of the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council, Box 8, NSC Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

5For this unprecedented occurrence, see Hansards Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 558, p. 1625.

6DDE, October, 1956 Phone Calls, Box 18, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.


8For actions by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, see JCS 091 Palestine, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218. For actions relating strictly with the Navy, see Chronology of Naval Activities—Suez Incident, Operational Naval Archives, Washington D.C., hereafter cited as Chronology of Naval Activities.


11 For an analysis of Eisenhower's disagreement with his military advisers during the Quemoy-Matsu affair, see Rushkoff, Eisenhower, Dulles and the Quemoy-Matsu Crisis, 1954-1955, pp. 470-471.

12 Dulles was suffering from cancer. See Hoopes, The Devil and John Foster Dulles, p. 380.

13 For complete text of Dulles' address, see Department of State Press Release, unnumbered, November 1, 1956, in Selected Correspondence & Related Material, 1956, Suez Canal, 1956, Box 110, Dulles Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

14 Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 83.

15 Copy of the letter is available in DDE, November 2, 1956, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

16 Ibid.

17 Telephone Conversation Memoranda, Dulles Papers, November 2, 1956, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

18 Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 84.

19 Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 397.

20 Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, pp. 171-172. See also Eden, Full Circle, pp. 606-607.


23 For accounts of this meeting, see Eden, Full Circle, pp. 616-617 and Lloyd, Suez, 1956, pp. 204-206.

Memorandum of Conference with the President, November 5, 1956, DDE, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

For complete text of Bulganin's note, see White House Central Files, Confidential File, Subject Series, Suez Canal, Box 82, Eisenhower Library. Hereafter White House Central Files will be cited WHCF.

In an interview with the author, Burke emphatically declared that the exercised direct command of American naval forces in the Middle East during this critical stage. For general orders to the American forces in the event of foreign aggression, see JCS 1887/299 in 381 EMMEA (11-19-47) Sec. 47, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.

After the invasion, there were reports that Brown had interfered with the Anglo-French armada by maneuvering submarines under the task force. Both Burke and Brown categorically denied these allegations. See Memorandum For Record, Interview with Admiral Arleigh Burke by the author, June 18, 1981, Appendix C and "When Trouble Came in the Mediterranean," *U.S. News & World Report* 41 (December 14, 1956): 30-32.


DDE, November 6, 1956, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

Memorandum of Conference with the President, November 6, 1956, DDE, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

For specific recommendations, see CJCS, 091 Palestine (June '56-December '56), Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.
Burke to VADM Freidrich Ruge, FGN, November 14, 1956 in Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, Personal File, Operational Naval Archives, Washington Naval Yard.

Memorandum For Record, Interview with C. Douglas Dillon by the author, June 29, 1982. Dillon also noted an interesting sidelight concerning French military intelligence. The actual battle scene which the French depicted on their situation map was totally erroneous. Mollet thought his forces were in Ismailia, but they were actually twenty miles short of their objective. Had the diplomatic leaders been aware of the actual military deployment of the invasion force, Dillon stated that they would have been even more adament about protesting Eden's cease-fire. See Appendix D.

Economist, November 3, November 10, 1956.

Times (London), November 1, 1956.

As quoted in Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 409.

Times (London), November 6, 1956 carried the full text of the debate.


Times (London), November 7, 1956.

For a transcript of Eisenhower's call, see DDE, November, 1956 Phone Calls, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

CHAPTER VII

THE CRISIS RESOLVED

Above all, we should keep in mind that the real enemy of the United States is in the Kremlin, not Cairo or Tel Aviv.1

Dwight D. Eisenhower

With the acceptance of the cease-fire by all the belligerents, the crisis in the Middle East rapidly dissipated. Having accomplished his immediate goal of ending the fighting, Eisenhower directed his efforts toward preventing a reoccurrence of hostilities, upholding the United Nations, removing any pretext for further Soviet intervention, and reducing the friction within the Atlantic alliance. The latter two objectives dominated the President's actions and strategy management throughout November.

The overwhelming defeat suffered by the Egyptian military forces had caused considerable depression among the Arab states, and the Soviet Union had seized the opportunity to inject itself into the region by its dramatic and obviously unacceptable offer to join with the United States in repelling the Anglo-French invasion
by armed force. From the time of its initial proclamation on the subject, the Soviet Union had done everything within its power to create the impression that the cease-fire and the demand to withdraw foreign troops from Egypt were due to its own intervention. Regrettably, the action of Great Britain and France forced Eisenhower to unite with the Soviet Union in condemning the Anglo-French aggression. Although he was uncomfortable with the obvious differences with respect to the policies of his oldest and closest allies, there was certainly no difference regarding Eisenhower's attitude toward the Soviet Union or his determination to strengthen the Atlantic alliance. Accordingly, Eisenhower continued to flex American military muscle to prevent the introduction of Soviet forces into the Middle East. He reserved his greatest efforts, however, to restoring cordial relations with Great Britain and France. The President gave this project his full attention, but he did not give his Atlantic partners unqualified support. Throughout November, he continued to apply diplomatic and economic pressure to force the British, French, and the Israelis to withdraw their troops from Egypt. Only when the evacuation was complete would diplomatic relations return to the status ante bellum.

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On the morning of November 7, Eisenhower received a
call from Eden, in which the Prime Minister requested a summit meeting to be held in the United States with Mollet in attendance. Such a conference, Eden maintained, would demonstrate Western solidarity against the threat of possible Soviet military thrusts in support of Arab nations. Although the President was initially receptive to the opportunity to mend fences with traditional allies, he immediately began to have second thoughts concerning the wisdom of holding the summit conference. Chief of Staff Sherman Adams and Staff Secretary Goodpastor recommended against holding the meeting while foreign troops remained on Egyptian soil. Meeting with the President to discuss the ramifications of such a visit, they expressed their fear that a summit conference would possibly project the image that the Western powers were concerting action independently of the United Nations. Their opposition prompted Eisenhower to call Eden and indicate that he [Eisenhower] considered the meeting's purpose to be to solidify their support of NATO, and under no circumstances did it signify a deviation from his position on the cease-fire.³

While this call was in progress, Hoover entered the room and informed the President that Secretary Dulles, with whom he had just conferred, opposed the summit meeting because it would give the impression that the United States was "teaming up" with the British and
In addition, Hoover stated that the Soviets had offered 250,000 volunteers to Nasser, but a subsequent check with Allen Dulles by Goodpaster proved this report to be erroneous. Joining the meeting, Secretary of the Treasury Humphery told the President he appreciated how difficult it was for Eisenhower to tell Eden he would not talk to him, but Humphery thought the question of timing for a summit conference was overriding. After further discussion, Eisenhower accepted the prudent advice of his associates and telephoned Eden that the timing of the proposed visit was bad, and regrettably, the leaders would have to visit the United States at a later time.

Later in the evening, Eisenhower received reports that Ben Gurion had rejected the General Assembly resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from Egypt. The vote in the United Nations was 65-1, Israel alone dissenting. Such a position endangered Eisenhower's attempts to bring stability to the trouble area, and Ben Gurion's alleged remarks about annexing the Sinai infuriated him. In Washington, Hoover summoned Israeli Ambassador Shiloah and admonished him severely, informing him:

I consider this to be the most important meeting ever held with Israeli representatives. Israeli's attitude will inevitably lead to most serious measures, such as the termination of all
To bolster Hoover's tough language, Eisenhower cabled Ben Gurion and informed him that the United Nations intended to dispatch its forces to Egypt. Urging the Israelis to comply with the General Assembly resolution, the President stated that the United States viewed Ben Gurion's refusal to withdraw his forces "with grave concern." In the face of overwhelming presidential pressure, Ben Gurion reluctantly agreed to withdraw his forces in conjunction with the arrival of the United Nations force.

Now that Israel had submitted to his demands, Eisenhower addressed the economic situation in Europe caused by the Suez war and other factors affecting American security, particularly the threat of Soviet intervention. On November 8, the President presided over the 303rd meeting of the National Security Council. Taking his place at the head of the table, Eisenhower informed the Council that the first item on the agenda was a discussion of the European oil situation. Robert Anderson, who had been working with the oil companies at the direction of the President, stated that there was approximately two weeks' supply of crude in Europe at the present time and one month to six weeks' supply of refined
products on hand. Both Eisenhower and Hoover said it was crucial to increase domestic oil production. After lengthy discussion, the National Security Council noted the President's approval of the authorization of the movement of Gulf Coast oil to the east coast in foreign flag tankers for possible shipment to European markets. Control of oil shipments gave Eisenhower a powerful economic weapon that he did not hesitate to use on his Western allies.

Turning to the situation in the Middle East, Allen Dulles commented that Nasser's prestige had grown immensely as a result of the Soviet Union's promise of support. In spite of the efforts of the three aggressors, internal security in Egypt remained under his control. The net result of the fighting seemed to have made the Egyptian president an international hero, particularly among the nonaligned nations and the Arab states.

Dulles next addressed the Soviet position, stating that the real question was how far the Soviet Union was prepared to go in this situation. Fully aware of the limitations imposed by their actions in Hungary, Dulles summarized that he was inclined to think that for the time being, the main Soviet thrust would be on "keeping the pot boiling." Following Radford's comments on the Soviet military presence in the region, Eisenhower expressed agreement with Dulles and commented that he
just could not believe that the Russians would play their
game of threats short of anything that might lead to a
general war. Furthermore, it remained wholly inexplicable
to him that any state in the world would play with the
Russians after witnessing the events in Hungary.

Acting Secretary Hoover changed the subject by
stating that he would like to report on the immediate
steps that the United States must take to bring the
Middle East crisis to a successful conclusion. The first
thing was to get the United Nations police force
established in Egypt; secondly, the United States had
to get the Anglo-French troops out of Egypt; thirdly,
Israel had to withdraw behind the 1949 armistice lines;
and lastly, the United States had to insure petroleum
reached Europe. Hoover was convinced that Eisenhower was
handling each of these problems satisfactorily.

Before adjourning the meeting, the President asked
the Council's opinion on the best manner to deal with
the briefing of congressional leaders, which he had
scheduled for November 9. After some deliberation,
Eisenhower decided to have Dulles brief on the intelligence
side and Radford on the military situation. Hoover
received orders to address the legislative body on United
Nations activities and future policies of the the United
States. Lastly, Eisenhower directed Arthur Flemming to
brief the congressmen on the oil crisis.
Although he met frequently with key members of the Congress, maintaining good relations between the executive and legislative branches was an important component of the President's management of national security. As such, he took extraordinary measures to insure that executive briefings received the full attention of his aides. Since Congress would not reconvene until January, he considered it essential to inform the leaders of both parties of the administration's policies in the event the situation deteriorated and he had to summon the legislative branch into emergency session.

In the days after the cease-fire, Eisenhower remained convinced that the Soviet threat to send volunteers to the Arab states was an empty promise. He conferred daily with Radford with respect to the American military readiness in the region. On November 7, as a result of JCS recommendations, the President approved orders augmenting DEW-LINE extensions, increasing ocean reconnaissance and the number of hunter-killed anti-submarine groups operating in the ocean approaches to the United States, preparing to sail carrier task forces from both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, and placing heavy troop carrier wings on twelve hour alert status. In addition, Chief of Naval Operations Burke prepared a
cover plan for shipping a Marine battalion landing team from the Far East. The Joint Chiefs decided to take no further action regarding loading a Marine battalion landing team from the eastern United States until the situation became clearer. The units that were the object of the Joint Chiefs' recommendation proceeded to their duty stations on receipt of orders.

On November 11, Eisenhower wrote a formal reply to Bulganin's letter of November 5, suggesting Soviet-American intervention in Egypt. In a stern message, Eisenhower stated:

With respect to your suggestion that the United States join with the Soviet Union in a bi-partite employment of their military forces to stop the fighting in Egypt, it is our view that neither Soviet nor any other military forces should enter the Middle East area except under United Nations mandate. Any such action would be directly contrary to resolutions of the General Assembly...and it would be the duty of all United Nations members, including the United States, to oppose any such effort.9

Unable to reconcile Bulganin's expressed concern for the principles of morality and the objectives of the United Nations with action taken by the Soviet Government in Hungary, Eisenhower reiterated his earlier communique and suggested that the Soviet Union make a great and notable contribution to the cause of peace by complying with the General Assembly's resolutions on the subject of Hungary.10 As he expected, the President did not
receive a reply.

Two days later, in his final press conference at SHAPE, General Alfred M. Gruenther issued another warning to the Soviets. Gruenther's communique lacked the diplomatic rhetoric that characterized Eisenhower's telegram. If the Communists attacked the West [France and Great Britain], he claimed, the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc "would be destroyed...as sure as day follows night."\textsuperscript{11}

The Soviet press, meanwhile, had indicated that the Soviet volunteers might depart for Egypt. Acting Secretary Hoover, accordingly, addressed the General Assembly on November 16 and declared that such action would be "clearly contrary" to the United Nations resolution of November 2, and that it was the duty of all members to refrain from introducing forces into the area, except those of the Emergency Force. Introduction of external forces, he said, would present a threat to the United Nations forces then entering the area and would compel the international body "to take appropriate action." President Eisenhower, Hoover concluded, had already announced that the United States would fully support such action.\textsuperscript{12}

To insure the Soviets complied with his warning, Eisenhower increased the intelligence coverage of arms
shipments via Soviet bloc merchant ships to the Middle East. Brigadier General Richard Collins, Deputy Director of Intelligence for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Office of Naval Intelligence began monitoring all commercial shipping in the eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea. By November 15, however, the threat of Soviet intervention had eased to the point that Admiral Radford instructed Burke to deactivate the various task forces that had been formed to augment the Sixth Fleet. On December 13, Admiral Boone, CINCNELM, returned to London from his flagship, USS Pocono. Four days later, the Sixth Fleet resumed normal operations. The Soviet threat, as Eisenhower predicted, had proven to be merely a propaganda ploy.

Throughout the crisis, the performance of the Navy had been superlative. Burke was extremely pleased and placed lavish praise on his commanders. "As usual," Burke stated to VADM Freidrich Ruge, "only naval forces could take the military action that was required when the situation broke." Extolling the virtues of sea power, Burke continued, "Our Sixth Fleet was the only military force which could take position to protect U.S. interests and to effect the evacuation of our nationals." When Eisenhower met with congressional leaders on
November 8, he and his staff discussed a myriad of topics. Although the President did not feel the situation warranted reconvening Congress for a special session, he used the bipartisan meeting for the dual purpose of educating the legislators on the current status of the Suez imbroglio and exploring alternatives for creating a new Middle East policy from the shambles of the Middle Eastern war. The crux of the President's proposal was the necessity to take prompt action that would minimize the effects of the recent difficulties and exclude Soviet influence from the area. He then discussed the need to lay before the Arab governments information and proposals that would establish genuine peace and insure that every weak country understood what was in store once it fell under Soviet domination. After the individual countries came to that realization, American arms, training missions, and cash would follow. Eisenhower also considered translating the defunct tripartite statement of 1950 into bilateral treaties with each of the Arab states. Although Egypt and Israel would receive the majority of the proposed aid, the President examined methods of assisting Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. To Eisenhower, the chief legacy of the Middle East crisis was the necessity to develop ways and means to strengthen economic and diplomatic ties to each of the regional
states, either on a bilateral or a group basis. Collective declarations by the Western allies had proven ineffective, especially if the vital interests of the Western states did not coincide. In addition, the President hoped that improved ties between the Middle Eastern states and the United States would hinder Soviet efforts aimed at establishing bases in the Arab world. From this proposal emerged the Eisenhower Doctrine of January, 1957.

If Eisenhower sought to obtain congressional approval for his actions by submitting proposals that would immensely increase executive authority to deal with the Middle East fiasco, he was entirely successful. Senator Lyndon Johnson found the President's remarks "very fruitful and helpful" and promised the administration that the Democrats would not play politics with foreign policy. Additionally, the Majority Leader said that the Senate would give responsible consideration to Eisenhower's proposals for a comprehensive revision of Middle Eastern policy. Senator John F. Kennedy joined Johnson in urging a bipartisan approach to foreign policy to provide "dissent without disunity." Not only had Eisenhower secured congressional support for what he considered his visionary proposals, but he also assuaged Democratic fears that the crisis was getting beyond the administration's ability to control it. Senator Walter George
of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee departed the briefing, stating there was no need "to be unduly alarmed," nor was it necessary to reconvene Congress for a special session. 16

Eisenhower did not confine his efforts to secure congressional approval to the bipartisan gathering of legislators. Three days after his briefing on November 9, the President dispatched his principal advisers, including Hoover, Allen Dulles, Radford, Flemming, and Herman Phleger, the legal adviser to the Department of State, to an emergency hearing by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the topics of Suez and Hungary. 17

Following introductory remarks by the chairman, Hoover reviewed the major developments in the Middle East since the committee last met on July 28. Radford then discussed the current military situation, but his remarks were off the record. The members of the committee questioned the administration's team, and all seemed reasonably satisfied with the possible exception of William Fulbright, who repeatedly sought to have Hoover outline Eisenhower's specific policies for bringing stability to the Middle East. The Acting Secretary of State, in turn, merely summarized the on-going debate in the United Nations and the contingency plans for increasing oil shipments to Europe if the Arab states severed all the pipelines to
the West. George adjourned the meeting two and a half hours after it began, promising to issue a rather vague statement, in which he stated that representatives of the Department of State, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others had given his committee substantially all the information that Eisenhower had given to the legislative leaders at the White House briefing three days earlier.

For the remainder of November, Eisenhower directed his efforts toward securing a lasting peace in the Middle East. On November 10, he approved a joint State-Defense memorandum, under which the United States would provide the initial air and surface lift of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to Egypt on a non-reimbursable basis. The United Nations, however, would pay the United States for any subsequent logistical support the country provided. There were to be no American military personnel or supporting facilities in the area under supervision of the United Nations force. The plan further provided that nations having bilateral military assistance agreements with the United States were to be granted authority to use, for the forces participating in the United Nations action, equipment acquired through the Mutual Defense Assistance program.18

Advance parties of the United Nations Emergency Force began arriving in Egypt on November 15 under command
of Canadian General Eedson Burns. Although Nasser's objections regarding the composition of the force delayed its full deployment, the most serious stage of the crisis was over.

Now that the multi-national force was in Egypt, Eisenhower continued to apply economic and diplomatic pressure on Great Britain, France, and Israel to expedite the withdrawal of their forces from Egyptian soil. It took another United Nations vote on an Afro-Asian resolution condemning the continued presence of the Anglo-French expeditionary force in Egypt and American intransigence to bolster the faltering British sterling and demand for oil before the initial contingent of British forces departed Egypt on December 3. As usual, the French were reluctant to withdraw their forces, but lack of British support and economic hardship, based on the oil shortage, convinced Mollet to withdraw French forces. According to Ambassador Dillon, the oil shortage had begun affecting the people of Paris and several deaths had occurred due to lack of heat. Consequently, French forces debarked from Egypt in mid-December, and by December 22, Egypt was once again free of Anglo-French troops. It was not until the President threatened to impose economic sanctions against Israel that Ben Gurion agreed to withdraw Israeli forces. The last Israeli
troops departed Egypt on March 7, 1957.

In the interim between the General Assembly vote (November 20) and the debarkation of British forces from the Suez region, Eisenhower approved a "Middle East Plan of Action" that the Departments of the Interior, Justice, and the Office of Defense Mobilization had prepared during the preceding summer. The plan added two hundred thousand barrels of oil a day to the quota of three hundred thousand barrels then being shipped to Europe. On November 30, the President authorized the Director, ODM, to request the Secretary of the Interior to permit the United States petroleum industry to coordinate their efforts to assist in handling the oil supply problem. Private industry cooperated fully with the Government to make the effort a success. In addition, Eisenhower began financial aid to the British.\(^{21}\)

The President's seemingly belated economic assistance to Great Britain did not signal a new direction for his foreign policy. He had met secretly with top officials on November 21 to outline long term policy for the Middle East. It was the consensus of the attendees that Great Britain was facing economic collapse, and unless the United States furnished aid rapidly, the dissolution of Western Europe was imminent.\(^{22}\) The Conservatives of Eden had scheduled rationing to commence on December 17, and
British gold and sterling reserves were dwindling. In spite of his opposition to Eden’s role in the crisis, Eisenhower had no intention of witnessing the economic disintegration of Great Britain. However, he was not reluctant to use economic leverage to persuade his ally to hasten the withdrawal of its forces from the war zone.

This assistance was the first step toward the reconstruction of friendly relations between the chief partners of the Atlantic alliance. In late November, Eisenhower and Churchill exchanged letters, in which both statesmen expressed their convictions that it was time to restore the traditional friendship that existed between the United States and Great Britain. In replying to Churchill's letter, Eisenhower hoped:

...that this one [Suez] may be washed off the slate as soon as possible and that we can then together adopt other means of achieving our legitimate objectives in the Middle East. Nothing saddens me more than the thought that I and my old friends of years have met a problem concerning which we do not see eye to eye. I shall never be happy until our old time closeness has been restored.23

Placing the Suez crisis in perspective, Vice President Nixon reiterated Eisenhower's remarks to Churchill in a December speech, in which he stated:

New that our allies have subordinated what they considered to be their national interests to the verdict of the United Nations, it is essential that we recognize that neither we nor our allies were without fault in our handling of the events
which led to the crisis. Now is the time for us all to recognize that recrimination and fault-finding will serve no purpose whatever.

We are proud of our association with Britain and France and of our common dedication to the principles of freedom and justice which joined us together as allies in both World War I and World War II. Together, the United States, Great Britain, and France have a solemn obligation to give leadership and support to the United Nations program which will assure the solution by peaceful means of the problems which brought about the armed conflict in that area.  

It was to the task of repairing the Atlantic partnership that Eisenhower dedicated his greatest efforts following the Suez affair.

It is difficult to determine if anyone emerged victorious from the long and debilitating Suez crisis. There were certainly no clear-cut victors. Nasser, the victim of the aggression, clearly lost the war from the military standpoint, but his conduct of the war greatly enhanced his prestige in Egypt, the Arab world, and the Afro-Asian nations. From 1956 until his death in 1970, Nasser exerted a charismatic hold over the Egyptian masses. His staunch opposition of the Imperial European powers transformed him into a pan-Arab hero. "It was," said one biographer, "not he who took possession of Arabism, but Arabism which took possession of him. It was Arabism that invested him and established him as its hero."  

Of the conspirators, Israel seemingly benefitted the
most from the conflict. The war forced Egypt to open the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping and led to the presence of an international force on the Israeli-Egyptian border to prevent guerrilla raids. The rapid conquest of the Sinai contributed to the myth of Israeli invincibility, which the Six Day War of June, 1967 reinforced. It was not until the opening days of the War of Ramadan in 1973 that the first blemish appeared on the image of Israeli military superiority.

The two countries that suffered the greatest loss of prestige were Great Britain and France. The Suez affair was the harbinger of the collapse of their colonial empires in the Middle East. Eden's Tory Government was the first casualty of the post-war world. Frustrated by the weight of adverse national and international public opinion against his policies and gravely ill from the months of unbelievable tension, Eden vacationed for three weeks in Jamaica beginning November 23 to prevent his complete physical and emotional collapse. Although he returned to London on December 14, the end was near. The Times, Economist, Manchester Guardian, and the Daily Telegraph warned Eden on his return that unless he could provide leadership in time of crisis, he ought to resign. On January 9, 1957, the Prime Minister summoned Harold MacMillan to 10 Downing
Street and informed him that due to reasons of health, he had decided to resign his office.28

Until his death, Eden denied charges that his government had colluded with France and Israel to overthrow Nasser. Speaking to the House of Commons on December 20, 1956, Eden emphatically stated, "I wish to make it clear that there was not foreknowledge that Israel would attack Egypt, there was not."29 Before submitting his resignation, he affirmed the righteousness of his government's action by stating:

I am convinced, more convinced than I have been about anything in all my public life that we were right, my colleagues and I, in the judgments and decisions we took, and that history will prove it.30

When he died in 1977, the Times' obituary succinctly summarized his career. "He was the last prime minister to believe Britain was a great power, and the first to confront a crisis which proved she was not."31

Guy Mollet's government quickly followed the fate of Anthony Eden's. Mollet fell in May, 1957, to be replaced by a coalition headed by his former defense minister, Bourges-Maunoury. Unlike his British counterpart, Mollet made no secret of the collusion. Christian Pineau, disgusted with the British for having ordered the cease-fire, washed his hands of the entire affair and was quite frank about the details of the conspiracy
in the months following the debacle. The political humiliation of Suez proved to be the last straw to a nation that had experienced defeat by the Germans and the loss of Indo-China within the span of two decades. Until Charles deGualle established the Fifth Republic in 1958, no French government was able to extract the country from the malaise that engulfed it. As General Beaufre stated, the Suez affair was "largely responsible for the events of May 13, 1958." If that was true, it brought to the forefront the only Frenchman capable of restoring French pride and grandeur.

Of the Atlantic partners, only the United States emerged from the crisis with increased prestige within the framework of the international community, but Anglo-French bitterness tempered the friendly relations that had once existed among the three most powerful NATO members. The most obvious result of the crisis was the termination of European colonialism and the introduction of the United States as a major power with which to be reckoned in the Middle East. Although the crisis did not alone do this, it certainly was a contributing factor.

Within the Arab world, the United States won increased prestige. Ambassador Raymond Hare cabled from Cairo to inform Eisenhower that the United States had suddenly emerged as a "champion of the right." King
Saud of Saudi Arabia commended the President for the American position in the General Assembly against his traditional allies. Even Nasser lauded Eisenhower for the President's firm stand against aggression in spite of the personal and political risks involved during the election. "By taking that position," said Nasser, "you put your principles before your friends."36

Unfortunately, Eisenhower's and Dulles' misconception of the Soviet threat to the Middle East and their failure to comprehend the realities of Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism forfeited any gains the United States achieved as a result of the President's moralistic position during the crisis. On January 5, 1957, Eisenhower addressed Congress and outlined his concept for joint executive-legislative action to confront the increased danger from international communism. When passed in March, the "Eisenhower Doctrine" authorized the employment of American military forces in the Middle East "against overt aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism," to be used only "at the desire of the nation attacked."37 The goal was a year and a half too late, six thousand miles too far away, out of kilter with the global balance of military power and other geopolitical realities, and against the revolutionary spirit of the times.38
Reaction to the doctrine within the Arab community was mixed. Syria insisted that the maintenance of stability was strictly a regional affair. In Beirut, the foreign minister hailed Eisenhower's initiative as a "good and timely move by the United States." Nasser viewed the Eisenhower Doctrine as a blatant attempt to replace Anglo-French colonialism with an American presence, and it did little to convince Nasser that the United States was not ultimately malevolent. Relations between Egypt and the United States deteriorated until Nasser severed diplomatic ties with the United States in 1967.

Far more important to Eisenhower than American-Arab relations was the strain the Suez affair placed on the Atlantic alliance. Both the Eden and Mollet governments were distraught over the lack of support from their American allies during the latter quarter of 1956, and both were predictably vocal in their criticism of Eisenhower and Dulles. Mollet was particularly incensed with the Americans, telling a domestic audience:

If I had been the American Secretary of State, I should have tried to understand better the real problems that faced the British and the French. I think the present situation is attributable principally to lack of mutual comprehension.

According to the French foreign minister, Suez made the French forget the Normandy landing and the Marshall
If there was a lesson for Mollet and successive French governments, it was that American power was unreliable if the United States vital interests fell outside Europe.

The official British position was no less critical than the French, but the British press was much more supportive of the Americans and Eisenhower's personal role in mending the frayed alliance. Officially, Eden lamented the misunderstanding that had made Eisenhower so obstinate and intractable. Repeatedly misreading Washington's intentions, both Eden and Selwyn Lloyd attributed the blame for the lack of American support directly to Eisenhower. The hardening of the American position against Great Britain in the immediate aftermath of the cease-fire disturbed MacMillan, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not so foolish to refuse the offer of American financial aid on November 30, even though it was "a little wounding to feel that we were to be given a 'reward' for our submission to American pressure."

The only British public official who actively sought to reconcile the differences between the two allies was Churchill, who wrote Eisenhower on November 23 to prevent the misunderstanding that might create a permanent gulf in the Anglo-American alliance.

To conclude that American policy during the crisis
did not create ill will and bitterness would be fallacious, as evident by the Times and other conservative newspapers. Nevertheless, the responsible press recognized that Great Britain's interest could best be protected within the context of the Anglo-American alliance. The Economist praised Eisenhower: "No man was more shocked by what the British and French did in Egypt, yet no man, after the first anger, was more intent upon rescuing the partnership." The Manchester Guardian urged the British government to make every effort to restore the atmosphere of political trust. The great task of statesmanship now was the rebuilding of the alliance, and the Economist ventured to report that the British must realize that they "are not the Americans nor can they be; hence, Great Britain must play a junior role in any Anglo-American alliance. The net result of this good will manifested itself in the Bermuda Conference, beginning March 20, 1957, where Eisenhower and Prime Minister MacMillan reaffirmed their cooperative partnership.

Ironically, the pressures of the Suez debacle did not seriously disrupt NATO, although the advent of deGaulle on the French political scene in 1958 altered the solidarity of the pact significantly. Dulles met with Pineau and Lloyd in December in an attempt to soothe
over differences among the NATO partners. Neither Army
Chief of Staff Maxwell Taylor nor NATO commander General
Lauris Norstad\(^{49}\) felt that the alliance was in jeopardy
as a result of tension between the major governments
during the crisis.\(^{50}\) Frederick Nolting, U.S. Ambassador
to NATO, viewed the situation as an incredible breakdown
in allied communications, but saw the net result as a
birth of a new impetus to attempt to form a consultive
process within and among NATO countries which would
prevent any future Suez-type fiasco.

Lastly, the Suez crisis reflected the increasing
tension between the United States and the Soviet Union
during the Cold War era. Despite of the threat that
"rockets would fly" if the British and French did not
halt their aggression, the Eisenhower team viewed these
statements as no more than appeals for favor in the Arab
community and elsewhere. The strong American military
posture in the Mediterranean had successfully deterred
the Soviet Union from executing their promise of sending
volunteers to assist Nasser against the European
conspirators.\(^{51}\) Strong public rejoinders by the United
States and the early United Nations cease-fire, however,
prevented a direct American-Soviet confrontation.

In summary, the Suez crisis was one of the most
important crises of the post-World War II world. From
the international perspective, it had serious repercussions, in that the United States altered its relationships with the Arab community and its European allies. Although the crisis strained the Atlantic alliance, it did not break it. If the affair accomplished anything, it demonstrated the necessity of re-evaluating American national interests outside the traditional limits of the United States.
NOTES


3DDE, November, 1956 Phone Calls, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

4Memorandum For Record, November 7, 1956, in November, 1956 Diary-Staff Notes, Box 19, DDE, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library. See also White House Memoranda Series, Meetings with the President, Box 4, Dulles Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

5Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 416.


7For summary of discussion, see Memorandum of Discussion of the 303rd Meeting, National Security Council, November 8, 1956, NSC Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library.

8Chronology of Naval Activities. See also Memorandum For Colonel Goodpaster, November 7, 1956, in CJCS 091 Palestine (June, 1956-December, 1956), Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.

201

Ibid.

Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, p. 187. See also Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p. 97.

Department of State Bulletin #908, November 19, 1956, pp. 795-796.

CCS 381 EMMEA (11-19-47) Scs. 53, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, RG 218.


Ferrill, The Eisenhower Diaries, pp. 333-334.


For a transcript of these hearings, see Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pp. 605-660.

See memorandum of conference between representatives of the Department of Defense (Gordon Gray, Arthur Radford, et al) and Department of State (Robert Murphy et al), November 10, 1956, in Department of State, Suez Canal Problem, pp. 198-199.


Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War, pp. 665-668.

Actions by the President, November, 1956, WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary, L. Arthur Minnich Series, Eisenhower Library.

See Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 428 for accounts of this conference.


Department of State Bulletin #912, December 17, 1956, p. 947.


28For accounts of this meeting, see Eden, Full Circle, pp. 650-653 and MacMillan, Riding the Storm, 1956-1959, pp. 180-181.

29Times (London), December 21, 1956. See also Hansards Parliamentary Debates, Volume 562, p. 1457. Selwyn Lloyd also denied the conspiracy. On December 6, he stated, "It is quite wrong to state that Israel was incited by this action by Her Majesty's Government. There was no prior agreement between us about it." New York Times, December 6, 1956.


31Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 435.

32Memorandum For Record, Interview with C. Douglas Dillon by the author, June 29, 1982, Appendix D.

33Cooper, The Lion's Last Roar, pp. 272-275.

34As quoted in Neff, Warriors at Suez, p. 417. See also Hare's oral history transcript at Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

35On November 17, 1956, Eisenhower sent Saud a warm reply, in which the President expressed his sincere hope for a lasting peace. See WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary, L. Arthur Minnich Series, Eisenhower Library.

36Heikal, The Cairo Documents, p. 189.

37Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, p. 494. See also Eisenhower, Waging Peace, pp. 180-182.

38Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War, p. 646.

39Cooper, The Lion's Last Roar, p. 247.


Eden, Full Circle, p. 640.

Ibid. See also Lloyd, Suez, 1956, p. 259.

MacMillan, Riding the Storm, 1956-1959, p. 177.

Economist, November 10, 1956.

Manchester Guardian, November 15, 1956.

Economist, November 17, 1956.

Norstad succeeded Gruenther as NATO commander in November, 1956.

Memorandum For Record, Interview with General Maxwell D. Taylor by the author, June 17, 1981, Appendix B. See also Lauris Norstad's oral history at Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This examination of the critical junctures of the Suez Crisis clearly reveals the scope of Eisenhower's direction of foreign policy and his ability to dominate the decision-making process during a major international crisis. Throughout the crisis, the President employed a variety of leadership techniques and bureaucratic skills to insure that his judgments prevailed and that his decisions were executed. Through adept personal diplomacy, he mobilized public and congressional support for his policy of renouncing armed aggression to settle the international dispute. Moreover, in managing the crisis, Eisenhower used personal contacts and supervised an elaborate staff system that aided him in gathering information, making decisions, and implementing presidential directives. His efforts were largely responsible for bringing the crisis to a satisfactory conclusion.

During the initial stage of the crisis, the ad hoc meeting with his inner circle of advisers was the forum through which Eisenhower shaped his policy and strategy.
Without formal consultation with either the National Security Council or the legislative branch, the President acted with singleness of purpose in forming a clear policy line against resorting to arms. His decision to oppose the military option was particularly striking since Eisenhower was taking a stand which his principal military advisers and European allies opposed. Indeed, throughout the Suez dispute, Eisenhower risked disrupting the solidarity of the Atlantic alliance by opposing the policy of force which Great Britain and France had adopted as early as July 1956.

Only after he had decided on the American response did Eisenhower consult with other executive and legislative institutions of the federal government. Confident that the series of diplomatic conferences he had initiated would buy time and possibly defuze the volatile situation, the President then expanded the decision-making process by including the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Congress, and the Cabinet.

During the first four months of the crisis (August-November, 1956), Eisenhower initiated specific measures to reconcile Anglo-French interests with the vigorous nationalistic policies of Nasser. These diplomatic endeavors included the tripartite conference (August 1-3),
the first London conference (August 16-23), and the second London conference (September 19-21) which established the framework for the Suez Canal User's Association. During the same period, the National Security Council met fourteen times with the Middle East as a principal topic for discussion. With the exception on one November session, Eisenhower presided over all the NSC proceedings. After the initial Israeli invasion and the subsequent Anglo-French landings on November 5, the President used these meetings as the principal forum for explaining his views and decisions to his military and economic advisers. Therefore, the National Security Council was merely the vehicle that Eisenhower used to insure consensus and coordination. It was not the premier decision-making body.

In addition to his adept employment of the National Security Council, the President demonstrated his comprehension of the military aspects of foreign policy by his relationship with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Of course, his former professional experience significantly contributed to his understanding of the military facets of complicated international issues and to his ability to control an assertive military staff. Early in the crisis, General Taylor and Admiral Burke expressed their dissent with Eisenhower's decision to oppose military
assistance to Great Britain and France. Both the dissident chiefs felt that the United States could best protect its national interests by supporting its European allies during the planned invasion of Egypt. Just as he had rejected the recommendations of his military advisers during the Quemoy-Matsu crisis, Eisenhower vetoed this proposal and stated that the United States would honor its commitment to non-intervention, as stated in the Tripartite Declaration of 1950. The principal reason for his objection to Taylor's and Burke's suggestions was Eisenhower's conviction that a military expedition would result in no lasting solution and American support of aggression would seriously jeopardize the moral reputation of the United States.

With respect to the perceived Soviet threat to the region, the Joint Chiefs strongly supported the President's directive to increase the strength and readiness of American forces in the Middle East. This was particularly true of Burke whose Sixth Fleet was the principal United States force in the eastern Mediterranean. Eisenhower took the necessary steps in the event of any Soviet effort to inject its own forces into the troubled area. The net result of the President's interaction with his military advisers was that
Eisenhower's own military expertise enabled him to reject or accept the recommendations of the Joint Chiefs on both political and military grounds.

Eisenhower also proved himself an adroit politician in dealing with the legislative branch. Fully aware of the value of "consensus building," particularly in a presidential election year, the President sought to involve Congress in the formation of foreign policy. Eisenhower, however, did not relegate decision-making to the legislative branch but merely kept the principal leaders of both houses informed on administration policies. By refusing to convene Congress for a special session, the President, in effect, excluded the legislative branch from the policy-making process although he met frequently with bipartisan leaders. The two most publicized conferences were the sessions on August 12 to discuss the American position at the first London conference and the session on November 8 to explore possibilities for creating a new Middle East policy from the shambles of the Suez war. The latter meeting was particularly significant because Eisenhower used the gathering not only to inform the legislators of the administration's policy, but also to submit new proposals that would greatly increase the power of the executive branch. In so doing, Eisenhower followed the practice
which had proven so successful during the Quemoy-Matsu crisis of 1955, that of explaining essential foreign policy decisions to congressional leaders during an atmosphere of crisis and requesting their support. By avoiding confrontational rhetoric and emphasizing the need for unity in the shadow of possible Soviet incursions into the Middle East, Eisenhower was successful in obtaining full bipartisan support for his actions.

Eisenhower's careful cultivation of congressional support reveals a skilled political practitioner who was able to convince legislative leaders that they shared fully in the decision-making process. The Suez affair was also reminiscent of the Indo-China crisis in 1954 when Eisenhower refused to commit American ground forces without the prior approval of Congress. Although he never intended to commit United States forces into combat in the Middle East except in self defense or intervention by the Soviet Union, the President demonstrated his political astuteness by actively seeking congressional advice and informing legislative leaders of his intentions.

Finally, the popular view of a president who relegated major foreign policy decisions to his secretary of state does not bear up under a close examination of the facts. Dulles was merely the most visible figure in an elaborate staff system, in which all aspects of
strategy management coalesced at the presidential level. Eisenhower alone decided as early as July, 1956, what the American response to the nationalization of the Suez Canal would be. The President made the initial commitment against the use of force without prior consultation with Dulles. As Staff Secretary Goodpaster later stated, Dulles merely worked within the parameters established by the President. Although both Eisenhower and Dulles were men of strong conviction, the latter deferred to the former on issues of great political importance. It was Eisenhower, rather than Dulles, who reacted so violently when he received word of the invasion of Egypt. The decision to take the matter to the Security Council in order to bring world opinion to bear against Great Britain, France and Israel was the President's alone. Extended telephone conversations between Eisenhower and Ambassador Lodge at the United Nations, together with his numerous dictates to Eden, Mollet, and Ben Gurion, reveal the true extent of Eisenhower's impact on foreign policy. When abdominal cancer removed Dulles from the scene at the apex of the crisis, there was no discernible alteration in the content of the American response to Anglo-French-Israeli aggression. Indeed, the President increased his efforts to end the fighting by applying strong economic pressure
and threatened sanctions on his European allies. It was the combination of American political and economic pressure that eventually led to the cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of foreign troops from Egypt.

In conclusion, the extent and complexity of the Suez Crisis engaged the President in a full text of his abilities as a crisis manager. The evidence casts serious doubt on the traditional view of Eisenhower as a weak chief executive who was content to allow Dulles to handle all crucial foreign policy matters. On the contrary, the image that emerges from this analysis reinforces the current revisionist trend that Eisenhower was an extraordinarily active president whose effectiveness depended on his personal administrative and leadership abilities. By insuring that it was only at the presidential level that the political, economic, and military dimensions of crisis management coalesced, Eisenhower was able to deal actively with department chiefs, legislative leaders, erstwhile allies, and dissenting military advisers to achieve his major policy objectives. He was successful due to the force of his own personality, his bureaucratic skill, and his personal direction of an elaborate staff network that deferred all major decisions to the President before coordinating
their execution. During the Suez Crisis, President Eisenhower was a skilled and competent chief executive who dominated the decision-making process and placed the indelible imprint of his forceful leadership on United States foreign policy.
MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., by the author, June 24, 1981

Kingseed: As Ambassador to the United Nations, you enjoyed a very unique position in the Eisenhower Administration in that the President awarded your post cabinet status. Did Secretary Dulles object to this arrangement?

Lodge: No, no, he did not.

Kingseed: There was never any conflict?

Lodge: No, there were no problems. President Eisenhower thought it was very appropriate due to my experience in international relations.

Kingseed: In your book, The Storm Has Many Eyes, you refer to October-November, 1956 as the most difficult and trying of your experiences at the United Nations. Prior to October 29, was there anyone on your staff who was aware of the intentions of our allies concerning the invasion?

Lodge: No, I don't think so. There were rumors all over the place, but I can't recall anyone having the actual facts. Nobody knew that much.

Kingseed: You also stated the intensity of the negotiations and the explosiveness of the situation dictated direct contact with the President during the crisis. What was the extent and nature of this contact and did you have time for dealings with Secretary Dulles, the cabinet, and the National Security Council?

Lodge: Well, Dulles was having his first cancer attack. He could not function.
Kingseed: I believe Acting Secretary Hoover acted in his stead, did he not?

Lodge: Oh yes, yes.

Kingseed: Did you deal directly with the President?

Lodge: Yes, that was the interesting thing. The President discussed it directly with me. He wanted me to report to him.

Kingseed: That was very rare. Did that happen only in times of crisis?

Lodge: Yes.

Kingseed: Why did the United States not sponsor the resolution creating the United Nations Emergency Force?

Lodge: Well, we wanted to avoid any embarrassment that we were taking sides. We wanted the smaller countries to have a depth of responsibility and help them keep the peace so that they would feel a part of the whole thing.

Kingseed: What was the impact of our actions in the United Nations on our allies, principally the British and the French?

Lodge: Well, they were very shocked. They said they had not expected anything like that. They were surprised.

Kingseed: In William Miller's biography, he states that the collapse of the Anglo-French-American alliance at the time of Suez marked the greatest failure of American diplomacy since the wartime failure to nail down access to Berlin. Do you agree with this assessment?

Lodge: I don't know. I don't feel I know enough to say what was the biggest problem that we had. Certainly we had a lot of problems with Suez. I have an idea that there were some other ones. I can not think what they are; it was a long time ago.

Kingseed: Did we keep our allies informed of our actions?

Lodge: I don't know. I wouldn't think so, but I don't know.
Kingseed: One last question. On reflection, do you think the President acted correctly and wisely during the crisis?

Lodge: Oh yes, yes I thought so. Some people have criticized him for not intervening on behalf of Hungary... but I think Eisenhower showed very good judgment in not invading Hungary with U.S. troops.

Kingseed: Well, I thank you very much for your cooperation.

Lodge: I hope you get the recognition you deserve. Good-bye.
MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD


Kingseed: In an early meeting with President Johnson, following Kennedy's assassination in November, 1963, you brought to his attention Kennedy's National Security Council memorandum of June, 1961, in which he had set forth his concept of the responsibility of the Chiefs to furnish broad advice transcending purely military considerations. Was this a significant departure from the Eisenhower administration?

Taylor: It was the first time it was ever laid down in specific terms by a president. There had always been many arguments within the Joint Chiefs themselves as to the scope of the advice they should give. There was a strong school, perhaps the majority in the Chiefs--not only the Chiefs, but also the deputy Chiefs around the organization--that the military should be very careful to stay with their military knitting because we were the only voice in the country speaking for the military interests or at least the military aspects of a given issue. We owed it to our country to make sure that the military voice gets across. This view would be consistent with and that would be to follow General MacArthur's advice from his famous speech in 1952 to the cadets at West Point. He said in effect, 'Don't get concerned with economics, international politics and such non-military matters. Stay with your professional tasks and be ready to fight and win in battle.'

This narrow view of the role of the military affected the Chiefs somewhat in the Bay of Pigs affair. President Kennedy's serious criticism of their behavior was directed at what the Chiefs failed to do. In the conferences, they sat quietly in their chairs and at no time raised their hands and said, "By the way Mr. President, the chances of this thing succeeding are 50/50 or perhaps less." They felt such criticism was
not their responsibility as the operation was run by the CIA. That infuriated the new president, and I thought he was entirely justified. I contributed most of the language to that NASAM you mentioned which stated his concept of the duties of the Joint Chiefs.

Kingsseed: The President indicates in Mandate For Change that differences over budgetary allocations tended to neutralize the advisory influence that the Joint Chiefs should have enjoyed as a body. You mention in The Uncertain Trumpet that the organization has the strengths as well as the weaknesses of any committee system. Considering the natural difference over roles and missions in the overall framework of national defense as well as the competition over budgetary allocations, how realistic was the President's desire to have the JCS render unanimous advice on the problems that confronted them?

Taylor: Very unrealistic. I can not believe he really believed it. I have never apologized for the so-called bickering in the Joint Chiefs. Usually it was bickering over very serious business, and the budget was the pay-off. You can weave all sorts of theories about massive retaliation and flexible response in an academic context, but it is real business when you translate strategic theory into dollars needed to produce forces compatible with it. When we were arguing dollars, we were arguing the very essence of military strategy and its role as a part of the coercive power available to the President. Yes, there was a great deal of arguing. Sometimes it may have been small, but more often it dealt with very important national issues.

Kingsseed: I noticed in The Uncertain Trumpet that on most issues the Joint Chiefs agreed, but on the "blue chips" items...

Taylor: Oh yes, and the numbers I quoted there even surprised me when I got them out. There was unanimity on around 99% of the issues considered, but it was on the really hard ones that we split. There is nothing wrong with that.

Before I became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, in my discussions with Secretary McNamara, I made a condition for accepting the job that I would make no effort to beat concurrence for the Joint Chiefs. I had seen it tried by Admiral Radford and how self-defeating it was. On the other hand, certainly we would like to agree, since a unanimous recommendation is much more effective
than a split. But none of us should be expected to sell a principle to get that unanimity. So I told Secretary McNamara I would propose to make every effort to get a compromise if a compromise was thoroughly satisfactory to every member, but in those cases where it was not, we would act more or less like the Supreme Court. We would have our majority and minority opinions and as Chairman, I would put my opinion on top of the others and bring it to him for a decision. That was his business. Don't ever apologize to these civilians in the chain of command for asking them to make a decision. They are very proud of their job, and they have to pay for it by serving as the court of federal appeal.

Kingseed: Do you believe President Eisenhower had a broader understanding of the military dimensions of foreign policy based on his prior military service?

Taylor: He certainly had vast experience in Europe as commander of the forces of the alliance. In that broad international arena, he was very, very effective. Bear in mind that General Eisenhower had very little military service of the kind that we would expect in an officer of his rank. He grew up between World War I and World War II when there was very little to command. So his first real test as a commander was as commander-in-chief of an alliance. And that was an amazing jump, but he was tremendously talented in the arena in which he found himself. Unfortunately, the experience gave him later a feeling when President, that he knew all about the Army, a confidence which made it very difficult for the Army Chief of Staff.

Kingseed: Yes Sir, I imagine it would.

Taylor: Personally, I was very fond of President Eisenhower. He was a magnificent person, but he was human like everyone else. He had a feeling he knew what the Army needed and strangely enough he really believed that any war of significance would be a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Hence, he was very unsympathetic to my efforts, which were eventually seconded by the Navy and the Marines, to do more for the conventional forces.

Kingseed: Sometimes I get the impression that when the President approved the nominations of the individuals Chiefs he was more concerned about the political aspects of the appointments. I believed you used the term "administrative team." Is that normal?
Taylor: It's normal for the captain to want team players on his team. As I indicated, when I was being looked over for Army CS, I was never questioned what I thought of flexible response or massive retaliation. Senior officials asked if I was willing to take orders from my civilian superiors. It amazed me that the question should be asked. I had been in the military for many years and had a record that should answer the question. One reason for the question, I suppose, was the relationship, unfortunately bad, that had developed between General Ridgway and the President. It was very unfortunate because Ridgway was a magnificent soldier but like most of us, had occasional faults arising from his virtues. He was deeply convinced that the military man must think in military terms, and was so impatient with political factors getting in the way of military considerations. In fact if politics and military policy are unaligned, we can get in all sorts of trouble as we did in Vietnam.

Kingseed: One last question on the President's relationship with the Joint Chiefs. In Mandate For Change, Eisenhower states that only Radford developed the "breadth of understanding and devotion to his country" rather than his individual service that enabled him to recommend better solutions. Do you agree with that assessment?

Taylor: Well, the fact that he chose Admiral Radford was an amazing thing because Radford was one of the most notorious partisans of the Navy in its fight with the Air Force over the B-36 bomber. Eisenhower as Chief of Staff was known to have expressed very strong opinions against these rival service feuds. In choosing Radford, he was apparently impressed by the Admiral's briefing in CINPAC when Ike was going to fulfill his campaign promise to visit Korea. Radford, in fact, was a very able man. In expressing his views, he had a convincing and forceful manner. His strategy thesis was basically that of Ike's, that the Navy and the Air Force backed by nuclear weapons would give us peace and we needed little else in our arsenal. Whether Radford instilled that concept in the President or merely reinforced a concept the President already had, I don't know. It would be interesting to find out.

Kingseed: Can you briefly describe your relation with the other Chiefs, beginning with Admiral Burke?
Taylor: We were on very good terms. Arleigh Burke was then, and still is one of my best friends. Twining, I had never known until I joined the Chiefs, but he was a very personable officer. He was not a particularly strong Chairman as a matter of fact, but a most pleasant change from Radford. Pate was a very fine Marine who had commanded the Marine Division in Korea when I commanded Eighth Army. We had no personality problems among ourselves. We disagreed occasionally, but that was very natural.

Kingseed: I'd like to focus on the broader dimensions of the Suez crisis of 1956. The President mentions that no region of the world received as much attention as the Middle East.

Taylor: Well, I'm sure that was the case from his point of view.

Kingseed: Yes Sir. I noticed the Chiefs met frequently during the early days of the crisis and made certain recommendations as to the consideration of various alternatives.

Taylor: I am sure we did, but none was so significant that I can recall it today.

Kingseed: During the Suez Crisis, the Hungarian revolt also occurred. Do you feel your duties as Chief of Staff became more intensive during this period?

Taylor: Well you see, they are intensive every day of the week, 365 days of the year. This obviously was a special time when everyone focused on the Middle East, but there was so little we could do, or so little anyone thought we should do in most cases. A decision such as to refuse support to the British, French, and the Israelis was made personally by the President. I don't recall every attending an official discussion of the matter.

Kingseed: The President seemed to rely quite heavily on Secretary Dulles.

Taylor: They were very close.

Kingseed: I get the impression the President did not rely very often on his military advisers during crises.
Taylor: Well you see, he viewed himself and the country viewed him as the great military leader of the nation and the Western world. He was not a conceited man. He simply recognized himself as an international character and a bonafide expert on military matters.

Kingseed: Do you recall the Chiefs discussion whether we should support the British and the French during the crisis?

Taylor: No, I recall no such discussion.

Kingseed: There were several meetings of the Joint Chiefs during this time. On October 29, it was decided to take action to improve the state of military readiness of the American forces.

Taylor: Wasn't that the decision of the President after the Soviets made warning moves? The President then alerted the forces. The movement of the Sixth Fleet was the only specific action I can recall.

Kingseed: It seemed to be primarily a Navy show by virtue of the availability of forces in the area.

Taylor: I agree.

Kingseed: During the Suez Crisis, we had a difference of opinion with our allies. Did this affect NATO in any way?

Taylor: No, I don't recall that as a separate issue.

Kingseed: On reflection, do you feel the President acted wisely?

Taylor: The basic question is did he do right in disowning his allies. That's a hard one. I think he probably did right although you can't prove otherwise. I can see very little good that could have come from occupying the canal and the taking over its operation by these two Western powers for an indefinite period. It was bound to be a transient condition. It would have been an unstable situation and how it would have terminated I wouldn't know.

Kingseed: The President brought out that very point in Waging Peace. When you formulate your foreign policy, you have to plan on how is this policy going to end. How will it affect the country and the rest of the world?
Taylor: At least you ought to think about it. You are not necessarily right in your conclusions.

Kingsseed: From your point of view, did we learn any lessons from the crisis?

Taylor: I'll answer that by telling you a story told by Secretary of the Army Pace who was Secretary during a good part of the Korean War. Sometime after the war was over, he ran into General Marshall. In the course of their chat, Pace said, "General Marshall, I wonder if you would think me naive if I said I thought the American people learned a great deal out of Korea."

Marshall looked at him with those cold blue eyes and said, "Pace, no I wouldn't say you were naive, I would say incredibly naive." As a nation, we aren't very good at learning lessons. The only time I know in my experience we ever took time out in the executive branch to post-mortem a crisis was the Bay of Pigs. In this case all the principal participants were called to the White House, where in the presence of the President, the errors and the culprits were clearly identified. In fact, all present were culprits in one way or another, there were no heroes.

Kingsseed: That was right before you became the military representative to the President.

Taylor: Yes, that's right. The Bay of Pigs experience made Christians of these presidential advisers who were essentially the same group that later handled the Cuban missile crisis. Here, they didn't do too badly.

Kingsseed: Well Sir, I thank you for your time today. I certainly appreciate your views on the Joint Chiefs and the Suez Crisis.

Taylor: I warned you I was a dry well on the subject of Suez.
APPENDIX C

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with Admiral Arleigh A. Burke by the author at Admiral Burke's home in Bethesda, Maryland, June 18, 1981

Kingseed: Admiral Burke, it is both an honor and a privilege to be able to interview you today. Your service to the Navy and your country has certainly been exemplary throughout your career.

I would like to begin by referring to our previous conversation at the Washington Navy Yard in which you discussed the necessity for considering the political, economic, and military components in the formation of foreign policy. Will you elaborate on your views of the subject?

Burke: First I want to thank you for those very generous comments. If I remember rightly, we were talking about the narrow views various people have on their own discipline and are completely ignorant in other disciplines. This has been true in our government and every once in a while, it gets very bad. In my own experience, I, as well as every other senior U.S. military officer, have heard at least a thousand times in conferences with the State Department or other officials of the government that "this is not a military matter." So you should not be concerned with it. You should stick strictly with military affairs." That is fatal because the military must know and take into account first the economic aspects of everything it does, such as a simple little thing as a weapons system for example. The military wants to get the very best equipment they can get and so they keep reaching for better systems. Finally weapons systems are developed which are extremely expensive. They are the very best all right, but extremely expensive. Quite frequently if those systems were 95% effective, they might be only 20% as costly.
There is a big difference. You pay heavily for the last 5% of improvement. The net result is we design systems which we can't buy.

The same thing is true in the relationship between international relations and the military although it is more evident. The military can not run international affairs, but most anything that happens may have some military impact, particularly if military operations stem from an international incident. So the military has to be cognizant and participate in national strategy early on so political people won't get themselves and the country in a situation where we will have to fight and can't win, which we have done. Our military people should never have let the political people get us in a position where they expect to win by military force but not realize the amount or kind of military force we would need to win. You'll recognize Vietnam from that. There has to be some give and take between the military and civilians both in the State Department and the economic sector so that all people concerned with executing strategy have a direct input into national strategy.

Kingsseed: Do you believe President Eisenhower was receptive to the advice of his military leaders or due to his own military experience did he consider himself as his own military adviser?

Burke: Both. Any man who spends a lifetime in a career believes he knows something about it. I know where the origin of your question comes from because the Army Chief of Staff at times was hurt because President Eisenhower thought he knew about the subject. His opinions often varied from the current Army Chief of Staff. There was that part of it, but General Eisenhower was a very broad-minded man. He was a great man and he understood the need for consensus and understanding very well. He understood the relationships that had to exist. He had the unusual ability of letting the people run their own shows pretty well as long as they were in accordance of the general plan. That is very unusual in this country. Even had he not been brought up in some other career, he still would have understood that all the factors had to be considered that may affect the ultimate result.
Kingseed: In reading excerpts from Radford's book *From Pearl Harbor To Vietnam*, I noticed the President insisted that Radford come to the White House at a minimum of once a week. He didn't state what was discussed, but the President made a point of talking to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs on a regular basis.

Burke: He wanted the military point of view and I believe Radford tried to give the various views of the Joint Chiefs which frequently were not alike. They shouldn't be alike. If they were alike, it would be wrong. You wouldn't need the rest of the Chiefs. He knew he should have the military input. That's why he leaned so heavily on Dulles. He knew he needed the State Department's input too. And he also leaned heavily on his economic advisers. In his conferences like the NSC, there was quite a bit of give and take, however, General Eisenhower did believe the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs should have the final say in military things. That is not necessarily good. No matter how good an individual is, he can not represent an opposing view very well. For example, to get away from Admiral Radford for a moment, when Nate Twining was Chairman, he leaned over backwards to try to present all views. He was an Air Force man and I was Navy, and we had great differences of opinion. Most of the time, Nate would ask me to come along with him. I'd say, "Nate, you can present this." Most of the time he would do that and I had absolute faith and confidence he would present my view clearly, distinctly, and well. But once in a while, he would say, "I disagree with that so much, that you come." Radford did put in his view which as I said was not always the view of his associates in the Joint Chiefs.

Kingseed: Do you feel your position as Chief of Naval Operations was complicated by the presence of another naval officer serving as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs?

Burke: Yes, just as the Chief of Staff of the Army got irked every once in a while because the President thought he knew all the Army answers. Oh yes, Radford's and my biggest fights, quarrels, differences of opinion were on just that. He would sometimes agree to something concerning the Navy that I had not heard of. Sometimes I would disagree with him on what he had done. I would go down to him and say, "Now listen, I'm the representative of the Navy, not you." He'd say, "I know about the Navy, I've been in it for awhile." I'd say, "I know you do Admiral, but you don't have the responsibilities for
that now. Your responsibilities are different and you don't know the factors involved in this case. You're basing it on general experience and not specific things."

Well, he would come around nearly always, but it was instinct for him to speak up. In the Joint Chiefs, every once in a while, Radford would say the Navy will do this. I'd say the hell it will.

Kingsseed: We have discussed the differences of opinion of several members of the Joint Chiefs and the President over the President's desire to have the Chiefs render corporate advice. In several letters, he said it lessened the effectiveness of the advisory capacity of the Joint Chiefs. I know you disagreed with the principle of the Joint Chiefs rendering corporate advice...

Burke: Not disagreed with it. When you can get an agreed position, that advice is very good. But if you disagree, then you should not have any forced agreement to come up with a majority opinion and say nothing of the minority opinion. That can be very wrong because those minority people have very good reasons for believing the way they believe. The man who is making the decisions should have the benefit of what they believe because it might be critical and very often is. Sometimes the physical restrictions are very important in controlling things, so the man who is making the decisions should have the direct opinions of those people who are deeply involved in carrying out the decisions.

Kingsseed: Did President Eisenhower confer with the Chiefs as a body very often? I know he saw Admiral Radford very frequently.

Burke: Well, I didn't think so at the time, but I think we had a conference with him about every two weeks. Sometimes it was more often than that and other times, it would go six weeks without seeing him. I think on the average it was once every two weeks. That's a lot compared to what they do now, but at the time I didn't think it was enough. Not so much to get a view heard, but it was important to hear his views. There are a lot of undertones in a meeting that can not be put on a piece of paper. The badge "with reluctance" for example is never put in a piece of paper.
Kingseed: Before we discuss the Suez Crisis, will you say a few words on your relationship with General Twining and General Pate?

Burke: Twining is one of the finest men I know. He was not a good writer; he was not a good speaker; he was not a man who could sway a crowd. But he has great integrity and he tries to look at all aspects of a situation. We used to have strong differences of opinion on a lot of specific things. Never once did I feel that Nate Twining didn't believe what he said he believed. I always had utmost confidence in that man. I could talk with him freely about a situation that the Navy would find itself in...and he would give me good advice. That's not always true with all people.

General Pate was sort of a quiet man. I knew him when he was a colonel and I was a captain. We were on the General Board together. We became good friends then. He was a quiet lad. Pate was another man with whom I had problems, as there are always problems between the Navy and the Marine Corps. We hit abrasive spots now and then. We'd have problems. If he had problems with the Navy, I was the first man to know about it. He would come over and talk about it. Same thing was true that I tried to do with him. So there again was a close relationship, a closer personal relationship between Pate and myself than perhaps any two people because our services worked together over the years. I knew what he was thinking about, and he knew what I was thinking about.

In other words, I liked both those people.

Kingseed: Sir, I would like to direct your attention to the Middle East and particularly the Suez Crisis of 1956. President Eisenhower mentions in Waging Peace that no geographic area required so much of his attention as did the Middle East. Did his military advisers, particularly the Joint Chiefs, play an important role during the 1956-1957 timeframe with respect to Middle East policy?

Burke: Yes, I think they did. I think the President listened to them quite a bit. I think he heard but quite frequently he didn't do what the Joint Chiefs recommended. Mr. Dulles, who was a very forceful man, a very persuasive man, a very knowledgeable man, had the most influence of President Eisenhower than any other
individual. This was particularly true during the Middle East crisis. I liked Dulles too, but he got irked at the British because they did not inform the United States of all the things they were going to do or intended to do. I think the British also got irked at the United States because we didn't do the same thing. It was a little thing of misunderstanding caused by not having complete confidence in telling your ally your thoughts. In any case, Mr. Dulles did have a tremendous influence on President Eisenhower particularly on the decision not to support the British in their attempt to take the Suez back.

I don't think that all the Chiefs were in favor of supporting the British, I rather doubt it, but I think all did support not opposing them. I'm not even sure of that, but that's what I think.

Kingseed: Ever since Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company in July, 1956, the crisis was intensifying. Had the Joint Chiefs made any contingency plans in case we had to send any forces into the area?

Burke: Yes, I'm sure we did have some plans, but I don't recall any specific plans. Now you'll have trouble sometimes finding a contingency plan because it was never completed. There are contingency plans always in the formation that may never be completed, but still the services have them because they are bases on which action is taken in the event of an emergency. That is why we had a battalion of Marines, not just for that but because a battalion of Marines is useful for unexpected situations. That's why you have a certain amount of airpower, naval air, and anti-submarine groups to be ready for possible action. They aren't just showpieces.

Kingseed: What was your opinion concerning whether or not we should support the British?

Burke: I believed we should have supported the British. I was exercising my State Department perogative there for a very simple reason. Nasser had been pushing the United States in the face pretty often, not militarily but diplomatically. He was very aggressive and very anti-American and getting worse all the time. The British were our allies and I believed fundamentally this: If you have a friend and he starts doing something or might get himself into trouble, he knows where you
stand. You let him know. And tell him if you don't think he should do that or if you aren't going to support him if he does it. If you're a real friend, you'll tell him so that he does not go off being dependent on you and you're not there. In other words, I think a friend is to be depended upon primarily. If ever a situation arises where you can't be depended upon, you should let the man know. That's an extreme position I know, but that's the way I feel.

I think the same thing is true with nations. I think it's hard to be that way because you have to be very frank, you have to tell the truth. That means you have a situation where a lot of diplomatic language won't explain our position in that situation. Sometimes you have to be not blunt, but you have to realize it is really the truth that is needed and that our allies may get really upset about it. Or maybe, you simply can not support them, but they ought to know that too.

So the situation here was Nasser had been increasingly hostile toward the United States as well as Britain. We were an ally of Britain. I started to say we did not inform Britain that we would not support them. We did. Dulles did, but it was in diplomatic language and they didn't believe it. At least I don't think they did, I don't know. Any way, I thought in order to keep stability in the Middle East, Nasser should not be permitted to throw out the British by force without the British trying to get it back. I thought they should. If Britain wanted to continue its rule of Egypt, they should continue it. If Nasser did not like it, there should have been preliminary steps taken to arrange some sort of negotiations. There were some negotiations, but not very much. When Nasser took forceful action, I believed Britain was quite right in taking forceful action in return. And I thought we should support them. Now I didn't think so at the expense of a tremendous war, but I believed we should support them. I said so, but got voted down by the Chiefs. It was none of my business I was told, but it was some of my business because if the British failed, the United States military was going to have to pick up the pieces.

Kingsseed: To whom did you direct your comments? Was the President privy to your views?
Burke: Oh, yes. The President knew about it. This does not all occur in just one session. Nor does it occur without a primary point of discussion. There were probably a great many discussions. They certainly knew my position on the matter. It was one of those positions that I thought it was the proper thing to do. I'd rather that be done than some other things, but neither was it a position that I was going to scream and howl if my ideas weren't accepted.

Kingseed: Were the Chiefs advised as to what the State Department was doing during the crisis?

Burke: They never are completely. I think the State Department would say we were and we were after the fact. It was a secondary thought with the State Department. When they decided to do something, they didn't think the first thing they had to do was tell the military. They did it, and then someone said we ought to tell the military what we've done. So the answer to that is reasonably they probably did.

Kingseed: As far as supporting the British and the French, what kind of support did you have in mind?

Burke: I did not have in mind a specific means of support. This is one of the troubles. You can't envision in detail a situation that's going to happen. The first thing you have to do is get a general idea not of what needs to be done, but whether you are going to do anything at all.

If we were going to support the British, the first thing I would have done was to call the British and ask how we could help. We were in pretty much of a mess in the United States as far as discussions were concerned, but the situation in Britain was just horrible.

Anyway, this is what I think happened, and I'm talking about a long time ago. I have not checked my memory on this. I think the British Joint Chiefs told the Foreign Office that if they were notified they could be ready to land in Suez on such a date. But the Foreign Office was having discussions within itself as to whether or not they should do that or not. So they did nothing and hoped the situation would go away. The date that they should have informed the British Chiefs went by with the Foreign Office still discussing the
thing. Finally the Foreign Office decided that if the
British Chiefs said they could do this on such a date,
let's go ahead and do it. But they made that decision
much later than the Chiefs said they had to make it.
The military did not have enough warning time. They
gave the Royal Navy orders to do things that were
physically impossible to do. The Navy's amphibious
craft were in Malta. They couldn't get from Malta to
the embarkation points soon enough to carry out the
operation on schedule. In addition, their troops
weren't ready. There were no training areas; there
was no support ready. It was just awful. Well, I had
some dispatches with Mountbatten. I knew in general
what Mountbatten had and didn't have. I didn't know
about the trouble in Britain at the time, but when the
British did start to move, I suggested we turn over to
them some of our amphibious craft that were near. Just
give them to them right then; their crews walk on, our
crews walk off. Well, of course, that wasn't acceptable
at all to anyone in the State Department. That would
have been really involved. I don't think it would have
saved the operation, but it certainly would have helped.
I wanted to do that. The State Department thought that
was a terrible thing to do. I would have been willing
if we really had intended to support them to put in our
marines. I would have been willing to put in our
soldiers, but only if we really intended to win.

But, Britain didn't deserve to win that. They didn't
prepare. They waited too long, and they tried to do
it without trying to understand what the military
complications were. The military perhaps did not
explain to the Foreign Office, and support for the
operation was lacking.

Kingsseed: By the time of the actual Anglo-French
invasion, Admiral Brown was operating in the eastern
Mediterranean with the Sixth Fleet. Did you issue
orders directly to Admiral Brown? Can you explain
about the command structure of the Navy?

Burke: I had command. I was the commander of the forces.
I was the Chief of Naval Operations.

Kingsseed: You were operating without a Flag Plot which
came a little later, were you not?

Burke: I don't remember whether Flag Plot was there or
not; but that doesn't matter. I gave the orders. Flag
Plot was just a place to do it. But I gave the orders
to go or not go. The orders to prepare for that had been issued a long time before, not only for that possibility, but for all possibilities I could think of.

Kingseed: Do you recall what your orders were to Admiral Brown with respect to the Anglo-French invasion?

Burke: Stand by for action. Be prepared for battle. And he sent back a dispatch: "Which side are we on? I'm prepared, but which side are we on?" I said not to take any guff from anyone. I didn't want the fleet out there to get caught with their guns unloaded if someone opened fire on them. It takes a couple of hours, and it takes longer than that when you start moving supply ships in and things farther back. So I wanted him to have as much notice as he possibly could, but I didn't know which side we were on. If we had supported the British, we would have been able to give them good solid close air support if that was desirable. We might receive orders from our government to stop the British. That was possible in which case we would have. We would have steamed up there and told them not to do this. It was a remote possibility, but it was a possibility.

Kingseed: Did the Sixth Fleet in any way obstruct the British and the French?

Burke: No.

Kingseed: Admiral Brown said the same thing in an interview conducted by U.S. News & World Report.

Burke: No, they never did. We did a fine job on that. He was all ready, but as long as we weren't in the fight, we didn't bother either side.

Kingseed: Did you have any problems with communications or did everything run fairly smoothly?

Burke: We in the Navy do not depend so much on communications. The order of mine to Cat Brown was probably less than ten words, and his reply was less than ten words. The order went out over multiple circuits so I knew he got it. We had given him preliminary instructions to build up. Give the local commander the information. Tell him how we fight, but he fights the battle if he's ready. If he doesn't have a supply ship there or if he has a ship with a bad engine, he can make quick adjustments. He's not dependent upon plans that are made by someone sitting behind a desk a thousand miles away.
Kingseed: What was your perception of the Soviet threat during the time of the Suez crisis? This was the same time as the Hungarian uprising, and the Soviets were saying a lot of things.

Burke: Well, it was real. I thought it was real. That threat was real, but the Soviets are very cautious people. And they are very realistic. I did not see anyway that the Soviets could gain by coming in. So I did not think they would, but you never can tell who is going to be on the other side. The threat was there. We were prepared if that happened.

Kingseed: I noticed several papers from the files of the Joint Chiefs that discussed troop movements and methods to increase our readiness in the region. Most times the Navy was well ahead of the ballgame in that the Sixth Fleet had already been operating in the eastern Mediterranean.

Burke: Yes, but that was not due to me. It was due to our system. Be prepared not necessarily for the worst action, but for a serious action. Don't ever bluff.

Kingseed: One of the lesser known facts about the Suez situation was the successful evacuation of American citizens from the troubled area. To what do you attribute that success and do you recall any serious problems that were encountered.

Burke: No, but the trouble there was getting the ships. You have to have a certain degree of emergency before the Navy can commandeer merchant ships, but you always have an idea where your merchant ships are in general. There are always plans of old evacuations, and you can refurbish those and build a plan to evacuate all American citizens from Haifa or wherever. You know approximately within 20% of how many citizens there are. You also know from past experience that 10% of the citizens who should be evacuated are going to balk.

I think the reason the evacuation was successful was the evacuation turned out to be unnecessary. If there had been a few casualties or an attack on Americans, it would have changed much of the success into bitterness.

Kingseed: Were you satisfied with the performance of the Sixth Fleet during the crisis?

Burke: Oh yes, they did a wonderful job. Cat Brown was a marvelous commander. All of the Sixth Fleet commanders were.
Kingseed: Did the Joint Chiefs learn anything from the Suez Crisis as far as advanced planning?

Burke: Oh yes, those Joint Chiefs did, but I'm not so sure that the Joint Chiefs did as a continuing body. I'm not sure a successor ever gets very much from what his predecessor has ever done in any walk of life.

Kingseed: Sir, that concludes my specific questions on Suez. Is there anything else you would like to say to summarize your views on what you think the role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be?

Burke: Well, the Joint Chiefs have two responsibilities, two sets of responsibilities. One is their duties as advisors, the other is their duties from their experiences in their own services. Those duties are about equal. Their chief duty is to make sure that their views are heard in the proper councils when a problem comes up that might affect the security of the United States, whether it is an economic problem, a foreign affairs problem, or a military problem.

Kingseed: Admiral Burke, I certainly appreciate your comments. You have been very helpful. I believe I possess a broader perspective of the role of the military in foreign affairs and the Suez affair in particular.
APPENDIX D

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with C. Douglas Dillon by the author at Mr. Dillon's office in New York City, June 29, 1982.

Kingseed: Sir, it is an honor to speak to someone with such a distinguished record of public service. I appreciate you taking time from your busy schedule to see me. I would like to begin by asking you to relate the circumstances surrounding your appointment as Ambassador to France during the Eisenhower administration.

Dillon: I was asked if I would accept the appointment by John Foster Dulles about mid-December, 1952. I had known Mr. Dulles for many years and had worked with him in the 1948 campaign. I was one of the speech-writers he had. I guess I was acceptable because, together with a friend of mine, I had helped organize a "Draft Eisenhower" movement in New Jersey that led the governor to come out for Eisenhower. I went to the 1952 convention as a delegate. The fact that Mr. Dulles knew and trusted me and that I had certain relationships with France and had traveled throughout France let him to believe I would do the job.

Kingseed: As Ambassador, what was the extent of your contact with Premier Mollet and Foreign Minister Pineau?

Dillon: My contact at the time was quite personal and quite close.

Kingseed: Turning to the events of 1956, it seems that the French Government had almost a fixation with President Nasser. Is that accurate?

Dillon: Well, they did have a fixation. I remember very well that Mollet kept a little book on Nasser in the drawer of his desk, which he would pull out anytime I was discussing the subject with him.
Kingseed: Following Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal on July 26, the official French position was very bellicose. Will you describe any consultations of which you were a part during that time?

Dillon: Well, I talked to them [Mollet and Pineau] from time to time about it. During that period Secretary Dulles was in Paris more than once, so he had plenty of opportunity to explain his point of view with them directly. He wanted to avoid the use of force. Since Mr. Dulles saw them so frequently, I don't think I carried the responsibility of explaining the American position. He made it very clear.


Dillon: Oh, I think so. There was a tendency to rally around the flag. It was quite similar to the current British reaction to the Falklands seizure.

Kingseed: The Times (London) reported a meeting between British and French military officials as early as July 29, 1956, to discuss a possible solution to the crisis. As Ambassador, were you aware of the numerous military conferences between the two nations?

Dillon: Oh, yes.

Kingseed: Were you aware of what was discussed?

Dillon: Not the details, but I was aware they were conducting military meetings. You obviously don't have those unless you intend to explore possible military actions. Secretary Dulles was working so hard to provide some other means of settlement, but he was unsuccessful.

Kingseed: Both Eisenhower and Dulles recognized by mid-October that there was a lack of intelligence among the major partners of the alliance. Did you notice an intelligence blackout?

Dillon: I'm not sure I was aware it was any different than it was before, but it was about that time that I was informed of the military plans by an official of the French Government.

Kingseed: Will you elaborate on that point?
Dillon: I was a close friend to Chaban Delmas, the mayor of Bordeaux, which is where my family had some wine property. He was serving as Minister of Defense at that time. He asked to come see me or suggested we have lunch together. We met at the embassy residence. He told me that time was running out on these various alternatives that Secretary Dulles was pursuing. What was needed was some very strong action by President Eisenhower or else military action would ensue. He informed me that without such action by Eisenhower military action would commence within forty-eight hours after the election. Looking at this in hindsight, I cannot tell if this was a design to deceive us as to the timing of the operation or if the time schedule was later changed after he spoke to me. That very well could have happened, but he did inform me of the plan in categorical terms, so I used a special channel, which was a CIA channel, to report directly to the Secretary of State, so it did not go through normal State Department channels. I do not have any idea how many people Secretary Dulles told as he was receiving diametrically opposed information from England, which I think weighed more heavily than my information.

Kingseed: Do you think President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles made it clear in the months preceding the invasion that the United States would not support Great Britain and France?

Dillon: I think they made it clear they would not support them, but they may not have been so clear as to how strongly they would oppose them. The British and French felt there would be cries of anguish from the United States, but nothing as stressful as to what actually ensued.

Kingseed: Were you aware of any meetings between French and Israeli officials immediately preceding the invasion on October 29?

Dillon: No.

Kingseed: Will you relate your activities during the days following the Israeli attack?

Dillon: I was not in Paris at the time of the attack. I was in southern France on a goodwill tour. I flew back to Paris. I do not recall anything exceptional concerning my duties other than we attempted to halt the invasion.
Kingseed: Was the French populace supportive of the introduction of French troops into the conflict?

Dillon: Oh yes, I believe they were. When it started, they all supported the government, but I remember speaking to ex-President Auriol. He was very much opposed to the use of force, but he was a Socialist.

Kingseed: After the commencement of the fighting, Eisenhower, Dulles, and Lodge took the crisis to the United Nations where Great Britain and France vetoed a Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire.

Dillon: Sure.

Kingseed: Did you have any conversations with the French Foreign Minister on the U.N. debate?

Dillon: Not that I recall.

Kingseed: What type of pressure did Eisenhower exert on Mollet to end the fighting?

Dillon: Prior to the operation, I don't know anything except words. Afterward, there was the oil stoppage designed to stay in place until the French and British got out, with which I took exception. We can explore that later.

Kingseed: Turning to the cease-fire, the French seemed reluctant to accept it, but were forced to go along because Anthony Eden was losing his nerve. Will you discuss any consultations between Mollet and Eden of which you were aware?

Dillon: Yes, I know everything about it. That's one thing I can tell you. That night [November 5], I got a call to come immediately to the office of the Prime Minister. I arrived about 0130, and there was an emergency session of the French cabinet in progress. Mollet was there and came out to show me a ticker-tape quotation from TASS which implied a very clear threat that the Soviet Union would use rockets against the French and the British, possibly against France and Britain, unless this thing stopped. It was not an official government statement, but it was a statement by TASS, and TASS was often the official spokesman for the Russian Government. When Mollet showed me the ticker-tape, he asked me what would be the reaction of the United States if this took place and could I urgently
get him an answer. I said 'no because it was nine o'clock in Washington and it would be impossible to find anyone, but you [Mollet] know the language of the NATO treaty and the United States always lived up to its obligations, and I was sure we would do the same in this case although we disliked what you were doing.'

Well, he seemed to like that and went back to his meeting. I sat there some more, and soon there was a telephone call. He took the call in the room in which I was sitting and it was from Anthony Eden. Eden informed him that the British Government had decided to order a cease-fire. Now the British were in command, so the French had no choice to accept, but they were aghast. They protested, but there was little they could do.

There is one interesting sidelight concerning military intelligence the French informed me about. The actual battle scene which was depicted on a map in their office was totally erroneous. They thought their forces were in Ismailia, but they were actually 20-30 miles short of the city. They didn't realize this until the following morning. This may be one reason why they didn't protest more violently. Then Eden stated to Mollet that the major reason for the cease-fire was the Soviet threat. That is what I uncautiously stated in my radio broadcast which the Secretary of State resented because he felt the moral indignation of the world, not the Soviet threat, had led to the cease-fire. I don't know how realistic the Soviet threat was, but I know Eden and Mollet were very concerned.

Kingseed: I have the same impression. Even the American Joint Chiefs were extremely concerned, perhaps more so than the President, but I have been unable to uncover any CIA memoranda on the subject.

Dillon: That's because it all happened in the middle of the night.

Kingseed: What was the reaction of the French populace to the cease-fire?

Dillon: I think they were very down.

Kingseed: On reflection, do you think the U.S. Government acted correctly during the crisis?
Dillon: Looking at it in hindsight, I think we should have made it much clearer to the French and the British, particularly the British who were more susceptible, as to what we intended to do. Had they not been so successful in deceiving us, I believe we would have.

Kingseed: Following the withdrawal of the Anglo-French troops in December, the French seemed to have been much more open than the British concerning the details of the collusion. Why do you think this was so?

Dillon: I don't know why the French took the position they did. I was asked by Pineau to come to see him, and he described the whole thing to me. I reported this while the British were still denying it. I think this was unusual, but the French were so disgusted with the British for having stopped that they decided they would wash their hands of the whole affair and start over.

Kingseed: Again on reflection, what were the repercussions of the Suez affair on Franco-American relations?

Dillon: Well, I don't think it was very bad until the end when I got very upset. Secretary Dulles at the time was in the hospital having his first cancer operation and Under Secretary Hoover was in charge. Secretary Dulles had always given considerable weight to my recommendations. At this time, the United States had imposed the oil embargo and stocks were low. It began to get pretty cold. Everyone in Paris was freezing and there was a lot of suffering. Since France had already stated that they were going to pull out their forces from Egypt and were in the process of doing so, I felt we were keeping this embargo on entirely too long and I recommended it be dropped.

I was getting no response on this, so I took the unusual step of requesting a personal audience with Eisenhower. It was immediately granted, and I flew home. By the time I landed in New York, the oil embargo had been rescinded. I don't know if my recommendation or my return to the country speeded up the decision to rescind the embargo, but I thought it was necessary to preserve our good relations with France.

Kingseed: Do you think the crisis affected NATO?

Dillon: I don't think it did for any length because Secretary Dulles flew over to France in December for a NATO conference, at which time he met both Pineau and Eden. Suez was outside the NATO area.
Kingseed: Do you think the crisis led to the fall of the Mollet government the following year?

Dillon: Oh, I doubt that it did. The French change their government so often anyway. Of course I was not there at the time.

Kingseed: Do you have anything else you would like to add that we have possibly omitted in this short session?

Dillon: No, I think you have a flavor of what happened, particularly the reaction to the TASS announcement, the telephone conversation between Mollet and Eden, and seeing the reaction of where they thought they were on the map.

Kingseed: Well, Sir, thank you very much for your time and comments.

Dillon: Thank you, I think it's well worth investigating. It's a very interesting episode.
APPENDIX E

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with Lieutenant General Andrew J. Goodpaster at General Goodpaster's office at the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, February 9, 1981

Kingseed: I am interested in both the substance and coordination of President Eisenhower's national security policy. With that in mind, I would like to start by asking you to review your duties as Staff Secretary to the President and Defense Liaison Officer to the security departments of the government.

Goodpaster: The duties of Staff Secretary were very comparable to the Secretary of the General Staff of a large army headquarters. The post originated some time after Eisenhower took over his office. One day when he found papers getting lost while moving through the White House, and lacking any kind of suspense system, he said, "I'm not going to be my own sergeant major around here." Everyone smiled and didn't know what he meant. Nothing was done and shortly a few more papers were lost. He said, "We got to have a secretary of the staff around here. I said I wasn't going to be my own sergeant major. Carroll, you're staff secretary starting right now." That was Pete Carroll, my predecessor, a brigadier general who had served with Eisenhower before. That's the Staff Secretary side; it was essentially to set up a system that kept track of papers coming in and going out. It provided some kind of suspense or follow up. I might just mention in passing, the way the office was organized. Neither Carroll nor I had to involve ourselves directly in any correspondence or actions of a political character. This was part of Eisenhower's understanding that military people should stay out of the partisan side of politics. We did that by having a deputy who could handle that side of the post. I should say also the Staff Secretary had responsibility for supervising the administrative activities of the White House: the
telephone, the budget, the parking, and all of that side of things.

Now the other post was more substantive. The other job was called Defense Liaison Officer. There the President wanted to have somebody who would be a focal point, a staff assistant as I came to describe it later, and I think it conformed to his view of it, who would handle the flow of material and information pertaining to those day-to-day operations in the international arena in which the President himself was involved. The accent there was on day-to-day operations in which the President himself was involved. That post paralleled very closely the post of Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, which was primarily concerned with the NSC operations and dealt with longer term planning and with broader policy. The Defense Liaison Officer—and that's far from a perfect term, but that is the term that was developed—dealt with the State Department, the Defense Department, the Atomic Energy Commission, CIA and the Economic Aid Administration, and the U.S. Information Agency, all of the activities that were on the international scene. In that capacity, the Defense Liaison Officer briefed the President on intelligence every morning, or substantially every morning, probably two out of three mornings, on the average.

Kingseed: I would like to concentrate on the office of Defense Liaison Officer. And with that, I'd like to move on to President Eisenhower's relationship with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In Mandate For Change, President Eisenhower was discussing the differences over the budgets and apparently he was experiencing problems having the individual chiefs think along the lines apart from their specific duties as heads of their individual branches of service. Eisenhower mentions, "Thus the internal differences in our highest military mechanism tended to neutralize the advisory influence they should have enjoyed as a body." Sir, I'm interested in your perceptions of the effectiveness of the Joint Chiefs in providing corporate advice to the President.

Goodpaster: Well, of course in terms of military operations, and I accent operations, he looked to them to discuss these issues with him. He dealt very largely with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I would say, just as an approximation, he met with the Chairman ten times as often as he met with the whole group of Chiefs. But he knew of the work of the Chiefs through
the Chairman and through the Secretary of Defense. But when it came to programs, particularly weapons development, weapons procurement, and budgets and manpower, there he felt, just as he said, that the Chiefs lost effectiveness and lost influence because they were really promoting their own service rather than looking at the problems faced by the United States. They approached problems too much—I think this was his overall judgment—from the standpoint of what good could they do for their service in connection with the problems rather than what was the best way to solve those problems in the overall interest of the United States. He had all of them in on such issues on a couple of occasions. I refer you in particular to a letter that he sent to the Secretary of Defense on January 5, 1955 following a meeting in his office in December, 1954 with the Chiefs in which he laid out his broad patterns of how the armed forces should be formed—what the principal tasks of the armed forces should be in the area of strategic conflict, war at sea, NATO, assistance to other countries, development of technology, and the like. As I say, in the program area, the rivalries among the services vitiated to a considerable extent their effectiveness with the President.

Kingsseed: I would like to move on to the Suez Crisis of 1956. In the realm of foreign affairs, Eisenhower stated that no region of the world received as much attention as did the Middle East. With respect to the Suez Crisis, did Eisenhower's military advisors play an important role during the crisis or in the months preceding it?

Goodpaster: Not very much during the months preceding it. During that time, he handled the problem—in his contacts and his handling of the problem—very largely simply as a diplomatic issue and in that the State Department had the lead. We did get from CIA and Defense some reporting about activities of the countries which were later involved, but it was limited because in general with the British and French at least, we relied on them as allies to inform us of what they were doing. Part of the way they conducted their operations at the time of Suez was very deliberately to deny information to the United States of what they were doing and planning to do. Once the crisis had begun, we did get military analysis and reports on how the operations were developing, the operations involving all the participants: the Israelis, the Egyptians, the British, and the French in connection with their airborne assault
into the Suez area. About the only other thing that we got at that time was that the Russians, Khrushchev in particular, were making threats. Initially, the President just disregarded them as being nothing more than bombast and blather. When we learned our European allies were concerned that these were going unanswered, the President instructed Jim Hagerty, his press secretary, to make a statement that if Russia attacked any of our allies, the United States would join in response to that aggression. He didn't really think there was any substance behind these Russian threats. In any case, he was willing to have that statement made.

Kingseed: After the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Suez, did the Joint Chiefs offer any recommendations or develop any contingency plans for the actual employment of American forces into the area?

Goodpaster: No, I recall no contingency plans being developed at that time. I think there might have been some movement of some of our naval forces, but on that I'm not sure. Essentially, it was our relations with our allies—that part of it was handled as a diplomatic matter to be resolved through negotiations—and in particular it was our intention to put the matter before the United Nations. That was the track that was followed at that time.

Kingseed: Was there any pressure on the President from other members within the administration for at least a consideration of military intervention?

Goodpaster: No, I recall no recommendations or suggestions to that effect.

Kingseed: Did you find your duties as liaison officer to the Defense Department becoming more intensive during this period?

Goodpaster: Well, I think with all the departments and agencies that were involved in international activities and international affairs, action definitely became very intensive as soon as the President returned to the White House. He had been traveling in connection with his political campaign. As soon as he got back, we began having a series of meetings. As I recall, that very evening we had in the British charge and met with him and began the process of communicating, particularly with the British, asking them for an explanation of what they were doing and conveying the view that the
situation had to be resolved quickly and with due regard for the sovereign rights of Egypt. We entered into very intensive negotiations. Meetings were held, and normally these were in the form of ad hoc meetings in the President's office. He would be brought up to date on the situation. Here the Defense Department had the role of providing information as to the progress or lack of progress of the Israeli and the Anglo-French actions, particularly the airborne action which was very slow, very late in being undertaken. The intensity was in getting intelligence, getting information, and carrying out the exchanges of views with the British in particular, but also with the French, Israelis, and with the Egyptians. I might say that Eisenhower had had a long exchange on this subject with Eden before the British undertook this action in which he had made very clear the views of the United States.

Kingseed: Sir, one last question. Would I be correct in summarizing the Suez Crisis in stating that Eisenhower was concerned with getting the matter thrown into the United Nations, maintaining good relations with our allies, principally the British, and protecting the sovereignty of Egypt? Were these his general guidelines?

Goodpaster: Yes, I think he felt a prompt resolution was necessary because of its effect on the Arab world and the potential effect on the oil supply on which all of the West, including our allies, as well as ourselves, were dependent.

Kingseed: Thank you for your time and your views on the Eisenhower years. You have been quite helpful.
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