Paris Spurred by Events
By HAROLD CALLENDER Special to The New York Times.
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PARIS, Oct. 31—Highly responsible and well-informed circles here cited evidence today to indicate that a British-French occupation of the Suez Canal zone had been planned for weeks and awaited only a suitable occasion.

It is believed that the original project was to defer the occupation until after the United States election, but that events were precipitated when the uprising in Hungary, by giving Moscow something new to worry about, hastened Israel's military action.

There was considerable disquietude in France about the French-British decision for a showdown with Egypt. The reasons were that it had brought a diplomatic breach with the United States, that it was believed to imperil the North Atlantic alliance and that if the conquest of the canal zone led to prolonged fighting there might be dangers of a wider conflict.

Supporters of the official policy contended France and Britain were acting to save Western influence in the Middle East from the consequences of the incapacity of United States policy and he failure of the United Nations.

Boycott Plan Recalled

Some officials said Washington bore great responsibility for the events since it had made French leaders look ridiculous by preventing their making good the promises they had made to their National Assembly in August when the Suez crisis began.

The argument was made that Washington had misled France and Britain in getting them into a diplomatic routine that led only to the Suez Canal Users Association, devised by Secretary of State Dulles.

Something more than this was necessary to persuade France and Britain to accept a peaceful settlement of their quarrel with Gamal Abdel Nasser, President of Egypt, in the view of diplomats here.

At the London conference on the Suez in August it was urged that the minimum requirement for such a settlement would be United States agreement to a boycott of the canal. This would have entailed expenditure by the United States of something near $500,000,000 a year to finance the diversion of shipping around Africa. Mr. Dulles would not commit himself to this aid, which Congress would have had to authorize.

It was then that the diplomatic breach began between France and Britain on one side

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PARIS' SUEZ ROLE FIXED WEEKS AGO

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and the United States on the other. The breach reached its climax yesterday when France and Britain vetoed the United States resolution in the United Nations Security Council asking Israel to withdraw her troops to the armistice line, while London and Paris ordered a military action without advance consultation with Washington.

The breach continued to widen in September and October, after the second London conference on the Suez in September. Prime Minister Eden visited Paris with his foreign secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, Sept. 27 and again Oct. 17.

The purpose was to mend French-British fences in the Middle East; to salvage what could be saved of the French-British policy of a showdown with Egypt that Mr. Dulles had sidetracked by the conferences and to create a London-Paris alliance for that region that would henceforth act independently of Washington.

Hints of these diplomatic aims were dropped by Premier Guy Mollet and his Foreign Minister, Christian Pineau, during this period of intense French-British negotiation. M. Mollet said of President Nasser Oct. 23:

"He knows already that he has not won; he knows he cannot win."

M. Pineau said: "The game has begun, but it is not over."

Pace of Events Increases

Immediately after Prime Minister Eden's second visit to Paris the pace of events seemed to accelerate, offering new opportunities for the long-delayed showdown with Egypt.

On Oct. 18 the French Navy captured the ship Athos, apparently loaded with arms from Egypt for the Algerian rebels. This created great excitement in Paris and played into the hands of those who believed that a blow at President Nasser was necessary to restore peace and French authority in Algeria.

Four days later the French Army captured five Algerian rebel leaders by diverting their aircraft from Tunis to Algiers. It was a Moroccan aircraft and the French Army had diverted it outside French territory.

But this military stroke proved popular in France and the Government backed up the Army. This again played into the hands of supporters of a tough policy in North Africa and toward Egypt. The two problems were inextricably linked in the French official mind. The captured rebel leaders had been living in Cairo.

The day after the capture of the rebels, M. Pineau went alone to London on an unexplained visit to Sir Anthony and Mr. Lloyd. Few here believe the visit pertained to anything but the North African-Egyptian situation, which was soon to lead to a French-British ultimatum.

Iraqi Troop Plan Recalled

Just before these dramatic North African events—that is, Oct. 17—Sir Anthony and M. Mollet discussed a British plan to move Iraqi troops into the Amman region of Jordan for the period of the elections in Jordan, which were expected to show pro-Egyptian trends.

The French opposed this plan and wanted British guarantees that the troops would not go beyond the border zone of Amman. The British appear to have given the guarantees but did not arrange to postpone the Jordanian election, as the French desired.

In these talks it is understood the French took issue with the British contention that the Iraqi move was useful against Egypt, which sought to influence Jordan. The French are reported to have contended that a better way to strike at Egypt was through Israel, which faced constant provocation and might move against Egypt at any moment.

This moment came last Monday. Meanwhile the British appear to have accepted the French thesis that the two powers should be ready to act when Israel moved into Egypt.

M. Pineau addressing the Foreign Press Association in Paris Oct. 26 said it was difficult for him to determine "the exact lines of United States policy," which he suggested might become clearer after the election. Thus, it appeared that the obscurity of Washington's policy was another argument for an independent French-British showdown with Egypt.

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