

**Middle East - Suez story No
27-32: Middle East - Suez
story No 27-32 - 67**

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Middle East / Suez story - 32

5 Dec. 56

Burns, E.L.M. (General, UNEF, Cairo)

- 1 code cable to D.H.

INCOMING CODE CABLE

TO: SECRETARY GENERAL
FROM: BURNS, CAIRO
DATE: 5 DECEMBER 1956
NUMBER: UNEF 220

At my conference in Port Said today the question of protection of Anglo-French salvage ships and crews which they propose to leave for clearing of Canal was discussed. I made no commitment and said I could not do so until General Wheeler had decided whether Anglo-French facilities were to be ~~used~~ used. They are expecting him and are most anxious that he arrive soonest. They will give him every facility to inspect the Canal.

Anglo-French have already cleared a channel through Port Said harbour area and say that the largest ships can now pass down as far as the destroyed Firdan Bridge (10 kms North of Ismailia). Incidentally the seven or so ships trapped in the Canal can now be brought out but the Egyptians have refused to allow this while Anglo-French are still in Port Said. If Anglo-French salvage ships are to be used they would need protection while at work as would an administrative base detachment on shore. They suggest General Wheeler will need facilities Canal Company dock yard at Port Fuad which would also need protection. One Colombian company is now there guarding electric power plant.

As you had given me to understand the protection of Canal clearing operations might be a UNEF responsibility I noted their representations without commitment.

Sudn Wheeler arrives and has examined situation, I presume it will emerge whether UNEF has tasks in this connection. Meanwhile would be glad of any advice or comment from you on this matter.