Chapter III

THE THREE CONSPIRATORS: BRITAIN, FRANCE & ISRAEL
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On July 26, 1956 Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal (see Appendix III) and on July 30, Anthony Eden resolutely declared his opposition to this. Thereafter till October 29, when Israel attacked Egypt, there took place a number of conferences.¹ The United States hoped that these would stall the use of force against Egypt which England and France were inclined to favour. The latter considered these conferences as steps to ultimately pressurizing the United States to support aggression against Egypt. And to Nasser the conferences were a confirmation of the Western ambition to make the Arab people subservient. The discussions were, however, in vain and the Suez War followed.

This chapter will address itself to three major issues: who is to be blamed for the Suez war of 1956? Was the United States Government aware of the impending war? Did America let her allies down, when it decided

¹. The first of these was the Three-Power talks, on August 1, in London between the representatives of the United States, Britain and France. This was followed by the 18-power International Conference (London, August 16), then the meeting between the Australian Prime Minister Menzies & Nasser (Cairo, September 3), Second International Conference (London, September 19), and the first meeting of the Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA, London, October 1). Nothing positive emerged from any of these.

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not be part of the aggression against Egypt? Perhaps there is greatest variance between contemporary and recently released sources on these issues. In the contemporary newspaper accounts of the time, the blame for the war and the consequent embarrassment to Britain, France and Israel, was laid largely at the door of the United States and Egypt. But Anthony Eden as well as the Israeli Government were spared. More recent sources, shift the blame to Britain, France and Israel. And the United States is exonerated. It is absolved of the charge that it let its allies down. The new sources reemphasise that right from the time of the nationalization of the Suez Canal the United States had made it very clear that it wanted to remain out of any offensive action against Egypt. As such there was no question of letting its allies down. On the contrary, the United States was kept in the dark about the secret alliance between Britain, France and Israel and their plans of attacking Egypt. Thus in reality it was the United States which was let down.

In most of the Middle East countries, the nationalization was, "greeted with jubilation",

2. Afaf Lulfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, A Short History of Modern Egypt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.113. The New York Times proclaimed (Egyptian) 'crowds hail announcement,' (July 27), or 'nationalization seen most spectacular example of anti-Western trend in Middle East, Iraq... enthusiastic about seizure, Syrian parliament backs Egypt,' (July 31). In the July 27, issue of the Washington Post, it was reported that Nasser declared the nationalization in Cairo to a "...wildly cheering, Crowd of 100,000" And then
specially by the Egyptians. And "Nasser became a hero to
the Third World, for he snubbed the west."\(^3\) As Dulles
conceded that, "by seizing the Suez Canal, he would
strike a blow at what he called, 'Western
Imperialism'."\(^4\) A man of lesser strength and
determination would not have been able to take this
stand. It would in fact have been easier for Nasser to
accept the offer to finance the Aswan Dam from the
Soviet Union. But Nasser was keen to prove that the
Arabs could stand on their own. Combined with this
outwardly nationalistic motive, was a deeper, ulterior
one. Nasser wanted to increase his own prestige and
power. He wanted to be the greatest Arab leader to raise
"Arab dignity and revenge."\(^5\) Whatever the motive, it
was a daring and difficult step to take. It could have
backfired. Had the United States entered the foray and
joined the triple combine of Britain, France and Israel.
against Egypt, Nasser could have been easily crushed.
One of Nasser's closest aide, Aly Sabry later said,
"Nasser chose nationalization to keep free of Russia.
Russian aid would have been the simple
solution...nationalization was dangerous."\(^6\)

\(^3\) Marsot, n.2.
\(^4\) Radio and Television Addresses by the President and
the Secretary of State, August 3, 1956, The Suez
Problem, July 26-September 22, 1956, United States
Department of State Publication, No. 6392, p.30.
\(^5\) Townshend Hoopes, The Devil And John Foster Dulles
\(^6\) Kennet Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War (London:
When the nationalization took place the first reaction was one of shock and disbelief in the Western world. This was followed by anger at the United States and towards Egypt.

Both the contemporary sources and some secondary books released after 1966\(^7\) as well as the recently released sources agree that Eden looked upon Nasser as the main cause of all his problems. The withdrawal of the British forces from the Canal Zone, the failure of the Baghdad Pact as an effective weapon of defence in the Middle East, the dismissal of Gen Glubb by the Jordanian Government and finally the nationalization of the Suez Canal only strengthened his belief.

To the *New York Times* Eden declared Nasser to be England's, "sole enemy".\(^8\) He always compared him with Hitler. He had resigned in 1938, from the post of Foreign Secretary, when he had not been able to frustrate Hitler. 1956 offered him a second chance. A number of oral transcripts, available in the John Foster Dulles Oral History Collection, substantiate this account.


Robert Bowie, Assistant Secretary of State for Policy Planning during Eisenhower's administration, says in his interview that Eden, "... cast Nasser essentially in the role of Hitler,... and therefore, cast himself in the role of having to stand up against this man and having to act firmly... not to give in to his aggressiv behavior with respect to Suez."9

Eden looked upon Nasser as a stumbling block in the realization of the British interests in the Middle East. He referred to the nationalization of the Canal as, "Nasser's thumb on our windpipe," which was "intolerable," as the Suez Canal was looked upon as the, "lifeline of British industries and well being."10 So the altered power position in the Middle East which the nationalization brought in its wake was resented to by Eden. Therefore, he wanted Nasser removed. He said "... the removal of Nasser and the installation in Egypt of a regime less hostile to the West, must therefore rank high among our objectives."11

The most scathing attack on Eden's role in the Suez war was made by Anthony Nutting who was then the


10. Hoopes, n.4, p.346


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Minister of State for foreign affairs in Britain. According to him, Eden had started planning an attack on Egypt since the dismissal of Gen. Glubb from Jordan's service in March 1956. Nutting has recorded:

The drama that was to become the Suez disaster actually began on March 1, 1956. It came to be known that king Hussein of Jordon had dismissed Gen. Glubb. The Prime Minister of Great Britain declared a personal war on the man whom he held responsible for Glubb's dismissal—Gamal Abdel Nasser. 12

It was then itself that Eden decided that Nasser had to be removed. He "... had to be eliminated somehow or the other, else he would destroy Britain's position in the Middle East and Eden's position as Prime Minister of Britain." 13 Speaking of Nasser, Eden declared says Nutting, "I want him destroyed, ... I want him removed." 14

The views of Nutting are of a person who was an active participant in the deliberations in the British Government on the use of force against Egypt, and, therefore, it is of great significance. He himself says in his book that atleast in Britain no written records exist of the military action of the three attacking powers. Nutting wrote:

13. Ibid., p.18.
14. Ibid., p.34.
No records were kept at least on the British side of the discussions between Britain and France and Israel which led to the attack on Egypt, thus it seems that I have a unique responsibility to set down in a single straightforward fashion the sequence of events of the Suez Crisis.\textsuperscript{15}

In protest against Eden's actions, Nutting resigned just after the Suez crisis because he felt these were unjustifiable. He said:

There can be no convention which allows a government to deceive Parliament and people and sheltering behind that deception, to lead the nation into war yet which denies the right to one, who dissociated himself from the deception by resigning his office to reveal the truth.\textsuperscript{16}

According to Nutting the withdrawal of the offer to provide financial assistance for the Aswan Dam provided Eden with the opportunity to destroy Nasser that he had been waiting for. He stated:

For Eden this was the challenge he was waiting for. Now at last he had found a pretext to launch an all-out campaign of political, economic and military pressures on Egypt and to destroy for ever Nasser's image as the leader of Arab nationalism.\textsuperscript{17}

Initially economic pressures were applied. All of Egypt's assets in Britain, France and the United States were frozen. Also the arms trade between Britain and Egypt was suspended.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
15. & Nutting, n.7, p.18. \\
16. & \textit{Ibid.}, p.34. \\
17. & Nutting, n.7, p.47. \\
\end{tabular}
However, economic pressures on Egypt was a method, which Eden neither wanted to apply wholeheartedly, nor did he want these to succeed. Because, if these had then Eden's plan to remove Nasser would not have been carried through. The urgency to apply military pressure was evident from the fact that just a few days after the nationalization was announced by Nasser, Eden wrote to Eisenhower on it. This becomes clear from a newly declassified letter Eden wrote:

As we are unlikely to attain our objective by economic pressure alone, we ought in the first instance to bring the maximum pressure to bear on the Egyptian Government. My colleagues and I are convinced that we must be ready, in the last resort to use force to bring Nasser to his senses. For our part, we are prepared to do so. I have this morning, instructed our Chiefs of Staff to prepare a military plan accordingly.18

A few days later Eden reiterated his position in a telegram to Dulles. He believed that the very existence of the West was threatened by nationalization and therefore, it was absolutely necessary to do it, even by force. He stated that, "United kingdom's and the whole Western position in Middle East will be jeopardized if Nasser gets away with his action ...

preparation for military action should start immediately." And when it became apparent to Eden, that the United States was against using force he started to align himself with France and later Israel.

From the British Foreign Office Records, opened in 1987, one learns that an Egypt Committee was set up in Britain immediately after the nationalization. This Committee met on July 30, primarily to discuss as to, "what should be the organisational arrangements for the control of the canal and the re-establishment of a new regime in Egypt after active operations have been successfully completed." What could be a better indicator of the British Government's secret planning than this.

The Egypt Committee agreed on two things; one to go in for military operations against Nasser and two to appoint a new head of state in Egypt. Thus it is clear on the basis of information now available that Britain had the prime responsibility. The United States had no role either in the planning or the war itself.

Winthrop Aldrich, American Ambassador in Britain too emphasised in his interview for oral history,


the desire of the British to use force to settle the Suez crisis. He stated with conviction that "...when Nasser seized the Canal, the British immediately wanted to go in with force," 21 Thus Eden's proposal for using economic pressures and other means to make Nasser see sense on which contemporary accounts laid so much emphasis was meant only to be a stepping stone to the final objective of using force to topple Nasser. That is why while economic pressure was being applied, preparations for war were going on. War was not even considered as the step that would follow only after economic pressure had failed.

Eden made his intention starkly clear to Eisenhower, in a letter dated September 6, 1956 Eden asserted:

The difference which separates us today appears to be a difference of assessment of Nasser's plans and intentions and of the consequences in the Middle East of military action against him... But if our assessment is correct and if the only alternative is to allow Nasser's plans quietly to develop until this country and all Western Europe are held to ransom by Egypt acting at Russia's behest it seems to us that our duty is plain. We


have many times led Europe in the fight for freedom. It would be an ignoble end to our long history if we tamely accepted to perish by degrees. 22

The emphasis on the words 'our duty is plain' leaves no room for doubts to that the British Prime Minister saw the removal of Nasser not as serving the British national interest alone but as highly moralistic fight for Europeans freedom. Is it surprising then that he was willing to pay the high cost of waging a war?

Nutting in his book writes of the advice he gave to Eden on not using force and also of keeping a distance from France and Israel, but to no avail. Nutting says that he, "cautioned Eden on greater association with France and Israel and told him to take the issue to the United Nations and remain in 'closest touch with the Americans'. 23 But Eden's reply was rather harsh, which on the one hand showed a dismay towards the Americans while on the other it brought out his deep seated resentment for Nasser. He replied:

If we did not show strength now, we should eventually lose all our oil to Nasser. The Americans did not really care about the Suez


Canal, but the French did and so did the Israelis, who deserved to be allowed to use it ... Compromise (which the United Nations might try to achieve) with Nasser would only serve to wet his appetite and I must get it into my head that this man must be destroyed before he destroyed all of us.24

That the whole thing was master minded by Eden has been corroborated by another important actor in the war. Andre Beaufre, Commander of the French Task Force in the 1956 war, who said that Eden was solely responsible for the idea of a military offensive against Egypt. He stated, "after the nationalization of the Canal, Eden... at once and on his own initiative sponsored the idea of a military operation and issued orders accordingly."25 However, Eden had hoped for a joint military action with the United States against Egypt. But when that seemed impossible, then only Eden turned to the French. The Israelis were brought in at the last stage.

Eden in his memoirs, refers to the military planning going on in his country but no mention is made of an alliance between France, Israel and Britain. "The Government determined that our essential interests in this area must be safeguarded, if necessary by military

action, and that the needful preparations must be made, he wrote.\textsuperscript{26} Again he added, "At this period there was a general conviction thoroughout the country that Nasser must not be allowed to get away with his theft and that we would be fully justified in taking forcible steps to prevent him." \textsuperscript{27}

Eden did write about the French in his memoirs, but not in relation to a joint military alliance with them. He spoke very highly of them in comparison to the Americans, who he felt were not understanding the whole problem. He said of Christian M. Pineau, that he, "...was a man of independent mind...(and) declared that his Government was unanimous in desiring urgent and decisive action."\textsuperscript{28} And about the Americans he lamented that, "the French attitude to the crisis was far nearer to ours than the American."\textsuperscript{29}

Eden makes no reference to Israel joining in on the war preparations either. It is only towards the middle of October, that Eden hints at what Israel should do in the given situation. He stated:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p.441.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p.435.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p.436.
\end{quote}
Cairo radio blared with increasing vehemence against Israel, menacing her with destruction. Unless Israel was prepared to just sit and wait until it suited her enemies to strangle and finally destroy her, it was clear that before long she would have to take some counter action, at least to put an end to the Fedayeen raids.  

The reference to the Fedayeen attacks, shows that though British relations, "...with Israel were not close or intimate," they were close enough to consider Israel as an ally against Egypt. Of course it can be said that the British saw the possibility of enlisting Israel in their enterprise proving the validity of the aphorism that your enemy's enemy is your friend.

It seems from Eden's account that he became paranoid about an Egyptian attack that or he purposely raised the spectre of the attack to justify his actions against Egypt. He wrote, "all evidence pointed one way. Egypt was gathering her allies, piling up Soviet arms and enlisting Soviet technical help, sharpening her propaganda and intensifying her raids." It on this ground that Eden had said, that he justified Israel's attack on Egypt on October 29, 1956. Eden wrote:

31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., p.516
On October 25th a report came that Israel was about to mobilize. She did so on the 27th and moved against Egypt on the evening of the 29th. I thought then, and I think now, that the Israelis had justification for their action... If we were not prepared to condemn Israel, we could not stand aside and watch events... The chief peril to us lay not in the conflict but in its extension by the intervention of other Arab states. The best way to halt that was by intervening ourselves. These considerations decided our course of action. 33

These words indeed are supposed to give the impression that there was no pre-planning. They straighten show a genuine desire on the part of Eden to help a nation in distress - Israel. Eden felt that Israel was the injured party, not Egypt. In the light of revelations made in the later sources, this concern was nothing less than 'hypocritical.'

Eden goes on to explain the final strategy of attack giving the impression that Britain and France had no choice left but to intervene, after Israel's attack. The alliance with France is accepted. He explained:

On October 25th the Cabinet discussed the specific possibility of conflict between Israel and Egypt and decided in principle how it would react if this occurred. The Governments of France and the United Kingdom should, it considered, at once call on both parties to stop hostilities and withdraw their forces to a distance from either bank of the Canal. If one or both failed to comply

within a definite period, then British and French forces would intervene as a temporary measure to separate the combatants... Our purpose was to safeguard free passage through the Canal, if it were threatened with becoming a zone of warfare, and to arrest the spread of fighting in the Middle East... To realize this we would put into operation the plan for occupation of the Suez Canal zone, prepared by the joint Anglo-French military staff which had been studying the problem since the end of July... 34

Thus though Eden accepts a British-French alliance, he is silent on Israel's role.

Harold Macmillan also did not write of any pre-planned alliance between Britain, France and Israel. Infact he echoed Eden when he wrote:

On 27 October Israel mobilised and on the 29th invaded the Sinai peninsula... The British and French Governments, who had already discussed all possible eventualities had no difficulty in deciding on their course of action. It was to call upon both parties - Egypt and Israel - to stop hostilities and to withdraw their forces from the Canal. If either one failed to comply, British and French forces would occupy the key position of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. 35

34. Eden, n. 26,p.523
This brings us, to the role of the French in starting the war. The contemporary sources suggested that the French were more keen on a war against Nasser than were the British. In fact it was argued that the French not the British were the first to talk of a military offensive against Nasser. The New York Times reported that the French Government suggested a, "military occupation of the canal, while French Foreign Minister M.Christian Pineau called Nasser a dictator. 36 Pineau further stressed that France will not accept nationalization and will "act with allies." 37 A special reference is therein made of Britain. It was also reported in the Washington Post that France and Britain sharply protested ...to the Egyptian government ...and made plain they will not accept nationalization." 38

The French dislike of Nasser was linked to the latter's support to Algerian rebels against the French colonial rule in Algeriers. The New York Times reiterated this. It talked of "French bitterness linked to Algerian situation' or 'French anxiety linked to Algerian

37. Ibid.
situation and fate of French Canal Company employees while French Premier Mollet called Nasser a "would-be Hitler." These are only a few examples. The New York Times from July 26-Oct 31, 1956 is full of similar pronouncements to show that the French were interested in a war against Egypt and had been nurturing a grudge against Nasser for long. Nasser's support to the Algerian rebels finally took the lid of their patience and the French, "...made up their minds they were going all the way." The nationalization provided it with a golden opportunity to carry through its plan.

In one recent source, however, the French Foreign Ministry Secretary General Joxe rejects the Algerian link with the French entry into war against Egypt. Joxe says:

...while it was undoubtedly true that there were some right wing elements and even a few right wing members of the government who were thinking primarily of Algeria in favouring action against Nasser, it would be a grave mistake for the United States government to feel that Algeria was the fundamental motivation for French action in Egypt. Basic motivation for this action, he insisted was French conviction of a parallel between the actions of Nasser in complicity with the Soviet

39. See New York Times, issues of July 28, July 29, July 30 and July 31 respectively.

40. Thomas Barman, Diplomatic Correspondent, BBC, in Suez Ten Years After, n.7,p.11.
Union and those of Hitler in late 1930's French government was convinced that the only way to avoid eventual world wide war was to take the action which they had done.41

Other newly released sources confirm the doubts many people earlier had expressed on the French insistence on war. An Israeli author, Michael Bar-Zohar stresses:

France was very very interested in crushing Nasser, one way or another. France was interested to go into a war against Nasser, even before the Suez Canal was nationalized by Egypt... but could not think of any pretext. But when in the middle of 1956, the Suez Canal was nationalized, France... found the excuse ...

So to blame Dulles and the cancellation of the Aswan Dam for the consequent war, would not be correct. Privately the three attackers must have been thanking the United States for its ignorant folly!

From the recently released sources it is also clear that the French Government indicated to the United States Government its intention of going to war. American Ambassador in Paris Douglas Dillon wrote to Dulles, about a meeting he had with Pineau. He informed:

Pineau sent for me this afternoon to give me French government's views regarding Egypt

41. Telegram from Dillon to Dulles, November 5, 1956, Dwight D. Eisenhower Series, White House Confidential File 1953(1 of 2), file; Confidential, subject Services, Box 72. Henceforth cited as DDES - WHCF.

42. Michael Bar-Zohar, Israeli author, quoted in Suez Ten Years After n.7, p.67.
seizure of Suez Canal. Pineau said that French government takes most serious view of the affair and likens it to seizure of Rhineland by Hitler. Pineau said that French government felt it was essential to react strongly so as to prevent Nasser from getting away with this outrage. Without such action Pineau said that inevitable result would be that all of Middle Eastern pipelines would be seized and nationalized within the next three months and Europe would find itself totally dependent on the goodwill of the Arab powers. This was an obviously unacceptable situation.43

The French were in favour of war and it had to be at any cost. Dillon reported of another conversation he had with Pineau. Dillon noted in a memorandum "Pineau took me aside at the reception last night and said he was convinced that military action would be inevitable in the Suez dispute." 44 In his interview recorded in 1965 for the John Foster Dulles Oral history collection, Dillon again stressed on the same factor, the French desire to destroy Egypt. He said:

The French Government was very bellicose about this whole thing right from the beginning, because the Prime Minister of the time, Guy Mollet, had almost a fixation about President Nasser. He used to have a little book in his desk that he'd show on any and all occasions, that Nasser was supposed to have written when he was an army officer, about how he was going to control oil and therefore, control the world.45

43. Telegram from Dillon to Dulles, July 27, 1956, AWDS-DHS, File; July 56 Box 7.


45. Douglas Dillon, interviewed by Richard Challener, New York City, June 24, 1965, JFD-OHC.
The British Ambassador in Paris Sir G. Gebb sent a telegram to the British Foreign Office on August 9, 1956 in which he reported a meeting he had with Joxe. In this meeting Gebb and Joxe worked out an agenda for a proposed meeting between the French and the British Governments later on. It is interesting to note the agenda of the proposed meeting. It read:

1) An agreed definition of the objectives of action to be taken in Egypt.
2) Israel
3) The Baghdad Pact and Levant states.
4) Algeria

The first item on the agenda shows that settling of the Egyptian problem was foremost for the the French and the British. The third and fourth items show that the French and the British associated Egypt with problems in these areas. And item number two, reveals that they were planning on including or consulting Israel in whatever plans they had.

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46. Telegram from Sir Gebb to Foreign Office, August 9, 1956, 371-118871, FOR-PRO.
ISRAEL

Israel thus was the third partner in this tacit tripartite alliance. Like the British and the French, it also carries the blame for the Suez war. The Israelis were inducted into the plan at a later stage but its action was the most important. Because it was the result of Israel's offensive against Egypt on October 29, that provided the opportunity to Britain and France to enter the war. Their entry, avowedly was to save Israel & Egypt from further fighting but actually it was to give themselves a pretext for being a part of the struggle to destroy Egypt. Moshe Dayan Commander of the Israeli forces in 1956 himself acknowledged in his dairy, "...the whole purpose of the ultimatum is to give the British and French governments a pretext to capture the Canal zone by military force..."47 Could there be a more clear evidence of the alliance between Britain, France and Israel?

Like Britain and France, Israel also had grudges against Egypt and was keen to settle scores with Nasser. The basic causes of irritation between

47. Moshe Dayan in Suez Ten Years After, n.7, p.105.
Israel and Egypt included the raids by the Egyptian Fadayeen groups, the restrictions imposed on Israeli shipping in the Suez Canal, and the closure of the Israeli port of Eilat, that was very vital for the trade of Israel. Abba Eban, the then Israeli Ambassador in the United States, put down four factors which alienated Israel and pushed it towards militancy. These included, "frontier violence, Egyptian rearmament, Soviet alienation and American frigidity had all come together to drive Israeli opinion towards embattled militance." 48

Abba Eban also felt that Egypt's growing military strength was perhaps what pushed Israel ultimately towards the decision to go in for an offensive policy against it. In his book he referred to an Egypt Divisional Commander, who had issued a very clear directive in February 1956. On the basis of this and other such similar notes, the Israeli Government became more and more wary of the Egyptians. The directive read:

Every officer must prepare himself and his subordinates for the inevitable struggle with

48. Abba Eban, My Country - The Story of Modern Israel (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; 1972), p.134. The reference to Soviet alienation, is the general feeling the Israelis had, that the Soviet Union was pro-Arab and therefore anti-Israel.
Israel, with the object of realizing our work aim, namely the annihilation of Israel and her destruction in the shortest possible time and in the most brutal and cruel of battles. 49

There is no conclusive evidence about the genuineness of the document. On the other side there are accounts in Egyptians books which speak of the Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion's, hatred for the Arabs "Ben Gurion and his violence against Arabs was an old known fact". 50 He was very very keen to destroy Nasser, and used the Egyptian military linkup with the Communists as a pretext for war. It has already been shown in Chapter II, that Israel had no security threat from Egypt despite the huge Egyptian arms purchase from Cezchoslovakia in late 1955. The Israelis had been secretly getting arms from the French for long. Ben Gurion, Israeli Prime Minister in 1956 stated, "we made attempts to get arms from America, which was a complete failure. But we succeeded in getting arms from France to a very large extent. For a long time it was a secret." 51 The sale of Mystere planes by France to Israel was also well known. Ben Gurion's plan for preempting an Egyptian attack became clear only later. An Egyptian source declared:

49. Dayan, n.7, p.142.

50. Secrets of the Suez War (Cairo : Ministry of National Guidance, Information Administration, 1966), p.6

... when he (Ben Gurion) came back from self-exile (he) said that now Egypt had Russian arms ... the situation demanded from Israel to think of a bigger action against Egypt (than the raids – similar to the one in early 1955-being conducted).52

Israel's grudge against Egypt and the Arabs in general has also been analysed in Chapter II, as to how Israel tried its utmost to prevent an Anglo-Egyptia accord from taking effect. It wanted no positiv alliance between Egypt and the Western powers which could benefit the former. Stated Livia Rokach, write and journalist of Palestinian origin, "to prevent an alliance between the West and the Arab World, especially with the most important Arab country Egypt - was (an was to remain) Israel's main goal.53 As the new source confirm, Israel secretly concluded towards the end of 1955, that Nasser must be completely finished. After the arms deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia on October 13, 1955 Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett stated:

Nasser must be destroyed... Israelis have been hoping internal forces in Egypt, possibly aided and abetted by us would bring about Nasser's downfall... This has not come about and Israelis are bit nonplussed by failure of the United

52. Secrets of the Suez War, n.48,p.6

53. Livia Rokach, Israeli's Sacred Terroris; (Massachusetts : Association of Arab-America: University graduates, Inc., 1980) p.50 (For further information on Rokach see chapter II, n.61).
States Government to adopt more rigorous policy towards Egypt (the) since conclusion of latter's Soviet arms deal."

The above makes two things clear. One that Israel had indeed been planning to destroy Nasser and events like the Lavon Affair, described in Chapter II, proved their 'aiding and abetting.' Secondly, the nationalization and the consequent of the United States from involvement in a war with the allies against Egypt nonplussed them and pushed them to a decision to join Britain and France in their struggle against Nasser.

"Thus the background to the Suez Affair was threefold: the war in Algeria, the nationalization of the Suez Canal and the Israeli problem." 55 It is exactly in this order, that the three attacking powers joined in the conspiracy against Egypt. It was a conspiracy that misled and befooled the United States completely. There are numerous and vastly varied new sources which bring out clearly the alliance between France, Britain and Israel. Contemporary sources had only given some hints, but nowhere was it publicly accepted by either of the powers that the attack was a pre-planned conspiracy to do away with Nasser. Each country had its own motives

54. Telegram from American Ambassador in Israel, Lawson to Dulles, November 13, 1955, JFD-OHC-MT, Real 137.

for hating Nasser and the cancellation of the Aswan Dam, followed by the nationalization of the Suez Canal gave the three attackers an opportunity to put their secret and dark desires into practice. The scheme as ultimately implemented was extremely ingenuous.

Israel was to send its forces deep into Egypt, quite near the Suez Canal, about 100 miles away. It was expected that an armed reaction from the Egyptians would naturally follow. The next day the British and the French would have chided them both and asked them to retreat within twelve hours. It was expected that both sides would not agree. Even if Egypt had wanted to stop, Israel would have kept the offensive on as pre-planned. Thus in order to save themselves the Egyptians would have continued fighting. The ultimatum by Britain and France would thus have been ignored by both parties. Then in the name of saving the Canal and world shipping therein Britain and France would have led an air and naval attack against Egypt. This was the plan, so, "Machiavellian in its deceptions..."56 And this was exactly how the plan was carried out.

Even the contemporary newspaper accounts had suspected as much but there was no evidence to support the conjecture. Some of the leading headlines included: "France favours military occupation of Canal zone if Great Britain will join action," British and French military experts plan possible joint action," "France prepares to call on 40,000 troops now mobilized in Algeria," "Premier Mollet backs severe policy," "Eden reports Queen Elizabeth will issue proclamation empowering Government to call up all organised reserves," "Mollet threatens British-French military action to impose international regime," "French cabinet approves plan for full international control and operation of Canal," "Israel sees Suez as public property," "France sets up skeleton headquarters of a Mediterranean fighting force in Algiers under Maj Gen. Beaufre," "Great Britain permits France to base troops temporarily on Cyprus at latter's request," and Pineau renews French threat of force and stresses duty to stop Nasser, a dictator like Hitler.\(^{57}\). Or for example it was stated in the *Washington Post* of August 3, that "Britain & France advising their nationals to leave Egypt, moved towards a war footing in the

\(^{57}\) These reports appeared in the *New York Times* of, July 28, July 30, August 2, August 3, August 4, August 15 and August 18, respectively.
Mediterranean." The important points that emerge from the above headlines and reports were that, the French took the lead in voicing the desire for a war against Egypt and wanted England to be a part of its plans. Secondly, Eden is also seen to be an active and eager participant in the war effort and lastly, Israel is seen to be the most non-vocal and yet the most lethal of the three attackers. This lends support to the fact that Israel joined in on the struggle only during the final stages.

Once the war started, most reports in the New York Times still did not point to even speculated about any pre-planned tripartite attack. Infact on the contrary numerous reports denying it did appear. For example Moshe Sharett denied that Israel had concerted with Britain and France. Or the report in the New York Times of November 2, 1956 denied that there was any coordination between the British-French attacks with the Israeli invasion. Lloyd said on November 6, that 'Great Britain intervened to prevent all-out Israeli-Egyptian invasion' Eden too said the same thing On

59. New York Times, November 1, p.14
61. Ibid, November 6, p.17.
November 21, that, 'Great Britain intervened to limit effects of Egypt-Israel conflict.' 62 When the war began Eden also stressed that Great Britain will ensure withdrawal of Israeli forces from Egypt once British and French troops have occupied key points in the Canal Zone. 63 Reports of a pre-planned British, French and Israeli attack did appear in the Washington Post and the New York Times but from sources which can be credited with impartiality - and therefore had little credibility in the West. Dulles, spoke of it. And the Egyptian, Russian, Yugoslavian and Chinese Governments did so too. In the Washington Post a report by Chalmers M. Roberts on October 31, was the first to hint at a tri-partite planned attack. The headline of this report was; 'Britain, France, Israeli collusion on moves in Mideast now seen.' In the report it was also stated that, "President Eisenhower attempted in vain last night to head off British - French occupation of the Suez Canal area, a move which caught the United States by surprise." 65 In the New York Times also of October 31,

63. Ibid., November 4, p.1.
65. Ibid.
1956 the first suggestion of a possible alliance between the three appears in a statement of Dulles who not only criticized the British - French attack on Egypt, but also speculated on a "possible link of British - French and Israeli moves." Then the Soviet Union accused, Britain, France and Israel of planned aggression and also stressed that the Israeli attack was a part of British - French move to revive their colonial regimes in the Middle East. Yugoslav President Marshall Tito labelled the Israeli and British French moves as 'single aggression', --and also accused the British and the French for using the Israeli invasion as a pretext for occupying the Canal zone. And finally the Chinese Government also blamed Great Britain and France for instigating an Israeli attack as an excuse to seize the Suez Canal.

In the later sources, however, such questions as who was to take the first step ? How it was to be implemented etc., are addressed more directly and explicitlly.

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67. Ibid., November 1 p.18.
68. Ibid., November 1, p.26.
69. Ibid., November 4, p.16.
The United States Government was aware of the planning too, but believed that it involved the British and the French, not the Israelis. It was also aware of the Israeli mobilization in the area but believed it to be directed against Jordan, not Egypt. Besides, it did not know when exactly the attack would come about. Consequently it was caught by surprise as much as the rest of the world.

We will first look into the secondary sources available in the late 1960's and early 1970's which confirm a tripartite alliance against Egypt and then analyse the primary sources made available after the 1970's.

Taking up the secondary sources first we begin with an account by Nutting. According to him Eden was initially in favour of an alliance with the United States against Egypt. But he soon realised that the United States was not in favour of such a policy. Instead, the French were more keen to overthrow Nasser. So Eden, 

"...began to ally himself more and more closely with his French counterpart, Guy Mollet." 70 As far as Israel was

70. Nutting, n.7, p.49.
concerned the British Government, said Nutting was "largely anti-Israel," and the close relationship between France and Israel was a major hurdle in the Anglo-French friendship. He pointed this out to Eden, but he:

...brushed me aside, saying that I was a prisoner of the anti-Israel prejudice in the Foreign Office. He refused to listen to my warnings that the French might involve us with the Israelis, whose obvious interests lay in control of the Canal and of the terminal ports of Suez and Port Said being taken out of Nasser's hands.

He also reports of the dubious strategy that Eden hoped would push Nasser to take the first step. But he failed. Nutting noted:

Eden hoped that Nasser would prevent the passage of a British ship through the Canal. So he and Mollet decided to pay their Canal dues to the former Co's account in London or Paris ...and agreed that they should refuse to pay anything to the new Egyptian Canal authority. But Nasser was not to be led into their carefully baited trap and all shipping continued to pass without let or hinderance between Port Said and Suez.

On Israel's role in the entire conspiracy, Nutting wrote that in the beginning it was not really keen on participating in a struggle between Egypt and the West. But French ultimately roped the Israelis

71. Nutting, n.7, p.49.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
in. "...The Israelis were initially reluctant. Israel's Prime Minister David Ben Gurion felt that the dispute was primarily an issue between the Great powers and Egypt ...(but by promising military shipments to Israel, France was able to make the), Isarelis gradually succumb to French solicitations."74

Nutting finally discusses the extent to which Eden went to keep the United States Government misinformed on the planning for the war. "Nobody was kept more completely in the dark than the President of the United States. The President was treated as an unreliable ally."75 This was understandable given the anti-war stance that Eisenhower had adopted. When the United States officials learnt about the French-Israeli concert, they asked questions. But they were unable to get any positive answers because no one told the people in Washington anything. "The United States Government felt suddenly cut off from its allies."76

When Israel did attack Egypt on October 29, even then says Nutting. "we continued to pull the wool

74. Nutting, n.7, p.79.
75. Ibid., p.110.
76. Ibid., p.111.
over American eyes."\(^{77}\) On the day Britain and France were to deliver their ultimatums to both sides to stop hostilities, Nutting reports that:

Eden sent a message to Eisenhower, in which he said not one word about the Anglo-French ultimatum to Egypt and Israel which was to be delivered that day and spoke only of the dangers which the fighting might bring to the Canal and of the need for decisive action to stop hostilities. Thus Eden made sure that America could not intervene at the last minute to prevent our going ahead.\(^{78}\)

He also writes about the French admission to the planning after the attack. He notes:

Later on December 9, Mollet at a press conference frankly admitted the accusation that the Americans had been duped, saying that Britain and France both knew that America would be opposed to their plans and that, if Eisenhower had been informed, he would have tried to stop them.\(^{79}\)

Nutting's account of event is confirmed by many other accounts. General Sir Charles Keightley the C-in-C of Allied forces, the British and the French, during the war also admitted this. In his version of the Suez crisis, "the Anglo-French operation was a joint one in every sense of the word."\(^{80}\) That the British and the French were anti-Nasser was

\(^{77}\) Nutting, n.7, p.11

\(^{78}\) Ibid., p.112.

\(^{79}\) Ibid., p.162.

\(^{80}\) Sir Charles Keightley, in Suez Ten Years After, n.7,p.2.
accepted by Andre Beaufre the Commander of the French Troops in 1956. He stated that, "The military objective of the operation was termed secure the Canal Zone. I do not think that it was really the aim. The real one was to put out Nasser."  

Israeli author Michel Bar-Zohar spoke of the Israeli-French friendship dating back to 1954, a friendship that was based on mutual need. And it was this friendship which proved itself in 1956. Zohar wrote:

The Franco-Israeli friendship began in 1954-55. That was because at the time the Algerian war began and France was extremely anxious to have somebody, who would fight against Nasser, against Egypt. I do not speak, of course about the sympathy which French Governments or the French people might have for Israel...  

And Israel of course was eager to get as many arms as possible from the West as a bulwark against Egypt.

As pointed out earlier Moshe Dayan admitted in diary to a concert between Britain, France and his country. In his diary he however, lamented on the secrecy of their plans to attack Egypt and to the unfortunate fact of keeping these from the United

81. Beaufre, n.7, p.3.
82. Zohar, n.7, p.60.
States. His comments on the secrecy are enough to convince anyone that the attack by Britain, France and Israel was premeditated. Thus he wrote:

The situation with the United States is complicated and not at all agreeable. Israel, wishing and needing to maintain close ties of friendship with the United States, finds herself in the difficult position of having to keep from her and even to be evasive about her real intentions. 83

Moshe Dayan made this entry in his diary on October 26, 1956. Three days later Israel had attacked Egypt. The United States it seems had no real standing amongst its allies!

The United States Government released numerous documents after 1970. All these reveal that it was aware of the military planning of Britain, France and Israel. However, no one in the United States Government knew the exact date of the attack or that Israel's mobilization was going to be directed against Egypt and not Jordan. However, the fact that the three powers—Britain, France and Israel had concerted together comes through clearly. And so does the deceit of these three

powers in hiding their plans from the United States.

Some of these records have been discussed earlier while analysing the responsibilities of the British, French and the Israelis in the 1956 war. Other records, which specifically point to the United States apprehensions and fears of a possible war led by Britain and France against Egypt will now be examined hereafter. For example in a meeting on August 12, attended by Eisenhower, Dulles and others the Secretary of State voiced his concern at the insistence of Nasser to use the "...Canal in a manner that would run contrary to the guarantees of its international status that are contained in the treaty (of 1936)," and that this would provide, "... the British and the French with a solid foundation for possible action."^84 This shows that the United States was aware of the possibility of the invasion of Egypt by Britain and France. In the same meeting, Dulles said something else which indicates that he knew about the Anglo-French planning against Egypt. He said:

84. Memo of conversation between Eisenhower, Dulles and others, August 12, 1956, p.2, Ann Whitman Diary Series, Dwight D. Eisenhower Diary Series, File; August 56' Diary, Staff Memos, Box 17. Henceforth cited as AWDS - DDEDS.
He would point out to the legislative leaders that the British and French have said that they can handle the type of military operation they contemplate and that they would not expect the United States to commit any of its armed forces. 85

The United States was aware of the strong possibility of Britain and France attacking Egypt but it was led to believe that the possibility would not become a reality. The British by concealing their intention were able to achieve this. They led the United States through the garden path.

In a letter written by Eden to Eisenhower on August 27, the former himself admitted to the need of a strategy against Nasser and also of an alliance with the French. Eden stressed:

the firmer the front we show together, the greater the chance that Nasser will give way without the need for any resort to force ... It is also one of the reasons why we have to continue our military preparations in conjunction with our French allies. 86

Then on August 30, when Dulles met the President they both agreed that using force against Nasser was not necessary. Remarked Dulles, "... I did not believe the situation was one which should be resolved by force. I could not see any end to the situation that might be created if the British and the French occupied the Canal and parts of Egypt." 87 Eisenhower agreed with Dulles

87. Memo of Conversation between Eisenhower and Dulles, August 30, 1956, John Foster Dulles, White House Memoranda Series, File; meetings with the President, Aug-Dec 1956(6), Box 4. Henceforth cited as JFD-WHMS.

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that the British and the French chose a wrong, "... issue upon which to try to downgrade Nasser."88

As time progressed and compromise seemed remote, Eisenhower and Dulles's anxiety over the possibility of a war grew. And their analyses and comments in private became more and more explicit and telling. Eisenhower commented on October 2, "... we should have nothing to do with any project for a covert operation against Nasser personally... we (must) maintain an independent position as regards the British and French until we know definitely what they were upto."89

From the recently released material, the deceit of the British is so clear. On October 30, a day after the Israeli attack on Egypt, Eden wrote to Eisenhower, showing surprise at Israel and irritation at the United States for the attack on Egypt. In reality, he was in on it! He tartly commented:

We have never made any secret of our belief that justice entitled us to defend our vital interest against Nasser's designs. But we acted with you in summoning the London conference, in despatching the abortive Menzies Mission and in seeking to establish the S.C.U.A... Now this has happened. When we received news of the Israeli mobilisation, we instructed our Ambassador in Tel Aviv to urge

88. Memo, n.84.

89. Memo of Conversation between Eisenhower and Dulles, October 2, 1956, pp.1-2, JFD-WHMS, File; Meetings with the President, Ang - Dec 1956(5), Box 4.
restraint, soon afterwards he sought and obtained an assurance that Israel would not attack Jordan. This seems to me important, since it means that Israel will not enlarge the area of conflict... we feel that decisive action should be taken at once to stop hostilities... Selwyn saw Winthrop this morning. We are meeting with the French later. I will send you a further message immediately after that meeting. 90

Not only does he show surprise and irritation, Eden also tries to prove the British Government's innocence and tries to make out Israel as an injured party, in which situation the British had no choice but to protect its interests in the Suez. 91 It is really odd, that just to prove his innocence, Eden could go to extent of warning Israel not to attack Jordan, when he knew perfectly well that Israel would not attack Jordan at that time!

The fact that Hugh Gaitskell and other members of the British Labour party, expressed their anger to the United States Embassy in Britain on November 1, at Eden's policy speaks volumes of the British and the French involvement in the Suez crisis. A telegram from


91. As far as the 'hurt party factor,' is concerned, "not one single editorial in any of the magazines (contemporary) was directed against Mr. Ben Gurion," says Michael Suleiman, in his M.A thesis on An Evaluation of Middle East News Coverage in Seven American newsmagazines, July-December 1956. He arrived at this conclusion, after a survey of the New York Times, New Republic, Life and U.S. News & World Report of the time. For reference see his thesis, submitted to the University of Wisconsin, 1961, p.45. At present Suleiman is Professor of Political Science, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, USA.
Aldrich to Dulles, on the same day mentioned about the Labour opposition. The Labour Party it read:

... today expressed deep appreciation to embassy of United States action at United Nation over Britain's ultimatum to Israel and Egypt and strongly urged that USG not relax its firm opposition to "Eden-Mollet Folly" in Middle East. Gaitskell... stated that, 'more than half if not three-quarters of British nation' are opposed to Eden's 'monstrous' policy..."92

About the French involvement already a lot has been said. Some more sources, specially of October 1956 indicate the surprise of the United States over "... a sizeable number of Mysteres to the Israelis in excess of agreed figures and without the notification called for in US-UK-French agreements on arms to the Middle East."93 These also point to Dulles's reference to "... a very large number of messages between Paris and Israel yesterday,"94 meaning October 28, a day before the Israeli attack on Egypt.

During the meeting with the President as mentioned above, Dulles did not accept the suggestion of Allen Dulles, his brother and then head of the CIA, that "... the Israeli's might still be planning to

92. Telegram from Aldrich to Dulles, November 1, 1956, DDE-WHCF Confidential, 1953-61 (1 of 2), File, Subject Series, Suez Crises (1), Box 82.

93. Memo of Conference between Eisenhower and Hoover, Dulles & others, October 29, 1956, p.1, AWDS-DDEDS, File; October 56' Diary Staff Memos, Box 19.

94. Ibid.
nature of probing action." Dulles believed the action to have a much deeper perspective. His views at the conference were that:

...the operation goes further than that, the Canal is likely to be disrupted and pipe lines are likely to be broken. In those circumstances British and French intervention must be foreseen. They appear to be ready for it and may in fact have concerted their action with the Israelis.

The important sentence here is, 'they appear to be ready for it and may in fact have concerted their action with the Israelis.' Of course this was more a speculation expressing probability rather than certainty and acceptance of military preparedness of their allies, as well as their possible conjunction with the Israelis. On October 30, in another meeting in which the President along with senior officials of his administration met to discuss the situation, Eisenhower clearly stated his objections to the British and French attack. He asserted that, "...the French and the British do not have an adequate cause for war. Egyptian action in nationalizing the Canal was not enough to justify this." And Dulles added with surprise that

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95. Memo, n.93, p.2.
96. Ibid.
97. Memo of Conference between Eisenhower and Hoover, Dulles & others, October 30, 1956, p.3, AWDS-DDE7S, File; October 56' Diary Staff Memos, Box 19.
though, "...the British were practically in agreement with Egypt on a resolution of the Suez dispute at the recent UN meeting,"98 they still had to take such a drastic action.

A report issued by the 302nd Meeting of the United States National Security Council on November 1, 1956 discusses the above and also pointedly singles out the French as the main force behind the war. As stated earlier the French were more interested in crushing Nasser than were the British. The hatred that Eden had for Nasser was deeper, but the resentment the French had for him went back much longer. It says that the British and the Israelis were roped in by the French. It also analyses the planning amongst the three and the disassociation of the United States with the whole affair. The United States had from the very beginning made its opposition to war very clear. Excerpts from the meeting report are given for a complete understanding of the situation as well as for the American viewpoint.

Secretary Dulles observed that, following the meeting of the United Nations Security Council in

98. Memo, n.97.
New York, some two weeks ago, it had been expected that negotiations among the British, French and Egyptians would be renewed in Geneva, beginning October 29...Indeed Selwyn Lloyd and Pineau had come very close to agreement with Egyptian Foreign Minister Fawzi on an acceptable settlement of the Suez problem. In fact according to Selwyn Lloyd, an actual agreement on such settlement would have been reached at that time had it not been for the stubborness of Pineau, who dragged his feet in the early meetings of these three men.  

It is, therefore, astonishing that on October 29, when negotiations for a final adjustment on Suez were to begin—(this is corroborated even by the reports of the contemporary newspapers), the three countries started war against Egypt. The deceit of the three attackers is so apparent, when one realises that they were only dilly-dallying and were actually planning for the attack to begin that very day!

Again the report goes on:

We had known all along that the French had been pushing strongly for a forceful solution of the Suez crisis. There had been doubts of their attitude from the beginning. There were likewise elements in the British Government who wished to invoke force. These elements thought it best not to have Secretary Dulles around as they moved towards their objective. Accordingly there was a blackout of communications between Washington on the one hand and London and Paris on the

other...Our fears became aggravated when it became clear that the French were working very close with the Israelis, as was shown, for example, in the heavy diplomatic traffic between Paris and Israel. This was followed by the Israeli mobilization and then by the Israeli strike.100

The moratorium on communications across the Atlantic and the collusion between the three attackers is thus amply proved by this. The United States by acknowledging it, a few days after the attack, proved the veracity of the speculation about premeditated tripartite attack. Further, the report indicates how the United States was misled into believing that the Israeli mobilization was directed against Jordan. It stated:

Secretary Dulles indicated that we had thought that the Israeli attack might go against Jordan, since the Israelis are anxious to secure the territory up to the West bank of the Jordan River. Apparently, however, the British persuaded the Israelis not to strike at Jordan because to do so would involve the British in the invocation of the Anglo-Jordanian treaty. The result of the British persuasion was accordingly an agreement that the Israelis would strike south at Egypt. This was a move which the British and the French could use as a pretext to intervene to protect the Suez Canal.101

Further it emphasised:

When the Israelis commenced their attack, we promptly called in the British and French Ambassadors to see what their Governments were going to do under the terms of the Tripartite

100. Report, n. 99.

101. Ibid., p.4.
Declaration of 1950. The British and French were evasive in their response...Coincidentally with the Israeli strike came the so-called ultimatum by Britain and France to Israel and Egypt. Evidently, said Secretary Dulles, this was not much of an ultimatum as far as Israel was concerned. They were asked to keep ten miles back from the Canal itself. According to the terms of the ultimatum, even if the Canal were freed from the risk involved in the fighting, the British and French proposed to occupy the Canal Zone. All this Secretary Dulles described as a series of concerted moves among the British, French and Israelis, the French actually conducting the concerted planning and the British acquiescing. Moreover, the French had for some time been supplying the Israelis with far more military equipment than we knew anything about...102

A telegram from the American Ambassador, Douglas Dillon in Paris to Dulles, on November 29, 1956 summed up the attitude of the French to the whole affair as well as indicated the general American opinion of the French at the time. Dillon commented:

...French state of mind has been abnormal since 1940. It is not (rpt not) easy for population, particularly political and intellectual leaders, of nation which has for centuries been one of world's Great Powers, to adjust themselves to fact that their international position must henceforth be second or third rank...nationalization of Suez Canal, following prolonged campaign by Nasser to foment opposition to France in North Africa, was last straw. This action produced extreme psychological tension throughout France...some violent release became necessary and since no other effective means of dealing with Nasser was found military action was almost inevitable...103


103. Telegram from Dillon to Dulles, November 29, 1956, No. 2649, DDE(WHCF), 1953-61 (1 of 2), File, Confidential, Subject Series, Suez Crisis (2), Box 82.

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Regarding the involvement of Israel in the plan to attack Egypt, it is a known fact that Israel was getting a lot of arms from France and Canada. A telegram from Dillon to Dulles on July 27, 1956 reported a conversation with Pineau, wherein Pineau agreed to arming Israel and requesting Canada to do so too. The telegram informed "Pineau said that French Government had also made strong representations to Canadian Government urging them to agree to immediate sale of F-86 aircraft to Israel in view of new French decision to send additional Mysteres."\(^{104}\) The emphasis on 'new' after the nationalization of the Canal was aimed at arming Israel as a strong barrier against Egypt.

However, as the sources now reveal the United States had absolutely no idea of the involvement of Israel in the military preparations of Britain and France against Egypt. In August during a meeting of the National Security Council, the possibilities of an Israeli attack on Egypt were considered but rejected. Dulles agreed that, "...such courses of action had been explored and had been found wanting," and the President said, "...that as quickly as that happened the United States would find all the Arab countries of the world

\(^{104}\) Telegram from Dillon to Dulles, July 27, 1956, \textit{AWDS-DHS}, File; July 56, Box 7.
against us."\textsuperscript{105}

President Eisenhower issued a memo on October 15, 1956 in which he listed the possible reasons for Israel's military preparedness during that period. From these it seems that the United States Government had no inkling whatsoever that this preparation would be used against Egypt. It believed that it would be directed against Jordan. Eisenhower remarked:

There has been some disposition to believe that Ben Gurion's obviously aggressive attitude is inspired, at this moment by... his desire to take advantage of the gradual deterioration in Jordan and to be ready to occupy and lay claims to a goodly portion of the area of that nation.\textsuperscript{106}

In consequence in a letter to Ben Gurion on October 23, Eisenhower warned the Israeli Government of the dangerous implications of large scale mobilization, "I feel compelled to emphasize the dangers inherent in the present situation and to urge your government to do nothing which would endanger the peace."\textsuperscript{107}

The deceit of Israel becomes fully clear from the fact that on October 29, the day Israel attacked Egypt Ben Gurion wrote to Eisenhower speaking in general of

\textsuperscript{105} Report of the 295th meeting of the NSC, August 30, 1956, p.6, \textit{AWDS-NSCS}, Box 8.

\textsuperscript{106} Memo for the Record-2, October 15, 1956, p.1, \textit{AWDS-DDEDS}, File; Diary copies of DDE personal 1955-56, Box 9.

\textsuperscript{107} Letter from Eisenhower to Ben Gurion, October 23, 1956, \textit{AWDS-IS}, File; Israel (4), Box 29.

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Israel's effort towards peace and Nasser's expansionist policy! He wrote:

...I wish to assure you, Mr. President that my government and I are deeply grateful for your unremitting efforts over years, and particularly during the current year, to achieve a lessening of tension in the area and a peaceful settlement between Israel and her Arab neighbours. Under ceaseless provocation, boycott and seige, we have prayed and continue to pray that your vision of regional cooperation and peace shall be realised... On reviewing the Middle Eastern scene during these past twelve months, I feel that you will agree that the obstacles to the fulfillment of our common aim is the attitude and activities of the Prime Minister of Egypt. Col. Nasser's expansionist policy has led to unprecedented tension in the area... 108

The hypocrisy of Ben Gurion is obvious. When he was labelling Egypt as the aggressor, he himself was getting ready to attack Egypt that very day!

On the whole, the United States Government was surprised and perplexed on the actual motives of the British and the French in attacking Egypt. Said Dulles to Eisenhower on October 21, "...I was really baffled to know the real, purposes of the British, and the French. Perhaps they did not know themselves..." 109 Also the United States Government felt that the French were more

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108. Letter from Ben Gurion to Eisenhower, October 29, 1956, AWDS-IS, File; Israel (4), Box 29.

keen on the war than were the British. On October 12 Dulles remarked that as a result of the various compromise efforts, the British seemed to be inclining towards a reconciliation, but the French restricted them. "...the British were showing a marked disposition to compromise with the Egyptians. The French on the other hand were adhering rigorously to their original position."\textsuperscript{110}

Assistant Secretary of State Hoover and Eisenhower were also present during the meeting of the National Security Council, where Dulles made these observations. The other two had their own comments to make. Hoover confirmed the United States suspicion of a French pressure on Britain for the war. And Eisenhower talked of keeping the discussions open, long enough to prevent war. Said Secretary Hoover, "...the British and the Egyptians were now very close to agreement and that in fact the chief reason why no agreement had yet been reached is French opposition."\textsuperscript{111} And Eisenhower remarked, "...if the United States could just keep the lid in on a little longer, some kind of compromise plan could be worked out for a settlement of the Suez problem. The only question was whether we could

\textsuperscript{110} Report of the 300th meeting of the NSC, October 12, 1956, AWDS-NSCS, Box 8.

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
A similar view on the French keeness on war was voiced by Dulles on October 21. He also reasoned as to why the French needed British support and what the British wanted. He explained:

...the French because of their war in North Africa understandably wanted the British in as fighting allies. The British position was equivocal. They seemed at times really to be seeking a peaceful settlement and I thought a reasonable one was in sight- at other times they seemed to feel that any settlement would not eliminate Nasser fast enough and that they must have a more rapid time schedule.

After the crisis was had already begun Eisenhower spoke at length on who he thought actually started the war. He was at pains to prove that Britain had not been keen on war. This bias might be the result of his fondness for the British. The President indicated that:

...he now believed that the British had not been in on the Israeli-French planning until the very last stages when they had no choice but to come into the operation. He had felt that when the British had originally denied collusion with the French and the Israelis that they were misleading us, but he had now come to the conclusion that they were telling the truth. (He believed this was proved by) the long delay that took place between the time the British declared their intent to go

112. Report, n.110.

into Egypt and the time they actually went in. The British were meticulous military planners and he was sure that they would have seen to it that they were in a position to move into Egypt in a matter of hours after they declared their intention to do so. 114

In 1992 a number of microfilms in the John Foster Dulles Oral History collection in Princeton were made available to the researchers. These cover the period July 28 to November 1, 1956 and provide data about French, British and Israeli design to destroy Nasser. This new information reveal the implicit faith of the United States in Britain and Israel and how these two countries practiced deception on the former.

On July 28, American Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover sent a telegram to Dulles outlining his apprehensions. He expressed concern over the, "grave dangers of engaging in military intervention on grounds outlined by Eden." 115 He mentioned various reports coming in from Britain and France of their, "...inclination towards military pressure..." 116 He also sounded a note of warning that, "...unless we can introduce an element of restraint Eden and Pineau will tend to move much too rapidly and without really

114. Memo of Conversation between Eisenhowe and others, November 12, 1956, JFD-WHMS, File; Meetings with the President, Aug-Dec 1956(3), Box 4.

115. Telegram from Hoover to Dulles, July 28, 1956, JFD-OHC, Reel 141.

116. Ibid.
adequate cause for armed intervention"\textsuperscript{117}

Then in August M. Pineau emphasized the need of military action to solve the Suez problem to Dillon in London. Dillon reported:

M. Pineau took me aside at the reception last night and said he was convinced that military action would be inevitable in the Suez dispute and that he considered that it would be most important to have arrangements completed ahead of time so that an international conference could be called, within a few days after the intimation of military action to consider the future international status of the canal.\textsuperscript{118}

Pineau was thus considering a military attack as the first and foremost option, followed later by a conference! And then strangely one finds the French Government blaming the United States for having let them down!

These records support the contention voiced earlier that the British were inclined towards compromise. On September 8, in a meeting between Dulles and the British Ambassador Sir Rojer Makins in the United States, the latter expressed his Government's wish that "...force should be used only as a last

\textsuperscript{117} Telegram, n.115.
\textsuperscript{118} Memo, n.44.
\textsuperscript{119} Memo of Conversation between Sir Rojer Makins, Dulles and others, London, September 8, 1956, MT-JFD-OHC Reel 71.
resort. As an alternative to the use of force the British were quite attracted to proposals made by the Secretary (Dulles) regarding an association of canal users."\(^{119}\) However, the British Ambassador's willingness to accept compromise cannot be taken at its face value in the light of numerous documentary evidence already cited to show the British intent was quite to the contrary.

The microfilm transcripts till September 1956 reveal nothing on Israel's role in the planning. A transcript of a September 19, meeting between Dulles and Pineau in London, is where Israel's name appears for the first time. Pineau is seen therein justifying Israeli anger at Arab provocation, as well as suggesting British occupation of the Suez Canal Base in case Israel attacked Egypt. Pineau emphasised that, "... if Israel got the impression that the Western powers were weakening and that Nasser would emerge victorious, Israel herself would precipitate hostilities..."\(^{120}\) Pineau also observed that "... the British treaty with Egypt regarding the evacuation of the Suez would give Great Britain the right to occupy the Suez Base in the event Israel initiated hostilities against the Arab

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\(^{119}\) Memo, n.118.

\(^{120}\) Memo of Conversation between Dulles, Pineau and others, London, September 19, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 50.
Ultimately the French Government got fed up of conferences and at the United States attempts a compromise. In a meeting with the British Foreign Minister Selwyn Lloyd and Dulles on October 5, 1956 Pineau stated:

The time has come to show our cards. We don't think the United States Government realises the importance that France and the United Kingdom attach to the Suez. It is not merely the Canal, but all of Middle East, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, that are involved. The temporizing tactics of the United States alarm us. We will play the game in the Security Council, but we will not get bogged down in procedure..."122

As negotiations for compromise dimed, the Anglo-American divide widened. Aldrich made a special reference to this increasing gulf between the United States and England, in a telegram to Dulles on October 10. He noted:

The Suez problem has strained US-British relations to an extent greater than any of the issues which have disturbed our alliance during my 4 years and beyond the limits of divergencies which we might regard as generally natural between allies. It is clear that British thinking and action in regard to Suez has been considerably confused and indecisive, largely I think because of the degree

121. Memo, n.120.

of emotionalism Nasser's action has aroused.¹²³

On October 26th, the first stirrings of war appeared on the horizon when reports about Israeli mobilization reached the United States Government. In a top secret meeting, in Washington D.C. on October 26, in hushed tones the members discussed:

... Beginning yesterday morning there has been a considerable call-up by the Israel Defence Force of reservists and civilian vehicles in Tel Aviv and adjacent areas. As of noon today, it was impossible for the Embassy (in Israel) to judge as to the area of possible action or whether the present movement will shift from partial to complete mobilization.¹²⁴

According to this telegram the United States Government was puzzled, as to why Israel was mobilizing so heavily and where its strike would be? Israel certainly kept its actions a secret. The deceptiveness of the Israeli Government becomes even clearer on October 28, when Abba Eban, the Israeli Ambassador in the United States was questioned on the mobilization. His answer was evasive and far from reality. Either he was really misinformed or he knew everything and pretended not to

It is quite possible that to prevent leakage of its

¹²³. Telegram from Aldrich to Dulles and Dillon, October 10, 1956, JFD-ONC-MT, Reel 141.

¹²⁴. Top Secret Afternoon Summaries, October 26, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 93.
secret plans to strike Egypt, the Israeli Government had not really informed Eban about the true nature and effects of the mobilization of its forces.

Thus just one day before Israel's attack on Egypt the following were Eban's comments on his country's mobilization:

Israel feared an attack from Jordan and that Israeli mobilization was for defensive purposes. Arab nations were concerting together in preparation for reprisal moves against Israel therefore, Israel felt it was its elementary duty to be prepared.\textsuperscript{125}

But Dulles replied:

...at no previous time had Israel been as safe as it was today. The situation in Jordan had deteriorated. Egypt was presently engaged in a dispute with the British and French regarding the Suez Canal. If Israeli intentions were defensive every factor in the situation would seem to indicate that Israel should not be concerned.\textsuperscript{126}

Eban's reply to Dulles's challenging statement was vague and shocking. He mentioned that since he didn't have enough information that day, he'll let them know something the next day. But the next day, Israel had invaded Egypt. If Eban was acting he did it very convincingly since when the attack took place the United  

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{125} Memo of Conversation between Eban, Dulles and others, Washington D.C., October 28, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 71.  
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
States was caught off guard. Eban also said that since he had only recently returned to Washington (he had been in Israel for a holiday) he, "...was not informed regarding developments in Israel," He recalled however, that "Egypt had been growing stronger militarily during the past year" and stated that on the basis of that record "Israel's fears were well founded."\textsuperscript{127} Eban then blandly said that "...he would supply additional information to the Secretary as soon as possible, probably tomorrow..."\textsuperscript{128} This seems to give the impression that the plan was well thought out.

The day after the attack against Egypt began on October 30, the British and French Government issued ultimatums to Egypt and Israel (See Appendix IV). Dulles summoned J.E. Coulson, the Charge d'Affairs of the British Embassy in the United States and strongly protested against at the ultimatums. He clearly conveyed that what the British and French planned to carry out in case the ultimatum were rejected, was too lengthy and complicated to have been decided upon in just a day. Dulles showed to Coulson the message Eisenhower had sent

\textsuperscript{127} Memo, n.125.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid.
to Eden and Mollet on the ultimatums. It expressed:

...concern regarding latest development and termed the ultimatum issued to Israel and Egypt a 'brutal affair.' On the one hand Egypt was called upon to surrender the Canal and a very large part of its territory and on the other hand, Israel is allowed to keep the territory which it has occupied in the Sinai Penninsula. 129

And Dulles added:

...the present plan which is being carried out by the British and French is too detailed not to have been concerted before the Israeli action. He felt that the British Government had recently kept us deliberately in the dark about its plans. 130

On the other hand during this very meeting, Coulson expressed his astonishment at any involvement of his Government in the attack. Like Eban either he also was ill-informed or was he too was pretending ignorance. Coulson said that it was very difficult for him to accept that "the United Kingdom had any part in urging the Israelis to attack Egypt. The British have no desire to keep British forces in Egypt any longer than is necessary to get an agreement between Israel and Egypt..." 131

Surprisingly even the permanent representatives

129. Memo of Conversation between Coulson, Dulles and others, Washington, D.C., October 30, 19566, JFD-OHC-MT,Reel 50.

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid.
Britain and France in NATO were not informed of their governments' military plans. This the representatives of both the countries themselves revealed in a private meeting of the NATO on November 1, 1956. They said that they were, "...both without instruction."\textsuperscript{132} And other members of NATO found it very odd that neither,"...U.K. nor France had taken the trouble to instruct its permanent representatives on a matter of this importance."\textsuperscript{133}

From the newly released material, it is also clear that on November 1, itself Pineau in a meeting with Dillon admitted that the, "... operation was a long planned, United Kingdom, French and Israeli affair."\textsuperscript{134} This admission completes the puzzle and shifts the full responsibility of the 1956 war from the United States to France, Britain, and Israel. Though the British refused to make any comment, Infact, as late as mid November 1956 Selwyn Lloyd insisted while communicating with to Aldrich that, "... the British had no advance knowledge that the Israelis were going to attack Egypt. He also gave assurances that the United Kingdom had made no commitments whatever to Israel in anticipation of such a move."\textsuperscript{135}

\textsuperscript{132} Notes of the NATO Meeting, November 1, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 215.

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{134} Afternoon Top Secret Daily Summary, November 1, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 93.

\textsuperscript{135} Secret Staff Summary, November 13, 1956, JFD-
In the light of all that is now known of the British role in the war of 1956, this statement was not true.

This is further corroborated by documents recently released by the British Government. These too point out to a pre-planned attack to oust Nasser from power. In a Memo on 'France and the Middle East,' prepared by the British Government in August 1956 the following suggestions were made:

1) To produce another Egyptian government which will be prepared to accept the new international settlement for the Suez Canal.

2) Until such time ... to occupy the Canal Zone ...

3) Once Nasser has gone, the main centre of opposition to the pact [Baghdad Pact] in the Arab world will have been disrupted.136

From these suggestions it is obvious that the British Government was planning on a military strike against Egypt. Similarly the collusion of Britain with France too is revealed by the sources available at the Public Records Office in Britain. A note by Harold Caccia the British Ambassador to the United States, after Makins left in early November 1956, supports the argument made

136. Memo on France and the Middle East, August 3, 1956, FOR-PRO 371-118871.
throughout this thesis that the British had planned the attack well in advance. It said:

... we must avoid giving any impression anywhere, that we and the French have not only determined a military action together to the conclusion of other forces, but that we have even reached a basis of political action in the whole of this area on a bilateral basis...\textsuperscript{137}

All doubts about a pre-mediated attack by Britain and France are now removed. And British deviousness in trying to conceal their operation is clear like a day. So is the deceit of the French and the Israelis.

Besides the primary sources released by the governments of the United States and Britain, numerous oral transcripts at the John Foster Dulles Oral History Collection, Princeton University, also prove the same points conclusions. For example, journalist Stewart Alsop in his interview ridiculed Britain for not telling the United States. The British Government he said, "... in being devious and in closing off all information to Washington, [made]... an act of stupidity...."\textsuperscript{138}

Andrew H. Berding, former Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, in his interview said that

\textsuperscript{137} Notes by Caccia, August 5, 1956, FOR-PRO, 371-118871

\textsuperscript{138} Stewart Alsop, interviewed by Richard Challener, Washington D.C., February 4, 1966, p.23, JFD-OHC.
the French were more keen on the war than were the British. He also argued that Eden was not strong enough to say no to the French pressure. He could not turn down the French proposal because the British and his own personal interest lay in the destruction of Nasser. Bearding also reported and agreed with what Dulles said on the same issue. Dulles felt that:

Eden should have resisted the importunities, particularly of the French, at the time of the Suez crisis. It was the French who were pushing, pushing, pushing for action in Egypt, action by force of arms if necessary. And Eden should have resisted it. But Eden went along... 139

Ambassador Douglas C Dillon had quite a few revealing things to say in his interview. He talked of how he came to know of the plans, of the British reluctance to accept the pre-planning of Israel's desire to hush up matters, of French acceptance of the plan after it had taken place, and of British denial even then. Dillon stated:

I guess I was the first person to learn of the plans for the military action and reported it to the State Department some ten days before it began. At the time I was told... the military action was scheduled to begin a few days after our [Presidential]

139. Andrew H. Berding, interviewed by Dr. Philip Crowl, Washington D.C., August 8, 1965, p.33, JFD-OHC.
election, they wouldn't do anything before it. The British when they were asked absolutely denied that there was any such thing in the wind... They (the United States Government) prepared a ... letter that Eisenhower was going to write the night of the election - asking them (these countries) to hold their horses and allow time for a new initiative by the United States...140

But the attack was actually preponed if we consider the dates that Dillon has given as the dates of attack. Why was it preponed? For this Dillon blamed Israel. He thus assessed:

My guess is that the primary responsibility for the change rested with the Israelis. They had got the wind of the idea that we were going to do something immediately after the President was elected and were under the false impression that just prior to an election we wouldn't dare do anything. They thought that this was a good opportunity for them to move and they just moved. And once they'd moved, the British and French felt that they were so involved they had to go along.141

On French acceptance of the responsibility for the war and British reluctance to do so, Dillon was rather sarcastic in his comments. He said:

Mr. Pineau told me a few days after all this was over that ... there shouldn't be any mystery... it probably had been a mistake. But, any way, this thing had been planned... well of course right at the same time the British Government, the Eden


141. Ibid., p.24.
Government was telling Ambassador Aldrich that this had never been planned... This led to further disenchantment with the British, and particularly with Eden personally... I get the impression that we tended to blame the British more than the French... Our people back here (felt) that the French were wrong, but they were, at least, honest. And the British who we felt ought to have been even closer to us, because of Anglo-American relations, were the ones who were not telling us the truth and deliberately... misleading us and, continuing to do so after it was over. 142

Allen Dulles, head of the CIA discussed at length how Eisenhower felt when the attack took place. He recalled:

...he was really very deeply hurt that the British and French had gotten together on this, secretly. I remember him calling me in and saying, 'I haven't heard anything. I haven't heard any word about this thing - these meetings taking place in Paris. Something's cooking here. I haven't heard anything about it.'... What he meant was that the British and French had not told him anything about it. He wasn't talking about what he'd gotten through intelligence channels because we had. We had word of the Israeli mobilization [we]... knew of the extra ordinary build up in the Island of Cyprus. They had troops there, they had aircraft there. 143

The interview of Abba Eban too is highly damaging to the claims of innocence by France, Britain and Israel.

On the military preparedness of the three countries he said:

There was another element in the web drawing Britain, France and Israel closer together, not that the British or French had done anything to get us any free passage until then, but the fact that we did not have free passage was extremely useful to them in their argument and in their preparation. 144

About the fact that he had pretended ignorance on October 27, when questioned by the United States Government on the preparations, Eban with rather a tongue in the cheek, stated:

... the fact is that I had been back in Jerusalem two weeks before discussing what seemed to be a danger from Jordan...[and] two days before the Sinai campaign I was playing golf at the Woodmount Country Club. The State Department has never quite solved the mystery of that particular golf game. Didn't I know what was happening? Or was I deliberately drawing a veil of complacency? 145

Then Eban spoke of what Ben Gurian had said to him before he left Jerusalem and related it to the coming attack on Egypt. He recalled:

Ben Gurion's parting words to me when I left Israel were, I don't know what will happen if anything. The whole thing may come to nothing. Reading back, of course this means that we didn't quite know what would occur what was happening in Paris... There was an utter lack of telegraphic communications between Washington and Israel for obvious reasons... 146

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144. Abba Eban, interviewed by Louis Gerson, Rehouth, Israel, May 28, 1964, p.31, JFD-OHC.
145. Ibid., p. 33
146. Ibid., pp. 33-34.
Winthrop Aldrich also went into details about how quiet and secretive the British were at the time. Aldrich referred to a dinner he had with the British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd, a day before the Isareli attack on Egypt and according to him Lloyd had clearly stated:

he had no evidence to show that Israeli mobilization was directed against Egypt... that the British Government had no information as regards a possible attack on Egypt, that he was very much concerned about a possible Israeli attack on Jordan. 147

Either Lloyd really did not know which does not seem possible or the British were determined not to let the Americans into the secret. Aldrich says that on October by when Isarel had already attacked Egypt, he asked Lloyd what his Government would do now. Lloyd replied with a straight face, "His Majesty's Government would immediately cite Israel before the security council of the United Nations as an aggressor against Egypt".148 It only shows the extent to which the British were willing to go to, to lie to maintain secrecy to ward off any preemptive action by the United States. The final act says Aldrich was that at 4.45 P.M. on that day Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, Permanent Under Secretary at the British Foreign Office, showed him the British and the French

148. Ibid., p. 546.
ultimatums for Egypt and Israel. But the ultimatums had already been served to Egypt at 3.20 P.M. and Israel at 3.30 P.M.\(^{149}\) Such dubious acts of the British government only succeeded in making the United States angry when the facts came to be known. It left the United States totally bewildered and says Aldrich, "President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles would have no further direct communication with Eden.\(^{150}\)

Finally it can be summed up in journalist Loy Henderson's words that the United States Government knew that military preparations were on, but were not quite sure of when and against whom these would ultimately be directed. Henderson reported:

The British silences, plus the increased telegram traffic among Britain, France and Israel, caused us deep concern. We were afraid that something that might be most disagreeable to the United States was being discussed but we did not know what that something might be.\(^{151}\)

One more piece to the whole puzzle is the emphasis of the United States on not using force. A detailed analysis of the \textit{New York Times} from July 25, 1956 onwards reveals the United States Government's, in

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149. Aldrich, n. 147.

150. \textit{Ibid.}, p.547

particular Eisenhower's aversion to the use of force to settle the Suez issue. At the same time the post October 29, reports speak of the United States letting its allies down. The two are non-complementary. Since it was well know that the United States was against force, then the allies let it down, rather than the other way around.

Let's take note of the 'no force' statements attributed to the United States Government and Eisenhower in the press from July 27 onwards. 'Eisenhower terms Canal vital to United States but urges caution,' 'US seen opposing use of force,' 'Eisenhower stresses United States seeks, peaceful solution,' 'Eisenhower, bars force...says United States would approve British French military action only if peaceful methods had been exhausted and Egypt violated peaceful use of Canal...,' 'Eisenhower stresses United States dedication to peaceful settlement,' 'Eisenhower denies United States policy has not been clear and firm' 'Eisenhower says United States has been urging conciliation, mutual understanding and justice,' 'Eisenhower says no one can challenge Egypt's legal right to nationalize Canal.'152

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152. For detailed reports attached to these headlines see the New York Times dated, August 2, August 8, September 6, September 12, September 15, October 12, October 17, and October 25, respectively.
Eisenhower's memoirs and numerous other books, are replete with the 'no force' statements. British Prime Minister Eden wanted American support to, "bring Nasser to his senses by force."153 But Eisenhower wrote that he did not," view the situation as seriously ... at least there was no reason to panic."154 Eisenhower also did not agree that the Egyptians lacked the knowledge to run the Canal. To him, the Suez Canal was a very small Canal specially in comparison to the Panama Canal. He called the Suez, a mere "ditch cut in the desert."155

It is true that Eisenhower was not happy with a situation where a, "little dictator was holding the world at ransom."156 And he made known his views on this. He stated:

All of us, of course appreciate the tremendous importance of the Suez Canal. Its continuous and effective operation is vital to the economy of our country, indeed to the economics of almost all of the countries of the world. So all of us were vastly disturbed when Colonel Nasser a few days ago declared that Egypt intended to nationalize the Suez Canal Company.157

But at the same time he insisted that there was no sense in using force against Nasser. It had no legal basis, as

154. Ibid., p. 37.
156. Eisenhower, n. 153, p. 43.
long as Nasser could run the Canal and let all countries use it freely as before, according to the terms of the Treaty of 1888. (See Appendix V) His argument was that military action by the West may, "outrage world opinion." 158 It would seem as if a tiny helpless country was being oppressed by the "big three." 159 As it is Nasser's prestige was on the increase due to the nationalization. Eisenhower did not want to increase it more. In all probability he rightly argued that if Nasser was attacked without a provocation and he was defeated he might emerge as a Middle East hero. It was this situation of Nasser becoming, "an Arab dictator controlling the Mediterranean," 160 that Eisenhower wanted to avoid.

Eisenhower also felt that if the United States policy towards Egypt had to undergo a positive change, then collaboration with 'Western Imperialists' had to be avoided. And Britain was regarded as the worst type of imperialist by the Egyptians. Thus when Nasser nationalised the Canal, the American reaction was to remain aloof. The United States did not want to associate itself with any scheme of Britain or France to pressurise Nasser to either denationalize the Canal

158. Eisenhower, n.153, p.43.
159. Ibid., p.38
160. Ibid.
or to hand it over to an international authority. 161

However, the United States did suggest an alternative plan in early October for the operation of the Canal, the Suez Canal Users' Association (SCUA). It was meant to be like an International Authority, the member nations of which were to decide together the use of the Canal, the collection and use of tolls etc. In other words the Association was to look after the functioning of the Canal. Brain-child of Dulles, it was meant to bring a negotiated settlement to the problem of nationalization of the Canal. This was the United States solution to the whole affair. And Dulles made it clear that there was to be full, "...voluntary operation among the users of the Canal...." 162 Unless this existed the Western nations would not gain anything from Egypt. As he further clarified:

... we do not believe that their (Western) rights can be adequately safeguarded if each nation, much less if each ship, fends for itself. We believe that under present circumstances, practical cooperation with Egypt can be effectively achieved only if the users are organised, so that they can deal jointly with Egypt, and Egypt deal with them jointly. 163

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163. Ibid.
Though Eisenhower was campaigning for the forthcoming presidential elections and was thus very busy, he gave his approval to Dulles's SCUA plan.

Dulles very earnestly hoped that the Users plan would be acceptable to all parties concerned because it would be implemented, "... without prejudice to the rights of anyone." He also very pragmatically accepted that the plan, "... provided no permanent solution." But this plan was not acceptable to Nasser. As it would have been a clear reversal of the nationalization which he had already carried through. But as one historian points out this plan was basically "tactical, to gain time." Dulles wanted time to prevent a military solution by Britain and France, to Egypt's nationalization. And though Eden did not really like the SCUA Plan he accepted it because, "he wanted to bind the United States to a policy of severe economic pressure at the minimum and possibly to the acceptance of a military solution."

The final decision of the United States not to support the British in the use of force was put forth

164. Dulles, n.162.

165. Ibid.

166. Hoopes, n.5,p.358.

167. Ibid., p.359.
aptly by Eisenhower when he said:

I can scarcely describe the depth I felt in the need to take a view so diametrically opposed to that held by the British.... Yet I felt in taking our own position we were standing firmly on principle and on the realities of the 20th century. But I sympathised with the British. Nevertheless I felt it essential to let the British know how gravely we viewed their intentions and how erroneous we thought their proposed action would be.168

Thus the persistent efforts of Eisenhower were towards preventing a war. Therefore it is not surprising that the United States not only offered an alternative plan to force but also an alternate to the route of the Suez Canal. This factor has been ignored up till now though the New York Times did refer to it at that time.169 The panic generated as a result of the nationalization had forced the European nations to think of how to get goods accross to Asia. The only answer for them was the Canal. Thus the desire of Britain and France to get the Canal back. It was only the United States which suggested an alternate route.

This thus became another issue of Anglo-American divide. Obviously the only other way to Asia was around the Cape of Good Hope. But that would have


169. For a report on this, see the New York Times, September 14, where Dulles is reported as saying that the 'United States would detour its shipping around Africa....'
meant an enormous increase in the cost of shipping. Anthony Eden was not willing to accept it. He made it very clear that in case the Users plan failed then his Government, "must be free to take whatever steps are open to them to restore the situation"\textsuperscript{170} Which meant only one thing: force. On the other hand Eisenhower approached the whole problem in a different manner. For him there was to be no war, whether the Canal was opened for all again or not.

The Egyptian Government in the meantime warned the United States not to be part of the Users scheme if "....her desire is to work for a peaceful solution."\textsuperscript{171} However, the the latter felt that Egypt had misunderstood the real purpose of the Users scheme and that once it was clear to her she would definitely join it. But Dulles assured Egypt that this did not mean that the United States would go to war against her if the scheme failed. He reaffirmed that the United States, "did not intend to shoot (its) way though the canal,"\textsuperscript{172} in case Egypt did not let ships pass through. In such a situation, Dulles declared, "the United States would detour ships around Africa and start

\textsuperscript{170} Dulles, n.162,p.122.
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
emergency shipments of oil to Europe."\(^{173}\)

In a news conference held in Washington on September 21, 1956 Dulles further clarified:

... the President had most authoritively said, that in his opinion, force if justifiable at all, is only justifiable as a last resort. So if there are alternatives to the use of force, we believe that they should be fully explored and exhausted... I repeat that we do not feel that the economic situation which would result from sending ships around the Cape would in any sense be catastrophic or beyond the capacity to deal with ...\(^{174}\)

Here-in lies the basis of the Anglo-American divide at this critical juncture. The above remarks are not only an indicator of the American stand, they are also a pointer as to what the other nations should do. But Britain and France thought differently. In fact the recall of the non-Egyptian pilots in the Canal by the Company's head office in France was a fine example of the policies these two wanted to follow which could lead to war. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry at once cabled

\(^{173}\) Dulles, n.162, p.122.

\(^{174}\) Ibid
to the United Nations that this move might lead to war because, "if there is any obstruction in navigation for reasons beyond Egypt's control ... the responsibility will lie on those parties who tried to obstruct the navigation in the canal - the British and the French...." 175 What could be more galling to England than the fact that Egypt did not regard the United States as an enemy. And the United States was taking positions that were implicitly anti British and underminded their prestige even further.

In the same news conference, on a question whether the United States decision to go around the Cape of Good Hope would not put it in conflict with Britain Dulles answered very diplomatically:

Well, I think that each nation has to decide for itself, what action it will take to defend and... realise its rights.... I did not get the impression that there was any... pledge given by him (Sir Anthony Eden), to shoot their way through the Canal. 176

Though diplomatic the answer gives away the fact that

175. Dulles, n.162, p.122.
176. Ibid., p.124.
the British and the United States did not see eye to eye on the matter. And Egypt remained outwardly calm, even though inwardly the tension must have been unbearable. "Despite the resignation of 100 of the 170 Canal Pilots, Egypt proudly kept the Canal in operation."177 noted Nolte and Polk in their monograph.

Mention must be made of the fact that though a sharp Anglo-American divide was visible throughout the whole affair over the use of force against Egypt, Eisenhower maintained a friendly disposition towards Britain. Recognition of America's long standing friendship with Britain was not forgotten. He wrote, "I do make this clear: our friendships with Britain are very, very important to us, not only sentimentally but officially, politically, economically and militarily."178 But in spite of all this, the Suez crisis inducted tension in Anglo-American friendship even though it was for a short while. Says Herbert Feis, "few differences have so estranged the American and British Governments as the one that resulted from the seizure of the Suez Canal."179

On September 1, Australian Prime Minister, Gordon

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178. PPP-DDE, p.235.

Menzeis went to Israel with the initial proposals of the 18 nations who had met for the London Conference on August 16. The Western powers were quite hopeful of their acceptance by Nasser. The proposals had four basic elements:

(1) respect of Egyptian sovereignty
(2) efficient and proper operation of the Canal
(3) the operation of the Canal was not to benefit the political purpose of any one nation.
(4) A fair and increasing share of the profits to go to Egypt and to no one else.

If at this critical juncture the American President had kept silent, the mission might have succeeded. But Eisenhower issue a statement which emboldened Nasser to reject the proposals. Speaking on the movement of French troops and ships to Cyprus Eisenhower remarked, "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...." 180 There was an immediate response from Nasser on September 2 ".... the

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180. Fies, n.179, p.599.
President's point of view was that of Egypt's and it had lifted the worry we had about the American stand on international justice."\textsuperscript{181} Assured, Nasser promptly rejected the Menzeis proposals. Eden cryptly remarked, "incited by the President's statement he abruptly concluded that it was safe to turn it down."\textsuperscript{182} It is possible that Eisenhower had been keen to project the United States Government's anti-force stance. It is also possible that he did not forsee that his statement would lead to this.

Feis does not wholly agree that it was the sole reason for Nasser to turn down the 18 nation proposals. Nasser by this time was already emerging as an independent Arab leader and he didn't need anyone's support to go on further. But Feis does agree that, "the evidence that the American Government would not join the British and French Government in any kind of concerted pressure doomed to futility all subsequent efforts to get Nasser to yield."\textsuperscript{183} Thus the consequent failure of the Users Plan as well, which seemed even more preposterous to Nasser. His rejection signalled

\textsuperscript{181} Fies, n.179, p.599.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{183} Ibid.
the war. In the recent sources, one again notices an assertion of the United States wish to avoid force. Immediately after the nationalization on July 28, 1956 Eisenhower, Dulles and Herbert Hoover the Under Secretary of State, met and exchanged various thoughts. The record of the meeting reveals that though Eisenhower was angry with Nasser for having nationalized the Canal, he was not in favour of using force to undo it. At the same time he did want to display Western solidarity and strength by warning that in case Egypt could not run the Canal well, or that it used force to retain it while mismanaging it, then force would have to be answered with force. However, Eisenhower's earnest attempt was to desassociate his country with any offensive action that Britain and France might take. Such thoughts set the course of action that the United States Government was to follow in the months to come. The important conclusion was of the meeting were:

...if Egypt was to bring in the use of force, they would meet it with force of their own. Such a line of action would probably be justified before world opinion... if such an announcement were made it would satisfy the requirement for action in the Mid-East to prevent countries from challenging the West and would show that the
countries having maritime interests are trying to put the matter before an impartial tribunal.

... a general line of holding down developments for the present, discouraging French and British suggestions of early armed action...

... the means that would be required for Western Countries to go in and operate the Canal would be very great at the present time, but (the President said) it is a question whether there is a basis for such action in terms of world opinion...

There was agreement on the importance of keeping this Government clear of any precipitate action with the French and the British which might later tie our hands...184

Then on August 1, in a meeting between Dulles, Aldrich, Harold Macmillan and others Dulles specified that the United States did not want to commit itself to any military strike. He emphasised on "... the danger of becoming involved in precipitate military action before all facts are before the public..."185

In early October, Eisenhower wrote to Herbert Hoover that it might be helpful if he issued a general anti-war statement. In it could be outlined said he:

...Our position and detailing our step-by-step moves to keep the peace. The statement might also contain a frank warning that the United States

184. Notes on Conversation with the President, July 28, 1956, AWDS-DHS, File ;July 56, Box 7.

185. Memo of Conversation between Dulles, Aldrich, Macmillan and others, August 1, 1956, JFD-OHC-MT, Reel 48.
will not support a war or war like moves in the Suez area. It would insist that negotiations must be continued until a peaceful but just solution is reached - regardless of how long it takes. \[186\]

This statement coming in early October, when a number of conferences had already been held in London and compromises had been tried, reveals that Eisenhower was very keen on a peaceful solution to the problem. The words, 'regardless of how long it takes,' shows the Eisenhower administration's persistence and insistence on peace at whatever costs.

Dulles also told Lloyd and Pineau in a meeting on October 5, that, "...force is not a measure which will improve our prospects in Asia and Africa and it is a great illusion to think that it would..."\[187\] Despite such open indications of the United States dislike of the idea of using force in the Suez area the British and the French blamed it for letting them down!

In a memo issued by Eisenhower to Dulles on October 15, 1956 Eisenhower specially refered to the reports of agressive behavior by Israel in the region. He issued a general warning to Ben Gurion

\[186\] Letter From Eisenhower to Hoover, October 8, 1956, \textit{JFDS-WHMS}, File ; White House Correspondence General 1956(1), Box 3.

\[187\] Notes, n.122.
indicating that the United States would not support his aggressive tendencies. He emphasised that:

Ben Gurion should not make any grave mistakes based upon his belief that winning a domestic election is as important to us as preserving and protecting the interests of the United Nations and other nations of the free world in that region. The Secretary is to point out, moreover, that even if Ben Gurion in an aggressive move, should get an immediate advantage in the region, that on a long term basis aggression on his part cannot fail to bring catastrophe and such friends as he would have left in the world, no matter how powerful, could not do anything about it... Foster will make this attitude clear and unmistakable to Mr. Eban. 188

When Israel attacked Egypt on October 29, Eisenhower was very annoyed and strongly reiterated his decision to stay out of the war regardless of domestic repercussions. Eisenhower said that he:

... does not care in the slightest whether he is reelected or not. He feels we must make good on our word... He did not really think that the American people would throw him out in the midst of a situation like this, but if they did, so be it. 189

Such a decisive course of action leaves no doubts that the United States did not double cross anyone. Eisenhower was also irritated about how the British were

188. Memo, n.97.

189. Memo, n.93, p.3.
taking the American friendship for granted. " The President thought the British are calculating that we must go along with them... He thought we should let them know at once our position, telling them...that nothing justifies double-crossing us,"

Thus though Eisenhower made no such remarks in public, in private his utterances show how disillusioned and angry he was with the British Government's stand. In public, however, he always kept up the illusion of a close Anglo-American friendship.

Eisenhower's dislike of the British policy on Suez is further revealed in a meeting he had with Dulles and Hoover on October 30. In the meeting Dulles assessed the British action as, "...a defacto situation, in which they might acknowledge that they have been rash, but would say that the United States could not sit by and let them go under economically." To this Eisenhower replied in the strictest of terms. He said that, " he did not see much value in an unworthy and unreliable ally and that the necessity to support them might not be as great as they believed." He also commented that:

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190. Memo, n.93, p.3.
192. Ibid.
A hands off attitude by the United States might well be indicated. He thought that it would probably be necessary today to make clear publicly that we have not been and are not now, associated with the French and the British in their activities.\(^{193}\)

The extent to which the British and the French had come down in the United States esteem is thus evident. Eisenhower chose to maintain a low profile at that time in order to keep up the dignity of his allies. Such an attitude is worthy of praise not condemnation.

Robert Bowie, Assistant Secretary of State for Planning in the Eisenhower administration, in his interview for oral history also stated that, "...it was made quite clear by the President and by Dulles, that they were not prepared to back the effort to overthrow Nasser by the British or the French."\(^{194}\) Bowie referred to what Aldrich once said that, "...the one thing I could never get across to Mr. Eden was the idea that the United States would not in the last analysis back Britain's use of force. I don't think that Mr. Eden ever quite understood this."\(^{195}\) May be Eden never understood this since Dulles never clearly told him so and kept him guessing. Bowie agreed with this.

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193. Memo, n.93.
194. Bowie, n.9, p.34.
195. Ibid., p.35.
explanation because he felt that Dulles wanted:

...to keep this as a possible threat to Nasser— as a sort of danger which Nasser could not rule out— that he had to take account of— hoping that this might bring him to make a deal on terms which would be naturally satisfactory... it was a sort of cat and mouse game. 196

Bowie also emphasised, "I don't think Eden wanted to get the message...(hoping) at least he could get the acquiescence..." 197 of the United States. Thus if Eden deliberately chose to see ambiguity, where there was none, the blame for it could not be laid at the door of the United States.

In the light of all the new sources it thus seems a case of bluff being called off. The only difference here was, that it had never been a bluff— it was real. Even though the United states had made it position known the contemporary accounts blamed the United States for once the war began for letting down its allies. It was criticised for not joining the allies in their crusade against a dictator like Nasser. Few examples include reports from the New York Times: `US double-talked and double-crossed Great Britain and France to point where—

196. Bowie, n. 9, p. 177.

197. Ibid., p. 36.
they felt impelled to proceed on their own,' Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt holds Israel acted in self-defence, holds its perils increased because Eisenhower Administration let Arabs get arms, refused Israel equivalent ones and Great Britain and France were driven to intervention through lack of confidence in US policy,' Truman holds Eisenhower could have avoided crisis by stopping USSR arms to Egypt,' and so on.198

The editorial in the November 2 issue of the Washington Post also blamed the United States for the events in Egypt. The title of this editorial piece was, 'OF Blunders and Blame.' The editorial stated:

... the American hesitation, placidity and pre-occupation with sops(sic) rather than solutions have contributed to the anguishing dilemma in Egypt. The failure to do anything effective to halt the terrorism against Israel, the mishandling of the Aswan Dam cancellation... these may be said at the door of the Eisenhower Administration.199

The accusations were endless.

It is astounding that the French who had been wanting to destroy Nasser for quite some time now however, denounced the United States openly at the time. A report entitled, "French Anger Over Suez" by Harold

198. See the New York Times, dated November 3, 1956 and November 4, respectively.

Callender, was carried in the New York Times of August 1, 1956. It reported:

The French view is that the United States...precipitated the Suez seizure by provoking President Nasser's fury in withdrawing its offer of financial aid for his Aswan High Dam project...if the West fails to act in unison in the crisis, Frenchmen will blame Washington. If President Nasser should come out of the crisis covered with glory, because Washington had been unwilling to help Paris and London deal him a knockout blow, and if France's position in Algeria should deteriorate afterward, the responsibility would be placed upon Washington by many Frenchmen.200

It appears France like Britain only wanted to use the United States as a scapegoat for their own ulterior motives. By shifting the blame for hostilities in the Suez area on the United States withdrawal of the Aswan Dam loan, the French and the British hoped to remove suspicions and doubts from their military preparations against Egypt. And this is exactly what happened.

Michael W. Suleiman who has done a detailed analysis of the print media coverage of the Suez crisis, came to the conclusion that the Western attackers and Israel received a better deal from the media than did Egypt. He wrote, "...During this period, marked by :

belligerent attitude on the part of Israel and later France and the United Kingdom, no front page headline portrayed Israel or the West as aggressors.  

Suleiman refers to a letter in *Time* magazine, dated November 26, 1956 which stated that, "most of the newspapers have taken such an emotional approach that they have somehow managed to convert the three aggressors... into victims."  

Suleiman's analysis gives a good insight into how the West perceived the Arabs though it is not a reflection of the United States Government's perception of the Arabs.

The *US News & World Report*, blamed President Nasser and the Arabs for all the trouble in the Middle East. The only place where one might find some criticism of Israeli actions was in the letters printed by the media. Though few in number, (five in *Time*, one each in *The New Republic* and *Newsweek*) these letters were at least a manifestation of an idea and a feeling that was not expressed by the magazine reporters and editors themselves. There was also a sizeable minority (20%) that rapped Great Britain for its armed attack against Egypt. France seems to have escaped with


less censure (10%), mainly because of the prevalent popular attitude in to West of not associating France with such unscrupulous attacks. 203

The New York Times and the Washington Post were not the only American newspapers which were critical of the United States for not joining the allies. There were others which had a similar approach. One such article in state The New Republic entitled 'A Touch of Nausea', stated:

A touch of nausea is what some of us feel when the spokesmen of Government announce that the foreign policy for which they are responsible reflects their devotion to moral principle rather than expediency. Why did it not condemn Nasser's occupation of Suez? Or force Russia to retreat from Hungary just as it forced Britain, France and Israel to retreat from Egypt? Would it be more accurate to say that we could afford to enforce the law on our friends and clients, who were at our mercy.204

The writer justified British and French action on the ground that, "the dilemma of the British and French was that, if they acceded to world opinion, Nasser would almost surely be confirmed in the fait accompli which threatened their vital interests."205

The criticisms of the United States and of

203. Suleiman, n.201, pp 6-7.


205. Ibid.,p.17.
Nasser, not withstanding, the former was shocked by the attack on Egypt by its allies. And of course Eisenhower immediately let it be known that," the United States was not consulted in any phase of these actions. Nor were we informed of them in advance."206 He further clarified in full detail denouncing the attack as a terrible mistake. He made the United States stand absolutely clear. He said:

As it is the manifest right of any of these nations to take such decisions and actions, it is likewise our right... to dissent. We believe these actions to have been taken in error. For we do not accept the use of force as a wise or proper instrument for the settlement of international disputes.207

Eisenhower felt strongly that, "the action taken can scarcely be reconciled with the principles and purposes of the United Nations to which we have all subscribed."208 He further emphasised that, "beyond this, we are forced to doubt that resort to war will for long serve the permanent interest of the attacking nations."209 Finally the American President concluded, "... there will be no United States involvement in these
Israel's offensive against Egypt. This is because Israel was also busy attacking Jordan in the West, trying to dislocate its government. It was thus busy fighting on two fronts. And Britain felt quite odd in this situation as it was under treaty obligations to Jordan, to help it against an outside attack. But this outside attack could hardly be countered, when the British themselves were a party to the invasion into Egypt. It was a very confusing situation. Ben Gurion and his representative in the United States, Abba Eban were quite sure that the Jewish lobby in the United States would keep America atleast neutral. They also felt that since Eisenhower was in the midst of a presidential election, he required the Jewish votes to win it. Therefore, the would not adopt a very hard stance against Israel. But they over-estimated their strength in the United States. As indicated earlier also, Eisenhower made it plain, that he was in no mood for compromising in his own position. politics. He also hit home the fact that a Presidential election alone cannot prevent him from taking a fair and just stand. He declared:

... that no considerations of partisan politics
will keep this government from pursuing a course dictated by justice and international decency in the circumstances and that it will remain true to its pledges under the United Nations. 211

Thus pursuing its course of justice and fairness, the United States took the issue to the United Nations. Ultimately the three attackers had to withdraw unconditionally. Eisenhower had fulfilled his United States of not wanting to be part of the military offensive against Egypt.

In 1984 a book entitled, Ike's letters to A Friend 1941-58 was released. These are addressed to a friend called 'Swede.' In one of these letters Eisenhower laments to his friend on the actions of his country's allies. He confided to him his inner thoughts that have been proved right with the release of highly classified material Eisenhower wrote:

The Mid East thing is a terrible mess... It does not seem to me that there is present in the case anything that justifies the action that Britain, France and Israel apparently concerted among themselves and have initiated... I think that France and Britain have made a terrible mistake. Because they had such a poor case, they have isolated themselves from the good opinion of the world and it will take them many years to recover. France was perfectly cold-blooded about the

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211. Ferrell, n.56, p.332.
matter. She has a war on her hands in Algeria, and she was anxious to get someone else fighting the Arabs on her Eastern flank so she was ready to do anything to get England and Israel in that affair. But I think the other two countries have hurt themselves immeasurably and this is something of a sad blow because, quite naturally, Britain not only has been but must be, our best friend in the world.212

The frustration and annoyance of Eisenhower was directed against Britain the most. The President couldn't believe that they could have been misled by their 'best friend'!

Thus the Suez war of 1956, brought the Anglo-American divide to its climax. From the survey of declassified material it now apparent is clear that Britain, France and Israel concerted with each other to destroy Nasser once and for all. Seething with anger against Nasser for their own reasons, they saw in the nationalization of the Suez Canal a chance to get even with him. Their cry of 'save the world' was meant to shift the world attention from their secret war preparations and cloak their narrow and partisan interests with moralistic purposes. Their reprimanding the United States for not standing by them,

was meant to find an alibi for their failure. Says Andrew Goodpaster, then White House Staff Secretary that, "there can be little doubt, that we were misled in important respects, deliberately, I am afraid, both prior to this action (the war), where we were given no advance notice of it whatsoever and in statements made later that there had been (for example) no joint planning between the Israelis, the British and the French." 213 Their secrecy and deceptiveness, was meant to prevent Eisenhower from finding out and stopping them. While Eisenhower main concern throughout, before and during the war, was an attempt at compromise, says Goodpaster emphatically. He stated:

...the claim later made by Eden and others that the action of the United States took them by surprise has no basis in fact (of not going in for force against Egypt). His effort ... was to work with the United Nations, with our allies, the British and the French and with the Israelis and the Egyptians to try to restore a situation which would be in the general interest of all... 214

But unfortunately Eisenhower, was misjudged and wrongly blamed, by the people at that time for his role in the Suez crisis.

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213. Andrew Goodpaster, interviewed by E D Edwin, August 2, 1967, Oral History, No.37, p.82, OH-EF.

214. Ibid.