

**Middle East - Suez story No
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Dag Hammarskjöld's saml.

Middle East / Suez story - 21

11 Nov. 56

- 2 memoranda of D.H. with annex 1-2.
- D.H.'s message to President Nasser of Egypt.
- 1 message from Nasser to D.H.
- Announcement conc. agreement D.H. - Nasser

Agreement with Egypt
and various texts.

"Agreement" with Egypt.

11 November 1956

A I D E M E M O I R E

Mr. Loutfi saw me at 2.45 p.m. on 10 November. He had received new questions from Cairo which he wanted me to clarify orally.

1. Once foreign troops had withdrawn from the Canal area and Port Said, would the United Nations Force have functions in the area independently of an agreement with the Egyptian Government, or is it recognized that such an agreement is necessary for their remaining in the area. My reply was yes, this interpretation of the situation corresponded to my view.

2. Is it recognized that it is indispensable to have the consent of the country concerned, in this case Egypt, for the participation of groups of specific nationalities in the Force? I replied that I did not consider it possible, constitutionally, to accept any such condition. If I were to accept the view implied in the Egyptian question, it would mean that I had permitted Egypt to infringe upon my authority under the General Assembly resolution. "The country concerned" would, if this principle was established, be able to stop the movement of the United Nations Force by unreasonable refusals to participation by such governments as could lend their assistance. However, this firm stand in principle on my side was not the full reply. I considered it obvious and necessary that the United Nations give the most serious consideration to viewpoints and wishes expressed by the country concerned on this point. Those views must be given their full weight in decisions on the composition. However, I repeated that, while that was my view on the policy, I could not acknowledge consent as to the composition as "indispensable".

3. The question about Canada was raised again, this time in a more pointed form. Egypt said that once they accepted a Commander of the United Nations Force who was a Canadian, they did not feel that it would be a slight to Canada to refuse Canadian participation in the Force. I brought out the previous reasons against the Egyptian stand, adding that the

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absence of the Canadians would, in my mind, seriously put in question the validity of my previous judgment that the Force, as it was being set up, would be capable of its tasks. All I could do was to get in touch with Mr. Pearson, but I wanted it to be fully understood that my previous stand on the issue remained fully valid.

I later called Mr. Pearson and, as a result of the talk, I told Mr. Loutfi that the Canadian Government took the matter very seriously and would have to reconsider its permission to General Burns to participate, if the Egyptians refused to receive Canadian forces. Mr. Pearson might, however, consider a switch from ground forces to supply units. He wished to talk that over with me on his return to New York, 11 November.

11 November 1956

AIDE MEMOIRE

Ambassador Loutfi saw me today at 2.30 p.m. He had not been able to receive cables from Cairo, but had had a talk over the telephone with Dr. Fawzi who then had dictated the substance of the dispatches which were on their way. My suggested press communique (Annex 1) was approved by the Government of Egypt for immediate publication on the following understanding:

1. Egypt maintains its position that the consent of the country concerned to the participation of groups from specific countries in the International Force is indispensable. Egypt "reserves its opinion" on the constitutional stand taken by the Secretary-General to the effect that he cannot accept a formal condition of this character.
2. (a) The Egyptian Government notes that there is agreement that the consent of the country concerned is necessary for "entry and presence" in Egypt or in specific parts of Egypt of the United Nations Force. It must likewise be agreed that "when this consent is no more valid" the United Nations Force should withdraw (to this I added that I did not find that a "withdrawal of consent" could be made before the tasks which had justified the entry, had been completed; if, as might happen, different views on the degree of completion of the tasks prescribed proved to exist, the matter should be negotiated).
- (b) It should be agreed that the United Nations Force had "no function" in Port Said and the Canal area after the withdrawal of the British and French forces.

In a special Aide Memoire, treating the composition of the Force (Annex 2), it was stated that "Egypt would eventually agree". It was Ambassador Loutfi's understanding that the word "eventually" here meant in case of execution of the plan.

Ambassador Loutfi felt that I should go to Cairo as early as possible. Fawzi had welcomed the idea. Loutfi felt sure that I could straighten out the question of composition. However, he would consider an immediate message to Nasser advisable.

ANNEX 1

EGYPTIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

New York, 11 November 1956

Agreement on the arrival in Egypt of the United Nations Force has been reached between the Secretary-General and the Egyptian Government. The first groups of the U.N. Force will go to Egypt Monday or Tuesday next week. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to visit Cairo at the very first stage of the operation for discussions of details with the Egyptian Government. He will, on his return, inspect the staging area for the U.N. Force in Italy.

ANNEX 2

EGYPTIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED
NATIONS

New York, 11 November 1956

AIDE MEMOIRE

Egypt would eventually* agree to the participation of Colombian, Swedish and Finnish forces in the United Nations Force. Egypt would further agree to the participation of Indonesian and Yugoslav forces since these countries have also offered to participate. These above-mentioned countries are not entangled in military pacts with the aggressors.

* In case of execution of the whole plan (D.H.)

11 November 1956

MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT NASSER

I have received further clarification of the Egyptian stand from Ambassador Loutfi. While fully understanding the wish for all possible clarity, I must express my deep concern about the delay caused by the discussion in which in some respects I could only repeat what is already on record in the resolutions of the General Assembly and in my reports to the Assembly. However, that in itself would not be a sufficient reason for me to address you personally. What causes me to take this step is your stand, which I firmly hope to be only provisional, concerning the countries which in your view could be permitted to take part in the operation. It is on this issue that I would like urgently to bring the following to your notice.

As participants in a force under United Nations Command every group within the Force is under the ultimate authority of the General Assembly. That gives to the Force a purely international character. On the other hand the legal arrangements give Egypt an opportunity to react against any departure in its functioning from the truly international character of the Force. Not repeat not to recognize this fact and to introduce considerations extraneous to the aims of the United Nations in this operation, is to distort the character of the Force and to create difficulties which may lead to the failure of the whole initiative. I need not elaborate what such a failure might mean. For that reason I must ask you for the most serious reconsideration of your approach to the question of composition. Following up my own initiative as announced to you yesterday, I will come to Cairo with the first troops, which are likely to be Colombians, in order to straighten out what I must consider a misunderstanding of our efforts.

Even pending this discussion I must ask you to revise your standpoint as to the Scandinavian units. It is true that Sweden and Finland are in no "military alliances" while Norway and Denmark are members of NATO.

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However, this is in this context irrelevant, as evidenced also by the fact that the two first mentioned nations in this case themselves have accepted to co-operate within one and the same Scandinavian unit with the Danish and Norwegian troops. Quite apart from the general considerations set out above this fact should be sufficient to prove that once you accept Swedish and Finnish units, there cannot be for you any reason not to accept cooperating Norwegian and Danish units. By a failure to include Norwegian and Danish units, you may well risk the whole Scandinavian participation. I therefore entreat you, without prejudice to your general stand, to accept Danish and Norwegian units as integrated parts of the larger Scandinavian units. It is the standpoint taken by the Scandinavian countries, themselves, which in this case, quite apart from all United Nations considerations, should lead to the conclusion for which I plead.

I cannot end this message without expressing how deeply troubled I am by a stand which involves such risks for international cooperation for peace and for Egypt itself, the cause of which has been endorsed by so many who would fail to understand the line you now indicate.

EGYPTIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED
NATIONS

New York, 11 November 1956

AIDE MEMOIRE

1. The Egyptian Government still considers that its consent is necessary concerning nationalities of forces participating, and reserves its position as to the Secretary-General's interpretation of what he called "constitutional" status in this respect.

2. The Egyptian Government takes note of the following:

A. it being agreed that consent of Egypt is indispensable for entry and presence of U.N. Forces in any part of its territory. If such consent no longer persists, these forces shall withdraw.

B. U.N. Forces shall have no function in Port Said and Canal area after withdrawal of French and British forces.

On above basis Egyptian Government has no objection to announcement being made today that "Agreement on the arrival in Egypt of U.N. Forces has been reached....."

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EGYPTIAN MISSION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

New York 12 November 1956

TEXT

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT
GAMAL ABDEL NASSER TO
MR. DAG HAMMARSKJOLD

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"Your message to me relating to the composition of the United Nations Force has been received today. I continue to trust that we all work for the same purpose of speedily ending the present crisis. With this in view and in my extreme desire to serve this purpose, the Government of Egypt accepts Danish and Norwegian participation. At the same time it earnestly urges acceptance of India, Indonesia and Yugoslave participation. The United Nations Force would thus be better balanced as composed of Colombia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, India, Finland, Indonesia and Yugoslavia."

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C o p y

(Egypt)

Cairo -- Egypt will retain the right to say what United Nations Forces may enter her country and where they will be stationed, it was announced tonight in a complete agreement between Egypt and UN Leadership.

An official announcement said president Gamal Abdel Nasser and UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold had reached a complete agreement on these terms:

1. Egypt's agreement will be necessary for the participation of troops of any country in the UN Force in Egypt.
2. Egypt's agreement will be necessary for each separate entry or shipment of troops.
3. Egypt's agreement will be necessary on the specific location of UN Forces.
4. The UN Forces withdraw immediately if Egypt so orders.
5. UN Forces will withdraw from the Suez Canal zone as soon as the Anglo-French forces withdraw. The UN Forces will move to the Egyptian-Israeli demarcation line.

Prior to the announcement, Nasser conferred today with Canada's Maj.Gen. E.L.M.Burns.

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