London's Aims Stated
By DREW MIDDLETON Special to The New York Times.
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LONDON, Oct. 31—Prime Minister Eden and the British Cabinet deliberately risked United States displeasure when they decided upon military intervention in Egypt.

They saw such action as the only means of obtaining the three goals that they regard as vital to Britain and the free world.

According to sources whose information on what happened on the highest Government level in the last forty-eight hours must be regarded as unimpeachable, these goals were:

¶Preventing President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt from achieving mastery of the Arab world through a series of palace revolutions in other Middle Eastern states and leading a united Arab crusade against Israel.

¶Solution of political differences between Israel and the Arab states based upon a more enduring basis than the present twilight state that is neither war nor peace.

¶A just solution of the dispute between Egypt and the West over President Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal company. This, it was said, was not one of the motivating factors in the decision to

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LONDON DEFINES ITS AIMS IN EGYPT

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intervene. But it is now regarded as an essential condition of a permanent settlement.

As the motives that led to the decision became better known today it was apparent that intervention was neither a nostalgic return to Britain's imperial past nor the result of blind anger at the steady deterioration of Britain's position in the Middle East.

Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd and Eliahu Elath, Israel's Ambassador to Britain, who returned to London today, have firmly rejected suggestions that Britain and France inspired Israel's attack on Egypt to create an opportunity for intervention.

Both the British and Israelis concede that Britain did warn the Israeli Government not to attack Jordan. In that event Britain would have had to go to Jordan's aid under the British-Jordanian treaty. It has been contended that this warning was interpreted by the Israeli high command as a "go ahead" signal for an attack on Egypt.

This, a source commented, does less than justice to the intelligence of the Israelis. They have never regarded Jordan as the important enemy. Egypt is the center of anti-Israeli military preparations in the Middle East.

Indeed, from an exposition of the "whys" of the situation that became available today it is evident that the Government understood that intervention would be exploited in the neutral, uncommitted nations by Communist propagandists as an example of "imperialism" and that for this and other reasons it would arouse intense unpopularity for Britain in the United States, the commonwealth and the free world.

Recital of Circumstances

The Government is convinced that this unpopularity will evaporate when it is seen that intervention works, that the policy goals will be achieved and that a catastrophic war with an Arab coalition headed by President Nasser will be avoided.

No one in the Cabinet, from the Prime Minister on down, "likes" the policy that has been adopted. But they were faced with what was described as an extremely difficult choice of evils, between intervention and an increasingly rapid deterioration of the West's position in the Middle East, both as it concerns the Arab states and as it concerns the Soviet Union.

In the light of their experiences in the last three months the British and French leaders felt they had no choice but to go it alone.

The circumstances that led to the decision to intervene without prior discussion with the United States were described at length today. Summarized, they are as follows:

¶The military situation arising from Israel's invasion of Egypt was such that only rapid positive action on the spot was considered sufficient to attain the primary, immediate objective of safeguarding freedom of transit through the Suez Canal.

¶Discussion with the United States on such action would have taken time and prevented the British and French from acting as quickly as was necessary under the circumstances.

¶Finally, and most important, over the last three months the action that might have arrested the steady deterioration of the position in the Middle East has not been taken because Britain and France tried and failed to win the United States approval of such action.

In this connection it was stated that even when it was obtained, the cooperation of the United States over measures to settle the dispute about the Suez Canal has led nowhere. Both the eighteen-power proposal drafted at the first international conference after Egypt's nationalization of the canal company and the Suez Canal Users Association were the result of United States cooperation and, in some respects, initiative.

Neither measure, it is asserted had the slightest effect upon Egypt's nationalization of the canal company. In regard to the Suez Canal Users Association, it was said, Secretary of State Dulles was at pains to make it clear that the United States was not prepared to equip the association with powers that would induce President Nasser to negotiate.

Choice as British Saw It

The choice, as the British saw it, was between preventive action now or endless discussion and debate without tangible results.

It is conceded that Britain and France acted in a manner that could be called "high-handed" abroad or "resolute" at home. The British Cabinet is quite willing to stand on the ultimate results. In this it is following the tradition of executive action under which such action, once taken, is submitted to the House of Commons for approval.

Two points were made by sources qualified to know why the Government acted as it did.

First, there is not now, nor has been, any belief that the policy of the United States Government would alter drastically if, as most officials expect, President Eisenhower is re-elected.

Second, the personal desire on the part of various members of the Government to "show up" Mr. Dulles was not involved in the decision. Intervention was too drastic a step; it involved too many calculated risks and penalties for it to be influenced by such a puerile reason.

It is freely conceded, of course, that cooperation with Mr. Dulles has not led to uniformly happy results, from the British point of view. But the tendency is to ascribe this to policy, not personality.

The timetable of events, provided by a source with the highest qualifications, appears to substantiate that the British Government, if it did not consult, at least informed the United States as much as possible.

Prime Minister Eden received the first news of Israel's invasion of Egyptian territory at about 8 o'clock Monday night while he was host at a dinner at 10 Downing Street for the Norwegian Premier.

He immediately asked the Cabinet Ministers present to meet with him after the dinner. Other Ministers were summoned for the impromptu meeting.

Next day, Tuesday, Premier Guy Mollet and Foreign Minister Christian Pineau of France flew over from Paris for a conference. This began at about 1 P. M. At 4:30 P. M. Sir Anthony arose in the House of Commons to announce the ultimatum to Egypt and Israel and the decision to intervene.

The French, it was emphasized, did not come to London with a proposal for intervention. The decision was hammered out in the French-British discussion.

The British acknowledge that the United States was not consulted. But they assert that the United States was kept informed. Early on Tuesday morning, they said, a memorandum dealing with the British views on the situation arising from the Israeli invasion was dispatched to the United States Embassy. No earlier notification was possible, since the situation had taken shape only in the preceding four hours.

On Tuesday the draft of the Prime Minister's statement was not completed until 3:45 P. M., three-quarters of an hour before it was due for delivery in the House of Commons.

As soon as Sir Anthony began to speak copies were sent to the Foreign Office for transmission to Washington and to the United States Embassy, the British said.

The British are reticent about the contents of the exchanges between Downing Street and the Foreign Office and the White House and the State Department since then. But there is general agreement that the tone of the Washington messages was not as frigid as some American reports have said.

Underlying Differences

In both capitals, it was stated, the underlying differences between the British and French and the American approach to the Middle East are well understood, even if they are deplored.

One salient difference, stressed by an informant, was that whereas the Suez Canal and the oil supplies that pass through it were of maximum importance to Britain and France, their importance to the United States, as Mr. Dulles has conceded, was not great.

Britain and France also differ with the United States on future political development of the area.

The British and French are convinced, on the basis of intelligence reports, that the present regimes in Jordan, Syria and Iraq are all threatened by young groups of officers encouraged by Egyptian propaganda and, in some cases, financed by Egypt.

These groups are considered capable of a successful revolution. This, it is maintained, would be followed by the organization of a military and political alliance with only one aim—the liquidation of Israel. This is the catastrophic war whose prevention is one of the goals of British policy.

Winthrop W. Aldrich, United States Ambassador, stressed in a speech tonight that despite the present differences between the United States and British policy, "our fundamental policy will survive this disagreement."

The starting point of American policy is the belief that the hope of the "present age and the future rests on the continuance of a strong and constructive Anglo-American friendship," he said.

His views were warmly endorsed by politicians on the highest level. Nonetheless, they consider British-American relations at their lowest point since the dispute over the future of Indochina in the spring of 1954.

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