Suez Crisis

The Suez Crisis, also referred to as the Tripartite Aggression,[1][2] (Arabic: أزمة السويس - أزمة السويس, Azmat al-Sūwais / al-ʿIdwān al-Thalāthī; French: Crise du canal de Suez; Hebrew: מבצע קדש "Operation Kadesh," or מלחמת סיני, "Sinai War") was an offensive war fought by France, the United Kingdom, and Israel against Egypt beginning on October 29, 1956.[3][4] Less than a day after Israel invaded Egypt, Britain and France issued a joint ultimatum to Egypt and Israel, and then began to bomb Cairo. In a short time, and despite Israeli and British denials, considerable evidence showed that the two attacks were planned in collusion, with France as the instigator, Britain as a belated partner, and Israel as the willing trigger.[5] Anglo-French forces withdrew before the end of the year, but Israeli forces remained until March 1957, prolonging the crisis. In April, the canal was fully reopened to shipping, but other repercussions continued.

The attack followed the President of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser's decision of 26 July 1956 to nationalize the Suez Canal, after the withdrawal of an offer by Britain and the United States to fund the building of the Aswan Dam, which was in response to Egypt's new ties with the Soviet Union and recognizing the People's Republic of China during the height of tensions between China and Taiwan.[6] The aims of the attack were primarily to regain Western control of the canal and precipitate the fall of Nasser from power, whose policies were viewed as potentially threatening the strategic interests of the three nations.

The three allies, especially Israel, were mainly successful in attaining their immediate military objectives, but pressure from the United States and the USSR at the United Nations and elsewhere forced them to withdraw. As a result of the outside pressure Britain and France failed in their political and strategic aims of controlling the canal and removing Nasser from power. Israel fulfilled some of its objectives, such as attaining freedom of navigation through the Straits of Tiran. As a result of the conflict, the UNEF would police the Egyptian–Israeli border to prevent both sides from recommencing hostilities.

Background

The Suez Canal was opened in 1869, after ten years of work financed by the French and Egyptian governments.[7] The canal was operated by the Universal Company of the Suez Maritime Canal, an Egyptian-chartered company; the area surrounding the canal remained sovereign Egyptian territory and the only land-bridge between Africa and Asia. The canal instantly became strategically important; it provided the shortest ocean link between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. The canal eased commerce for trading nations and particularly helped European colonial powers to gain and govern their colonies.

In 1875, as a result of debt and financial crisis, the Egyptian ruler was forced to sell his shares in the canal operating company to the British government of Benjamin Disraeli. They were willing buyers and obtained a 44% share in the canal's operations for less than £4 million; this maintained the majority shareholdings of the mostly French private investors. With the 1882 invasion and occupation of Egypt, the United Kingdom took de facto control of the country as well as the canal proper, and its finances and operations. The 1888 Convention of Constantinople declared the canal a neutral zone under British protection.[8] In ratifying it, the Ottoman Empire agreed to permit international shipping to pass freely through the canal, in time of war and peace.[9] The Convention came into force in 1904, the same year as the Entente cordiale, between Britain and France.

Despite this convention, the strategic importance of the Suez Canal and its control were proven during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904—1905, after Japan and Britain entered into a separate bilateral agreement. Following the Japanese surprise attack on the Russian Pacific Fleet based at Port Arthur the Russians sent reinforcements from their fleet in the Baltic Sea. The British denied the Russian fleet use of the canal and forced it to steam around the entire continent of Africa, giving the Japanese forces time to solidify their position in the Far East.
The importance of the canal as a strategic intersection was again apparent during the First World War, when Britain and France closed the canal to non-Allied shipping. The canal continued to be strategically important after the Second World War as a conduit for the shipment of oil. Petroleum business historian Daniel Yergin wrote of the period: "[I]n 1948, the canal abruptly lost its traditional rationale.... [British] control over the canal could no longer be preserved on grounds that it was critical to the defence either of India or of an empire that was being liquidated. And yet, at exactly the same moment, the canal was gaining a new role — as the highway not of empire, but of oil.... By 1955, petroleum accounted for half of the canal's traffic, and, in turn, two thirds of Europe's oil passed through it. At the time, Western Europe imported two million barrels (bbls) per day from the Mideast, 1,200,000 by tanker through the Canal, and another 800,000 via pipeline from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, where tankers received it. The US imported another 300,000 bbls. daily from the Mideast.\[10\]

In August 1956 the Royal Institute of International Affairs published a report titled "Britain and the Suez Canal" revealing government perception of the Suez area. It reiterates several times the strategic necessity of the Suez Canal to the United Kingdom, including the need to meet military obligations under the Manila Pact in the Far East and the Baghdad Pact in Iraq, Iran, or Pakistan. The report also points out how the canal was used in past wars and could be used in future wars to transport troops from the Dominions of Australia and New Zealand in the event of war in Europe. The report also cites the amount of material and oil which passes through the canal to the United Kingdom, and the economic consequences of the canal being put out of commission, concluding:

"The possibility of the Canal being closed to troopships makes the question of the control and regime of the Canal as important to Britain today as it ever was."\[12\]

Events leading to the Suez Crisis

Post-war years

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Britain was reassessing its role in the region in light of the severe economic constraints and its colonial history. The economic potential of the Middle East, with its vast oil reserves, as well as the Suez Canal's geo-strategic importance against the background of the Cold War, prompted Britain to consolidate and strengthen its position there. The kingdoms of Egypt and Iraq were seen as vital to maintaining strong British influence in the region. Britain's military strength was spread throughout the region, including the vast military complex at Suez with a garrison of some 80,000, making it one of the largest military installations in the world. The Suez base was considered an important part of Britain's strategic position in the Middle East; however, increasingly it became a source of growing tension in Anglo-Egyptian relations.\[13\] Egypt's post-war domestic politics were experiencing a radical change, prompted in no small part by economic instability, inflation, and unemployment. Unrest began to manifest itself in the growth of radical political groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and an increasingly hostile attitude towards Britain and her presence in the country. Added to this anti-British fervour was the role Britain had played in the creation of Israel.\[13\] As a result, the actions of the Egyptian government began to mirror those of its populace and an anti-British policy began to permeate Egypt's relations with Britain.

In October 1951, the Egyptian government unilaterally abrogated the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, the terms of which granted Britain a lease on the Suez base for 20 more years.\[14\] Britain refused to withdraw from Suez, relying upon its treaty rights, as well as the sheer presence of the Suez garrison. The price of such a course of action was a steady escalation in increasingly violent hostility towards Britain and British troops in Egypt, which the Egyptian authorities did little to curb.

On 25 January 1952, British attempts to disarm a troublesome auxiliary police force barracks in Ismailia resulted in the deaths of 41 Egyptians.\[15\] This in turn led to anti-Western riots in Cairo resulting in heavy damage to property and the deaths of several foreigners, including 11 British citizens.\[15\] This proved to be a catalyst for the removal of
the Egyptian monarchy. On 23 July 1952 a military coup by the 'Free Officers Movement'—led by Muhammad Neguib and future Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser—overthrew King Farouk and established an Egyptian republic.

Since the establishment of Israel in 1948, cargo shipments to and from Israel had been subject to Egyptian authorization, search and seizure while attempting to pass through the Suez Canal.[16] On 1 September 1951, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 95 called upon Egypt: "... to terminate the restrictions on the passage of international commercial ships and goods through the Suez Canal, wherever bound, and to cease all interference with such shipping." This interference and confiscation, contrary to the laws of the canal (Article 1 of the 1888 Suez Canal Convention), increased following the coup.

**Post-revolution period**

Britain's desire to mend Anglo-Egyptian relations in the wake of the coup saw her strive for rapprochement throughout 1953 and 1954. Part of this process was the agreement, in 1953, to terminate British rule in Sudan by 1956 in return for Cairo's abandoning of its claim to suzerainty over the Nile Valley region. In October 1954, Britain and Egypt concluded an agreement on the phased evacuation of British troops from the Suez base, the terms of which agreed to withdrawal of all troops within 20 months, maintenance of the base to be continued, and for Britain to hold the right to return for seven years.[17] The Suez Canal Company was not due to revert to the Egyptian government until 16 November 1968 under the terms of the treaty.[18]

Despite the establishment of such an agreement with the British, Nasser's position remained tenuous. The loss of Egypt's claim to Sudan, coupled with the continued presence of Britain at Suez for a further two years, led to domestic unrest including an assassination attempt against him in October 1954. The tenuous nature of Nasser's rule caused him to believe that neither his regime, nor Egypt's independence would be safe until Egypt had established itself as head of the Arab world.[19] This would manifest itself in the challenging of British Middle Eastern interests throughout 1955.

Britain's close relationship with the two Hashemite kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan were of particular concern to Nasser. In particular, Iraq's increasingly amicable relations with Britain were a threat to Nasser's desire to see Egypt as head of the Arab world. The creation of the Baghdad Pact in 1955 seemed to confirm Nasser's fears that Britain was attempting to draw the Eastern Arab World into a bloc centred upon Iraq, and sympathetic to Britain.[20] Nasser's response was a series of challenges to British influence in the region that would culminate in the Suez Crisis.

**Frustration of British aims**

Throughout 1955 and 1956 Nasser pursued a number of policies that would frustrate British aims throughout the Middle East, and result in increasing hostility between Britain and Egypt. Nasser "... played on the widespread suspicion that any Western defence pact was merely veiled colonialism and that Arab disunity and weakness—especially in the struggle with Israel—was a consequence of British machinations."[20] He also began to align Egypt with the kingdom of Saudi Arabia—whose rulers were hereditary enemies of the Hashemites—in an effort to frustrate British efforts to draw Syria, Jordan and Lebanon into the orbit of the Baghdad Pact. Nasser frustrated British attempts to draw Jordan into the pact by sponsoring demonstrations in Amman, leading King Hussein to dismiss the British commander of the Arab Legion Glubb Pasha in March 1956 and throwing Britain's Middle Eastern security policy into chaos.[21]

Nasser struck a further blow against Britain by negotiating an arms deal with communist Czechoslovakia in September 1955[22] thereby ending Egypt's reliance on Western arms. Later, other members of the Warsaw Pact also sold arms to Egypt and Syria. In practice, all sales from the Eastern Bloc were authorised by the Soviet Union, as an attempt to increase Soviet influence over the Middle East. This caused tensions in the United States because Warsaw Pact nations now had a strong presence in the region.
Increasingly Nasser came to be viewed in British circles — and in particular by Prime Minister Anthony Eden — as a dictator, akin to Benito Mussolini. Ironically, in the build up to the crisis, it was the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell and the left-leaning tabloid newspaper *The Mirror* that first made the comparison between Nasser and Mussolini. Anglo-Egyptian relations would continue on their downward spiral.

**Nationalisation of the Suez Canal and the road to crisis**

Britain was eager to tame Nasser and looked towards the United States for support. However, President Eisenhower remained unresponsive; America’s closest ally in the region, Saudi Arabia, was just as fundamentally opposed to the Hashemite-dominated Baghdad Pact as Egypt, and the U.S. was keen to increase its own influence in the region. The failure of the Baghdad Pact aided such a goal by reducing Britain’s dominance over the region. “Great Britain would have preferred to overthrow Nasser; America, however uncomfortable with the ‘Czech arms deal’, thought it wiser to propitiate him.”[23]

The events that brought the crisis to a head occurred in the spring and summer of 1956. On 16 May, Nasser officially recognised the People's Republic of China, a move that angered the U.S. and its secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, a keen sponsor of Taiwan.[21] This move, coupled with the impression that the project was beyond Egypt’s economic capabilities, caused Eisenhower to withdraw all American financial aid for the Aswan Dam project on 19 July.[21] Nasser's response was the nationalization of the Suez Canal. On 26 July, in a speech in Alexandria, Nasser gave a riposte to Dulles. During his speech he deliberately pronounced the name of Ferdinand de Lesseps, the builder of the canal, a code-word for Egyptian forces to seize control of the canal and implement its nationalization.[24] He announced that the Nationalization Law had been published, that all assets of the Suez Canal Company had been frozen, and that stockholders would be paid the price of their shares according to the day's closing price on the Paris Stock Exchange.[25]

The nationalization of the Suez Canal hit British economic and military interests in the region. Eden was under immense domestic pressure from Conservative MPs who drew direct comparisons between the events of 1956 and those of the Munich Agreement in 1938. Since the US government did not support the British protests, the British government decided in favour of military intervention against Egypt to avoid the complete collapse of British prestige in the region. Eden was hosting a dinner for King Feisal II of Iraq and his Prime Minister, Nuri es-Said, when he learned the Canal had been nationalised. They both unequivocally advised Eden to ”hit Nasser hard, hit him soon, and hit him by yourself” — a stance shared by the vast majority of the British people in subsequent weeks. “There is a lot of humbug about Suez,” Guy Millard, Eden's private secretary, later recorded. "People forget that the policy at the time was extremely popular.” Opposition leader Hugh Gaitskell was also at the dinner. He immediately agreed that military action might be inevitable, but warned Eden would have to keep the Americans closely informed. Jo Grimond, who became Liberal Party leader that November, thought if Nasser went unchallenged the whole Middle East would go his way.[26]

Direct military intervention, however, ran the risk of angering Washington and damaging Anglo-Arab relations. As a result, the British government concluded a secret military pact with France and Israel that was aimed at regaining control over the Suez Canal.
**Suez Crisis**

**Anglo-Franco-American diplomacy**

On 1 August 1956, a tripartite meeting was opened at 10 Downing Street between British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd, U.S. Ambassador Robert D. Murphy and French Foreign Affairs Minister Christian Pineau.[27]

An alliance was soon formed between Eden and Guy Mollet, French Prime Minister, with headquarters based in London. General Hugh Stockwell and Admiral Barjot were appointed as Chief of Staff. Britain sought co-operation with the United States throughout 1956 to deal with what it maintained was a threat of an Israeli attack against Egypt, but to little effect. Between July and October 1956, unsuccessful initiatives encouraged by the United States were made to reduce the tension that would ultimately lead to war. International conferences were organised to secure agreement on Suez Canal operations but all were ultimately fruitless.

**Protocol of Sèvres**

Three months after Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal company, a secret meeting took place at Sèvres, outside Paris. Britain and France enlisted Israeli support for an alliance against Egypt. The parties agreed that Israel would invade the Sinai. Britain and France would then intervene, purportedly to separate the warring Israeli and Egyptian forces, instructing both to withdraw to a distance of 16 kilometres from either side of the canal. The British and French would then argue that Egypt's control of such an important route was too tenuous, and that it needed be placed under Anglo-French management. David Ben-Gurion did not trust the British in view of their treaty with Jordan and he was not initially in favour of the plan, since it would make Israel alone look like the aggressor; however he soon agreed to it since such a good opportunity to strike back at Egypt might never again present itself.[28]

**Motivation of the involved states**

The interests of the parties were various. Britain was anxious lest it lose efficient access to the remains of its empire. Both the French and the British felt that Nasser should be removed from power. The French "held the Egyptian president responsible for assisting the anticolonial rebellion in Algeria."[29] France was nervous about the growing influence that Nasser exerted on its North African colonies and protectorates. Both Britain and France were eager that the canal should remain open as an important conduit of oil. Israel wanted to reopen the Straits of Tiran leading to the Gulf of Elat to Israeli shipping, and saw the opportunity to strengthen its southern border and to weaken what it saw as a dangerous and hostile state. The Israelis were also deeply troubled by Egypt's procurement of large amounts of Soviet weaponry that included 530 armored vehicles, of which 230 were tanks; 500 guns; 150 MiG 15 jet fighters; 50 Iluyshin-28 bombers; submarines and other naval craft. The influx of this advanced weaponry altered an already shaky balance of power.[30] Israel believed Egypt had formed a secret alliance with Jordan and Syria.[31]

Washington disagreed with Paris and London on whether to use force to resolve the crisis. The United States worked hard through diplomatic channels to resolve the crisis without resorting to conflict. "The British and French reluctantly agreed to pursue the diplomatic avenue but viewed it as merely an attempt to buy time, during which they continued their military preparations."[32] The British, Washington's closest ally, "felt abandoned by the American government."[33] Eden did not expect the Eisenhower administration to oppose the military operation in light of the 1953 Iranian coup d'état and the 1954 Guatemalan coup d'état. There was a secret American commitment called "Plan Omega" to bring the Egyptian leader down — but by covert means and over a longer period — which had been entered into at the end of March 1956, before the seizure of the Canal company.[34] Prior to the operation, London deliberately neglected to consult the Americans, trusting instead that Nasser's engagement with communist states would persuade the Americans to accept British and French actions if they were presented as a fait accompli. This proved to be a critical miscalculation. Although Eisenhower later insisted that he first learned of the outbreak of hostilities by "reading it in the newspapers", he knew that aircraft of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were taking high-altitude photos of the allied activities. Further information came from human sources in London, Paris and Tel Aviv. US spy chief Allen Dulles later confirmed that "intelligence was well alerted as to what Israel and then
Britain and France were likely to do ... In fact, United States intelligence had kept the government informed.\[^{35}\]

## Invasion

### Operation Kadesh: The Israeli operation in the Sinai Peninsula

Operation Kadesh received its name from ancient Kadesh, located in the northern Sinai and mentioned several times in the Hebrew Pentateuch. Israeli military planning for this operation in the Sinai hinged on four main military objectives; Sharm el-Sheikh, al-Arish, Abu Uwayulah, and the Gaza Strip. The Egyptian blockade of the Tiran Straits was based at Sharm el-Sheikh and, by capturing the town, Israel would have access to the Red Sea for the first time since 1953, which would allow it to restore the trade benefits of secure passage to the Indian Ocean.

The Gaza Strip was chosen as another military objective because Israel wished to remove the training grounds for Fedayeen groups, and because Israel recognised that Egypt could use the territory as a staging ground for attacks against the advancing Israeli troops. Israel advocated rapid advances, for which a potential Egyptian flanking attack would present even more of a risk. al-Arish and Abu Uwayulah were important hubs for soldiers, equipment, and centres of command and control of the Egyptian Army in the Sinai. Capturing them would deal a deathblow to the Egyptian's strategic operation in the entire Peninsula. The capture of these four objectives were hoped to be the means by which the entire Egyptian Army would rout and fall back into Egypt proper, which British and French forces would then be able to push up against an Israeli advance, and crush in a decisive encounter.

The conflict began on 29 October 1956.\[^{36}\] Because Israel's intelligence service expected Jordan to enter the war on Egypt's side,\[^{37}\] Israeli soldiers were stationed along the Israeli-Jordanian frontier. The Israel Border Police militarised the Israel-Jordanian border, including the Green Line with the West Bank, during the first few hours of the war. This resulted in the killing of 48 Arab civilians by the Israel Border Police, and is known as the Kafr Qasim massacre. This event and the resulting trials of officers had major effects on Israeli law relating to the ethics in war and more subtle effects on the legal status of Arab citizens of Israel.

### Early actions in Southern Sinai

The Israeli chief-of-staff, Major General Moshe Dayan, first planned to take the vital Mitla Pass. Dayan planned for the Battalion 890 of the Paratroop Brigade, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Rafael Eitan, a veteran of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and future head of the IDF, to drop at Parker's Memorial, near one of the defiles of the pass, Jebel Heitan. The rest of the brigade, under the command of Colonel Ariel Sharon would then advance to meet with the battalion, and consolidate their holdings.

On 29 October, Operation Kadesh - the invasion of the Sinai, began when Israel air-dropped a battalion into the Sinai Peninsula, east of the Suez Canal near the Mitla Pass. In conjunction with the para drop, four Israeli P-51 Mustangs using their wings and propellers, cut all overhead telephone lines in the Sinai, severely disrupting Egyptian command and control.\[^{38}\]
Early actions along the Gulf of Aqaba, and the central front

Meanwhile, the 9th Infantry Brigade captured Ras an-Naqb, an important staging ground for that brigade's later attack against Sharm el-Sheikh. Instead of attacking the town by a frontal attack, they enveloped the town, and negotiated their way through some of the natural chokepoints into the rear of the town, and surprised the Egyptians before they could ready themselves to defend. The Egyptians surrendered, with no Israeli casualties sustained.

The 4th Infantry Brigade, under the command of Colonel Josef Harpaz, captured al-Qusaymah, which would be used as a jumping off point for the assault against Abu Uwayulah.

Battle of Jebel Heitan, Paratroop Brigade under attack

The portion of the Paratroopers under Sharon's command continued to advance to meet with the 1st Brigade. En route, Sharon assaulted Themed, and was able to storm the town through the Themed Gap, and was able to capture the settlement. On the 30th, Sharon linked up with Eytan near Nakla.

Dayan had no more plans for further advances beyond the passes, but Sharon decided to attack the Egyptian positions at Jebel Heitan. Sharon would send his lightly armed paratroopers against dug-in Egyptians supported by air and heavy artillery, as well as tanks. Although the Israelis succeeded in forcing the Egyptians to retreat, the heavy casualties sustained would surround Sharon with controversy. Most of the deaths sustained by the Israelis in the entire operation, were sustained at Jebel Heitan.

Air operations, first phase

From the outset, the Israeli air force flew paratroop drops, supply flights and medevac sorties. Israel's new French Dassault Mystere IV jet fighters provided air cover for the transport aircraft. In the initial phase of the conflict, the Egyptian air force flew attack missions against advancing Israeli ground troops. The Egyptian tactic was to use their new Russian MiG-15 jets as fighter escorts, while their older British De Havilland Vampire and Gloster Meteor jets conducted strikes against Israeli troops and vehicles. In the air combat the Israelis shot down no fewer than seven and as many as nine Egyptian jets, with the loss of one Israeli aircraft, but Egyptian strikes against the ground forces continued through to 1 November. With the attack by the British and French air forces and navies, President Nasser ordered his pilots to disengage and fly their planes to bases in Southern Egypt. The Israeli Air Force was then free to strike Egyptian troops at will, as the Israelis advanced into the Western Sinai.

On the 3rd November Israeli jets attacked a British vessel, the Black Swan class sloop HMS Crane near the Gulf of Aqaba. In defending herself, Crane shot down one aircraft
Naval operations

On 30 October Egypt dispatched the *Ibrahim el Awal*, a ex-British Second World War era Hunt class destroyer, to Haifa with the aim of shelling that city's coastal oil installations. On 31 October the *Ibrahim el Awal* reached Haifa and began bombarding the city with its four 102 mm (4 inch) guns. Soon after, Israeli warships challenged the *Ibrahim el Awal* and the Egyptian warship immediately retreated. The Israeli warships gave chase and together with the Israeli Air Force, succeeded in damaging the vessel’s turbo generator and rudder. Left without power and unable to steer, the *Ibrahim el Awal* surrendered to the Israeli navy. The Egyptian frigate was subsequently incorporated into the Israeli navy and renamed *Haifa*.

On the night of 31 October in the northern Red Sea, the British light cruiser HMS *Newfoundland* challenged then engaged the Egyptian frigate *Domiat*, reducing it to a burning hulk in a brief gun battle. The Egyptian ship was then sunk by the escorting destroyer HMS *Diana*, with 69 surviving Egyptian sailors rescued.

Anglo-French task force

To support the invasion, large air forces had been deployed to Cyprus and Malta by Britain and France and many aircraft carriers were deployed. The two airbases on Cyprus were so congested that a third field which was in dubious condition had to be brought into use for French aircraft. Even RAF Luqa on Malta was extremely crowded with RAF Bomber Command aircraft. The British deployed the aircraft carriers HMS *Eagle*, *Albion* and *Bulwark* and France had the Jean Bart, Arromanches and La Fayette on station. In addition, HMS Ocean and Theseus acted as jumping-off points for Britain's helicopter-borne assault (the world's first).

In the morning of 30 October Britain and France sent ultimatums to Egypt and Israel. They initiated Operation Musketeer on 31 October, with a bombing campaign. Nasser responded by sinking all 40 ships present in the canal closing it to all shipping - shipping would not move again until early 1957. On 3 November F4U-7 Corsairs from the 14.F and 15.F Aéronavale taking off from the French carriers Arromanches and La Fayette, attacked the aerodrome at Cairo.

On late 5 November, an advance element of the 3rd Battalion of the British Parachute Regiment dropped on El Gamil Airfield, a narrow strip of land. Having taken the airfield, the remainder of the battalion flew in by helicopter. The Battalion then secured the area around the airfield. They moved up towards Port Said with air support before digging in at 13:00 to hold until the beach assault. At first light on 6 November, Commandos of Nos 42 Commando and 40 Commando Royal Marines stormed the beaches, using landing craft of World War II vintage (Landing Craft Assault and Landing Vehicle Tracked). The battlegroup standing offshore opened fire, giving covering fire for the landings and causing considerable damage to the Egyptian batteries and gun emplacements. The town of Port Said sustained great damage and was seen to be alight.
Acting in concert with British forces, 500 heavily armed paratroopers of the French 2nd Colonial Parachute Regiment (2ème RPC), hastily redeployed from combat in Algeria, jumped over the al-Raswa bridges from Noratlas Nord 2501 transports of the Escadrille de Transport (ET) 1/61 and ET 3/61, together with some combat engineers of the Guards Independent Parachute Company. Despite the loss of two soldiers, the western bridge was swiftly secured by the paras, and F4U Corsairs of the Aéronavale 14.F and 15.F flew a series of close-air-support missions, destroying several SU-100 tank destroyers. F-84Fs also hit two large oil storage tanks in Port Said, which went up in flames and covered most of the city in a thick cloud of smoke for the next several days. Egyptian resistance varied, with some positions fighting back until destroyed, while others were abandoned with little resistance.

In the afternoon, 522 additional French paras of the 1er REP (Régiment Étranger Parachutiste, 1st Foreign Parachute Regiment) were dropped near Port Fouad. These were also constantly supported by the Corsairs of the French Aéronavale, which flew very intensive operations: for example, although the French carrier La Fayette developed catapult problems, no less than 40 combat sorties were completed. The French were aided by AMX-13 light tanks. In total, 10 French soldiers were killed and 30 injured during the landing and the subsequent battles. British commandos of No. 45 Commando assaulted by helicopter, meeting stiff resistance, with shore batteries striking several helicopters, while friendly fire from British carrier-borne aircraft caused casualties to 45 Commando and HQ. Street fighting and house clearing, with strong opposition from well-entrenched Egyptian sniper positions, caused further casualties. The 2nd Bn of the Parachute Regiment landed by ship in the harbour. Centurion tanks of the British 6th Royal Tank Regiment were landed and by 12:00 they had reached the French forces.

Total British dead were 16, with 96 wounded. Total French dead was ten and the Israelis lost 189. The number of Egyptians killed was “never reliably established”. It is estimated 650 were killed by the Anglo-French operation and between 1,000 and 3,000 were killed by Israel. [45]

**End of hostilities**

**International reaction**

The operation, aimed at taking control of the Suez Canal, Gaza, and parts of Sinai, was highly successful from a military point of view, but was a disaster from a political point of view, resulting in international criticism and diplomatic pressure. Along with the Suez crisis, the United States was also dealing with the near-simultaneous Hungarian revolution; as events unfolded, the U.S. decided it could not criticise outside Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolt and simultaneously avoid opposing outside aggression by its two principal European allies and Israel. Despite having no commercial or military interest in the area, many countries were concerned with what was a growing rift between Western allied nations.

While Israel refused to withdraw its troops from the Gaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh, Eisenhower declared "We must not allow Europe to go flat on its back for the want of oil." He sought UN-backed efforts to impose economic sanctions on Israel until it fully withdrew from Egyptian territory. Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson and minority leader William Knowland objected to American pressure on Israel. Johnson instructed then-Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to oppose "with all its skill" any attempt to apply sanctions on Israel. [46]

Dulles rebuffed Johnson's request, and informed Eisenhower of the objections made by the Senate. Eisenhower was "insistent on applying economic sanctions" to the extent of cutting off private American assistance to Israel which was estimated to be over $100 million a year. Ultimately, the Democratic Party-controlled Senate would not
cooperate with Eisenhower's position on Israel. Eisenhower finally told Congress he would take the issue to the American people, saying "America has either one voice or none, and that voice is the voice of the President -whether everybody agrees with him or not."[46]

The President spoke to the nation by radio and television where he outlined Israel's refusal to withdraw, explaining his belief that the UN had "no choice but to exert pressure upon Israel."[46]

On 30 October, the Security Council held a meeting, at the request of the United States, when it submitted a draft resolution calling upon Israel immediately to withdraw its armed forces behind the established armistice lines. It was not adopted because of British and French vetoes. A similar draft resolution sponsored by the Soviet Union was also rejected.[47] On 31 October, also as planned, France and the UK launched an air attack against targets in Egypt, which was followed shortly by a landing of their troops at the northern end of the canal. Later that day, considering the grave situation created by the actions against Egypt, and with lack of unanimity among the permanent members preventing it from exercising its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council passed Resolution 119; it decided to call an emergency special session of the General Assembly for the first time, as provided in the 1950 "Uniting for Peace" resolution, in order to make appropriate recommendations to end the fighting.[47]

The emergency special session was convened 1 November; the same day Nasser requested diplomatic assistance from the U.S., without requesting the same from the Soviet Union; he was at first skeptical of the efficacy of US diplomatic efforts at the UN, but later gave full credit to Eisenhower's role in stopping the war.[48] In the early hours of 2 November, the General Assembly adopted the United States' proposal for Resolution 997 (ES-I); it called for an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of all forces behind the armistice lines, an arms embargo, and the reopening of the Suez Canal, which was blocked. The Secretary-General was requested to observe and report promptly on compliance to both the Security Council and General Assembly, for further action as deemed appropriate in accordance with the UN Charter.[47] [49] Over the next several days, the emergency special session consequently adopted a series of enabling resolutions, which established the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), on 7 November by Resolution 1001.[50] This proposal of the emergency force and the resulting cease-fire was made possible primarily through the efforts of, Lester B. Pearson, the Secretary of External Affairs of Canada, and Dag Hammarskjöld, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The role of Nehru, both as Indian Prime minister and a leader of the Non Aligned Movement was significant; he tried to be even-handed between the two sides, while denouncing Eden and co-sponsors of the aggression vigorously. Nehru had a powerful ally in the US president Dwight Eisenhower who, if relatively silent publicly, went to the extent of using America's clout in the IMF to make Eden and Mollet back down.[51] Portugal and Iceland went so far as to suggest ejecting Britain and France from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) defense pact if they didn't withdraw from Egypt.[52] Nehru achieved his objective of protecting Egypt's sovereignty and Nasser's honour; the Suez War ended in Britain's humiliation and Eden later resigned.[51] Britain and France agreed to withdraw from Egypt within a week; Israel did not.

Meanwhile on 7 November in the UN, David Ben-Gurion addressed the Knesset in a victory speech that would set Israel on a collision course with the UN, the US and others. He declared a great victory and that the 1949 armistice agreement with Egypt was dead and buried, and that the armistice lines were no longer valid and could not be restored. Under no circumstances would Israel agree to the stationing of UN forces on its territory or in any area it occupied.[53] [54] He also made an oblique reference to his intention to annex the Sinai Peninsula.[53] Isaac Alters[55] writes that Ben-Gurion 'was carried away by the resounding victory against Egypt' and while 'a statesman well known for his sober realism, [he] took flight in dreams of grandeur.' The speech marked the beginning of a four-month-long diplomatic struggle, culminating in withdrawal from all territory, under conditions far less palatable than those envisioned in the speech, but with conditions for sea access to Eilat and a UNEF presence on Egyptian soil.[53] The speech immediately drew increased international pressure on Israel to withdraw.[54] Later on 7 November in New York, the emergency session passed Resolution 1002, again calling for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops to behind the armistice lines, and for the immediate withdrawal of UK and French troops from
Egyptian territory. After a long Israeli cabinet meeting late on 8 November, Ben-Gurion informed Eisenhower that Israel declared its willingness to accept withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai, 'when satisfactory arrangements are made with the international force that is about to enter the canal zone.'

The Soviet Union applied military pressure, threatening to intervene on the Egyptian side, and to launch rocket attacks on Britain, France and Israel. Although the Soviet Union's position in the Crisis was as helpless as was the United States' regarding Hungary's uprising, Premier Nikolai Bulganin sent written thunderbolts from the Kremlin to London, Paris and Tel Aviv. The Soviet leader's notes used threatening phrases like "rocket weapons", "third world war", "use of force" and a threat to "the very existence of Israel", all open enough to interpretation to be an effective bluff. Eisenhower's reaction to these threats was, "If those fellows start something, we may have to hit 'em - and, if necessary, with everything in the bucket." Eisenhower immediately ordered the U-2s into action over Syria and Israel to search for any Soviet airforces on Syrian bases, so the British and French could destroy them. He told Under Secretary of State Herbert Hoover Jr. and CIA director Allan Dulles, "If the Soviets attack the French and British directly, we would be in a war and we would be justified in taking military action even if Congress were not in session." Eden was not worried by the apparent Soviet threat, since Britain was itself a nuclear power and his government had extensive knowledge of all the Soviet Union's weapons. Bulganin accused Ben-Gurion of supporting European colonialism, and Mollet of hypocrisy for leading a socialist government while pursuing a right-wing foreign policy. He did however concede in his letter to Eden that Britain had legitimate interests in Egypt.

Financial pressure

The United States also put financial pressure on Great Britain to end the invasion. Because the Bank of England had lost $50 million (US) between 30 October and 2 November, and England's oil supply had been damaged by the closing of the Suez Canal, the British sought immediate assistance from the IMF, but it was denied by the United States. Eisenhower in fact ordered his Secretary of the Treasury, George M. Humphrey, to prepare to sell part of the US Government's Sterling Bond holdings. The US Government held these bonds in part to aid post war Britain's economy (during the Cold War), and as partial payment of Britain's enormous World War II debt to the US Government, American corporations, and individuals. It was also part of the overall effort of Marshall Plan aid, in the rebuilding of the Western European economies.

Britain's then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Harold Macmillan, advised his Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, that the United States was fully prepared to carry out this threat. He also warned his Prime Minister that Britain's foreign exchange reserves simply could not sustain the devaluation of the pound that would come after the United States' actions; and that within weeks of such a move, the country would be unable to import the food and energy supplies needed simply to sustain the population on the islands. However, there were suspicions in the Cabinet that Macmillan had deliberately overstated the financial situation in order to force Eden out. What Treasury officials had told Macmillan was far less serious than the version he told to the Cabinet.

In concert with U.S. actions Saudi Arabia started an oil embargo against Britain and France. The U.S. refused to fill the gap until Britain and France agreed to a rapid withdrawal. The other NATO members refused to sell oil they received from Arab nations to Britain or France.

Cease fire

The British government faced political and economic pressure. Sir Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, announced a cease fire on 6 November, warning neither France nor Israel beforehand. Troops were still in Port Said and on operational manoeuvres when the order came from London. Port Said had been overrun and the military assessment was that the Suez Canal could have been completely taken within 24 hours. Eisenhower initially agreed to meet with Eden and Mollet to resolve their differences, but then cancelled the proposed meeting after Secretary of State Dulles advised him it risked inflaming the Middle Eastern situation further. Eisenhower was
not in favour of an immediate withdrawal of British, French and Israeli troops until the US ambassador to the United Nations, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. pushed for it. Eden's predecessor Sir Winston Churchill commented on 22 November, "I cannot understand why our troops were halted. To go so far and not go on was madness."[64] Churchill further added that while he might not have dared to begin the military operation, nevertheless once having ordered it he would certainly not have dared to stop it before it had achieved its objective. Without further guarantee, the Anglo-French Task Force had to finish withdrawing by 22 December 1956, to be replaced by Danish and Colombian units of the UNEF.[65] The Israelis refused to host any UN force on Israeli controlled territory and left the Sinai in March, 1957. Before the withdrawal the Israeli forces systematically destroyed infrastructure in Sinai peninsula (roads, railroads, telephone lines) and all houses in the Arab villages of Abu Ageila and El Quseima.[66] Before the railway was destroyed, Israel Railways took captured Egyptian railways equipment including six locomotives[67] and a 30-ton breakdown crane.[68]

The UNEF was formed by forces from countries that were not part of the major alliances (NATO and the Warsaw Pact — though Canadian troops participated in later years, since Canada had spearheaded the idea of a neutral force). By 24 April 1957 the canal was fully reopened to shipping.[69][70]

**Aftermath**

The imposed end to the crisis signalled the definitive weakening of the United Kingdom and France as global powers. Middle-sized powers were no longer free to act independently. Nasser's standing in the Arab world was greatly improved, with his stance helping to promote pan-Arabism. Although Egyptian forces had stood no chance against the three allies, many Egyptians believed that Nasser had won the war militarily. The Suez Crisis may have directly led to the 14 July Revolution in Iraq. King Faisal II and Prime Minister Nuri-es-Said were murdered within two years of their advice to Eden to "hit Nasser hard and quickly".[71] Egyptian sovereignty and ownership of the Canal had been confirmed by the United States and the United Nations. In retirement Eden maintained that the military response to the crisis had prevented a much larger war in the Middle East. Israel had been expecting an Egyptian invasion in either March or April 1957, as well as a Soviet invasion of Syria.[72] The crisis also arguably hastened the process of decolonization, as many of the remaining colonies of both Britain and France gained independence over the next several years. Some argued that the imposed ending to the Crisis led to over-hasty decolonisation in Africa, resulting in civil wars and military dictatorships.[73] The fight over the canal also laid the groundwork for the Six Day War in 1967 due to the lack of a peace settlement following the 1956 war.[74] The failure of the Anglo-French mission was also seen as a failure for the United States, since the western alliance had been weakened and the military response had ultimately achieved nothing. The Soviets got away with their violent suppression of the rebellion in Hungary, and were able to pose at the United Nations as a defender of small powers against imperialism.[75]

As a direct result of the Crisis and in order to prevent further Soviet expansion in the region, Eisenhower asked Congress on 5 January 1957 for authorization to use military force if requested by any Middle Eastern nation to check aggression and, second, to set aside $200 million to help Middle Eastern countries that desired aid from the United States. Congress granted both requests and this policy became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine.[74]

**Egypt**

In October 1956, when the Suez Crisis erupted, 1,000 Jews were arrested and 500 Jewish businesses were seized by the government. A statement branding the Jews as "Zionists and enemies of the state" was read out in the mosques of Cairo and Alexandria. Jewish bank accounts were confiscated and many Jews lost their jobs. Lawyers, engineers, doctors and teachers were not allowed to work in their professions. Thousands of Jews were ordered to leave the country. They were allowed to take only one suitcase and a small sum of cash, and forced to sign declarations "donating" their property to the Egyptian government. Foreign observers reported that members of Jewish families were taken hostage, apparently to insure that those forced to leave did not speak out against the Egyptian
government. Some 25,000 Jews, almost half of the Jewish community left, mainly for Europe, the United States and South America, and Israel, after being forced to sign declarations that they were leaving voluntarily, and agreed with the confiscation of their assets. Similar measures were enacted against British and French nationals in retaliation for the invasion. By 1957 the Jewish population of Egypt had fallen to 15,000.[76]

The imposed ending to the Crisis gave Nasser an inflated view of his own power. In his mind, he had defeated the combined forces of the United Kingdom, France and Israel, whereas in fact the military operation had been "defeated" by pressure from the United States. The Six Day War against Israel in 1967 was when reality kicked in – a war that would never have taken place if the Suez crisis had had a different resolution.[77]

**Britain**

The political and psychological impact of the crisis's denouement had a fundamental impact on British politics. Anthony Eden was accused of misleading parliament and resigned from office on 9 January 1957, after significant pressure was leveled by President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the United States government.[78] Eden had barely been prime minister for two years by the time of his resignation, and his unsuccessful handling of the Suez Crisis eclipsed the successes he had achieved in various government and opposition roles over the previous 30 years.[79]

His successor, Harold Macmillan, greatly accelerated decolonisation and sought to recapture the benevolence of the United States.[80] The two leaders enjoyed a close friendship from their first meeting at a highly successful conference in Bermuda in March 1957. Increasingly, British foreign policy thinking turned away from acting as a great imperial power. During the 1960s there was much speculation that Prime Minister Harold Wilson's continual refusals to send any British troops to Vietnam, even as a token force, despite President Lyndon B. Johnson's persistent requests, was partially due to the Americans failing to support Britain during the Suez Crisis.

The events leading to Eden's resignation marked the last significant attempt Britain made to impose its military will abroad without U.S. support, until the Falklands War in 1982. Macmillan was every bit as determined as Eden had been to stop Nasser, although he was more willing to enlist American support. Some argue that the crisis also marked the final transfer of power to the new superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union.[81]

Despite the US uncooperation, and although British domestic politics suffered, the British relationship with the United States did not suffer lasting consequences from the crisis. "The Anglo-American 'special relationship' was revitalised immediately after the Suez Crisis." "The two governments ... engaged in almost ritualistic reassurances that their 'special relationship' would be restored quickly."[82] Eisenhower himself later stated privately that he regretted his opposition to the combined British, French and Israeli response to the Crisis.[83] After retiring from office Eisenhower came to see the Suez Crisis as perhaps his biggest foreign policy mistake. Not only did he feel that the United States weakened two crucial European Cold War allies, but he created in Nasser a man capable of dominating the Arab world. In later years a revisionist view held that the real mistake during the Crisis was made not by Eden but by Eisenhower, since in failing to support his allies he gave the impression that the West was divided and weak, which the Soviets were quick to exploit.[84] Revisionists further argued that by failing to show enough leadership in finding a diplomatic solution to the Crisis, Eisenhower and the United Nations had made the Anglo-French military response inevitable. Eisenhower was intensely worried supporting his allies might harm his chances of winning re-election - had the invasion been launched on 7 November, his reaction might have been more muted and the whole Canal would have been taken by the British and French troops.[63]

The American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was diagnosed with colon cancer and underwent surgery during the week of the Suez war. During a visit by the UK Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, at the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, Dulles suddenly asked, 'Selwyn, why did you stop? Why didn't you go through with it and get Nasser down?' Lloyd was astonished and replied, 'If you had so much as winked at us …' Lloyd gasped. The record of a bedside visit by President Eisenhower five days earlier shows his Secretary of State made an almost identical remark.[85]
France

Franco-American ties never recovered from the Suez crisis.\[86\] There were various reasons for this. "Prior to the Suez Crisis, there had already been strains in the Franco-American relationship triggered by what Paris considered U.S. betrayal of the French war effort in Indochina at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.\[86\] The incident demonstrated the weakness of the NATO alliance in its lack of planning and co-operation beyond the European stage. Mollet believed Eden should have delayed calling the Cabinet together until 7 November, taking the whole Canal in the meantime, and then veto with the French any UN resolution on sanctions. From the point of view of General de Gaulle, the Suez events demonstrated to France that it could not rely on its allies; the British had initiated a ceasefire in the midst of the battle without consulting the French, while the Americans had opposed Paris politically. The damage to the ties between Paris and Washington D.C. "culminated in President de Gaulle's 1966 decision to withdraw from the military integration of NATO."[87]

According to the protocol of Sèvres agreements, France secretly transmitted parts of its own atomic technology to Israel, including a detonator.[88]

Israel

Israel emerged victorious from the war. Its forces executed a military campaign that leading military theorist B.H. Liddell Hart termed “brilliant.”[89] The Israel Defense Forces gained confidence from the campaign. The war proved that Israel was capable of executing large scale military maneuvers in addition to small night-time raids and counter insurgency operations. David Ben-Gurion, reading on 16 November that 90,000 British and French troops had been involved in the Suez affair, wrote in his diary, ‘If they had only appointed a commander of ours over this force, Nasser would have been destroyed in two days.’[90] The war also had tangible benefits for Israel. The Straits of Tiran, closed by Egypt since 1951 was re-opened. Israeli shipping could henceforth move freely through the Straits of Tiran to and from Africa and Asia. The Israelis also secured the presence of U.N. Peacekeepers in Sinai. Operation Kadesh bought Israel an eleven year lull on its southern border with Egypt.[91] In October 1965 Eisenhower told Jewish fundraiser and Republican party supporter Max M. Fisher that he greatly regretted forcing Israel to withdraw from the Sinai peninsula; Vice-President Nixon recalled that Eisenhower expressed the same view to him on several occasions.[92]

Other parties

Lester B. Pearson, who would later become the Prime Minister of Canada, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957 for his efforts in creating a mandate for a United Nations Peacekeeping Force, and he is considered the father of the modern concept of peacekeeping. The Suez Crisis contributed to the adoption of a new national flag for Canada in 1965, without references to that country’s past as a colony of France and Britain. The Egyptian government had objected to Canadian
peacekeeping troops on the grounds that their flag at that time included a British ensign. As Prime Minister, Pearson would advocate the simple Maple Leaf that was eventually adopted.

After Suez, Cyprus, Aden and Iraq became the main bases for the British in the region while the French concentrated their forces at Bizerte and Beirut. UNEF was placed in the Sinai (on Egyptian territory only) with the express purpose of maintaining the cease-fire. While effective in preventing the small-scale warfare that prevailed before 1956 and after 1967, budgetary cutbacks and changing needs had seen the force shrink to 3,378 by 1967.

The Soviet Union, after long peering through the keyhole of a closed door on what it considered a Western sphere of influence, now found itself invited over the threshold as a friend of the Arabs. Shortly after it reopened, the canal was traversed by the first Soviet warships since World War I. The Soviets' burgeoning influence in the Middle East, although it was not to last, included acquiring Mediterranean bases, introducing multipurpose projects, supporting the budding Palestinian liberation movement and penetrating the Arab countries.\[93\]

Notes

[1] The Suez Crisis is also known as the Suez War or 1956 War, commonly known in the Arab world as the Tripartite aggression; other names include the Sinai war, Suez–Sinai war, 1956 Arab–Israeli War, the Second Arab–Israeli War, Suez Campaign, Sinai Campaign, Kadesh Operation and Operation Musketeer.


[5] How Britain France and Israel Got Together (http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,824571,00.html), Time, November 12, 1956. "Within 24 hours after Israel invaded Egypt, Britain and France joined in an ultimatum to Egypt and Israel—and then began to bomb Cairo. Israel's Foreign Ministry talked of "the unexpected intervention of Britain and France." Britain's Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd protested: "There was no prior agreement between us." Despite their words, there was plenty of evidence to show that the two attacks were planned in collusion ("orchestration" was the French word for it). In this conspiracy, France was the instigator, Britain a belated partner, and Israel the willing trigger."


[10] Yergin, p. 480


[13] Darwin, p. 207. "Nothing could have been better calculated to lash popular Muslim feeling to new fury... and to redouble Egyptian hostility to Britain on whose 'betrayal' of the Palestine Arabs the catastrophe could easily be blamed."

[14] Butler, p. 111


[17] Butler, p. 112


[22] Darwin, p. 211

[23] Kissinger, p. 528

References

- http://www.lrb.co.uk/v15/n04/keith-kyle/lacking-in-style
- http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ydRHCPWngioC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Eisenhower+%26+Israel:+U.&hl=en&ei=dVXTeqjgEgKfQ9F9-S2DA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBkQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=f=false

[71] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6085264.stm
[72] Kyle, Keith Suez: Britain's End of Empire in the Middle East p. 493
[74] http://novaoonline.nvcc.edu/elie/evans/his135/Events/Suez56.htm
[85] http://www.lrb.co.uk/v15/n04/keith-kyle/lacking-in-style

**External links**

• Sinai Campaign 1956 (http://www.jafi.org.il/education/100/maps/sinai.html)
• Canada and the Suez Crisis (http://www.suezcrisis.ca/)
• July 2006, BBC, Suez 50 years on (http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/5199392.stm)
• Detailed report on the Suez campaign by Ground Forces Chief of Staff General Beaufre, French Defense Ministry archive (http://www.servicehistorique.sga.defense.gouv.fr/04histoire/dossierdushd/suez/suezcarr2.htm) *(French)*
• Bodleian Library Suez Crisis Fiftieth anniversary exhibition (http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/suez/suez.html)
• Suez index (http://www.britains-smallwars.com/suez/suez-index.html) at Britains-smallwars.com - accounts by British servicemen that were present

**Media links**

• Newsreel film, British Prime Minister’s broadcast (http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=61875) at Britishpathe.com

*The following links are not functioning as of 6 December 2009. They are retained here for reference.*

• "The Suez canal and the nationalization by Colonel Nasser" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=AFE85006880&random=3614851046) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 1 August 1956 *Fr.* (views of Nasser EG, Pineau FR, Lloyd UK, Murphy US, Downing street, comment on international tension)
• "The new pilots engaged for the Suez canal" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=AFE85006971&random=6950306567) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 3 October 1956 *French* (views of Port Said, the canal and Ferdinand de Lesseps’ statue few weeks before the Suez Crisis, incl. a significant comment on Nasser)
• "French paratroopers in Cyprus" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=CAF96065803&random=4978278098) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 6 November 1956 *French* (details on the French-British settings and material, views of Amiral Barjot, General Keightley, camp and scenes in Cyprus)
• "Dropping over Port Said" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=CAF96065804&random=879001678) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 6 November 1956 *French* (views of British paratroopers dropping over Port Said, comment on respective mission for the French and British
(views of French-British in Cyprus, landing in Port Fouad, landing Port Said, Gal Massu, Gal Bauffre, convoy)

• "The French in Port Said" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=I00015973&random=5080040484) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 9 November 1956 mute
(views of prisoners and captured material, Gal Massu, para commandos, Egyptian cops surrender, Gal Beauffre, landing craft on the canal)

• "Dropping of Anglo-French over the canal zone" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=AFE85007049&random=9555771826) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 14 November 1956 French
(views of 2 Nordatlas, paratroopers, dropping of para and material circa Port Said, comment on no bombing to secure the population)

• "Canal obstructed by sunken ships" (http://mp4.ina.fr/ogp/contenu_video.php?id_notice=AFE85007052&random=4486718388) French news from the National Audiovisual Institute, 14 November 1956 French
(views of troops in Port Said, Ferdinand de Lesseps' statue, comment on the 21 ships sunken by the "dictator")