

ADST ORAL HISTORY LESSON PLAN: Suez Canal Lesson
High School Grades 9-12

Big Idea: Oral history is a tool for learning about people, places, and events. Diplomats have a front-seat perspective on many international historical events.

Topics

- Diplomatic Oral Histories
- U.S. Foreign Policy
- 20th Century U.S. and World History

Description: Students explore how historians use primary source oral histories to understand the events surrounding the Suez Canal Crisis, and the people, and places from the past. They will read a collection of Moments in Diplomatic History from the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training (ADST) diplomatic oral history collection as well as other sources cited in the Resources section of this lesson to conduct a critical analysis of the interviews to better understand the international crisis. Students are encouraged to make connections between the experiences diplomats described in the oral history and their own lives.

Objectives:

Students will understand:

- the United States' role in the Suez Canal Crisis (goal of peacekeeping)
- the gravity surrounding the threat of nuclear war
- the role of the United Nations in international conflicts
- the spheres of Influence (West vs. East, USA vs. USSR, Communism vs. Democracy)

Skills:

- Identify, analyze, and interpret primary sources to make generalizations about events and life in world history
- Evaluate the authenticity, authority, and credibility of sources
- Develop perspectives of time and place

Standards

This unit is aligned with the following [Virginia Department of Education History and Social Science Standards of Learning](#):

- **World History and Geography: 1500 A.D. (C.E.) to the Present**
The Modern Era
WHII.12, WHII.12, WHII.13, WHII.14
- **World Geography**
WG.1, WG.4, WG.10, WG.17, WG.18
- **The United States 1865-present**
USII.8, USII.9

- **Virginia and United States Government**
GOVT.12, GOVT.13, GOVT.14
- **Civics and Economics**
CE.1

Using Primary Sources

Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents which were created at the time under study. They are different from secondary sources, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience, such as textbooks.

Examining ADST’s diplomatic oral history primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can give them historical empathy, learn about individual and organizational agency during this conflict, and also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.

Oral Histories & Essential Questions:

- How do historians learn about the past?
- How can the past inform our understanding about the present?
- How can one’s understanding of an event change over time?
- How are historical accounts influenced by the biases of eyewitnesses?

Time Frame:

1-3 class periods. This activity has been designed to be customized to your learning goals and your students’ individual needs. Choose to do the complete lesson plan or select parts with your students based on your schedule and objectives.

Background:

Introduction: This lesson will introduce students to American diplomats’ insights during one of the most significant conflicts during the Cold War. It is critical to understand the challenges world governments faced with during this time period. The objective is to learn the history, first-hand perspectives of the United States, as well as other countries, on the Suez Canal Crisis.

Context: The year is 1956. On July 19, 1956, the American and British governments formally let Egyptian president, Abdul Nasser, know they have decided not to fund Egypt in the construction of the Aswan Dam. Negotiations surrounding the Aswan Dam, a dam which would give Egypt the ability to control flood waters and gain hydroelectric power, had been occurring for months. Abdul Nasser is furious. In retaliation, Nasser has taken control of the Suez Canal Company. The Suez Canal is a vital transportation route for oil for countries all around the world, particularly Britain and France. Without access to this canal, their economies will be severely crippled.

Activity:

1. Ask students to closely observe each of the primary source oral histories, or break students up into 3 smaller groups with one oral history for each group.
 - a. Who created the primary source?
 - b. When was it created?
 - c. Where does your eye go first?
2. Help students see key details.
 - a. What do you see that you didn't expect?
 - b. What powerful words and ideas are expressed?
3. Encourage students to think about their personal response to the source after they read it.
 - a. What feelings and thoughts does the primary source trigger in you?
 - b. What questions does it raise?
4. Encourage students to speculate about each source, its creator and its context.
 - a. What was happening during this time period?
 - b. What was the creator's purpose in making this primary source?
 - c. What does the creator do to get his or her point across?
 - d. What was this primary source's audience?
 - e. What biases or stereotypes do you see?
5. Ask if this source agrees with other primary sources or with what the students already know.
 - a. Ask students to test their assumptions about this historical period.
 - b. Ask students to find other primary or secondary sources that offer support or contradiction.
6. Have students choose one of the three oral histories to answer the worksheet at the end of this packet.
7. Have students summarize to class what they've learned.
 - a. Ask for reasons and specific evidence to support their conclusions.
 - b. Help students identify questions for further investigation, and develop strategies for how they might answer them.

Adapted from: Cooley, Jennifer. "Primary Source Sets Toolkit." *State Historical Society of Iowa Educator Resources*, <https://lowaculture.gov/History>, lowaculture.gov/sites/default/files/history-education-pss-toolkit-final.pdf.

Suez Canal Crisis, U.S. Perspective

Allies: France, Canada, Britain, Israel

Important People: Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, President Dwight Eisenhower, Ambassador Robert D. Murphy

Ultimate Objective: To avoid a war at all costs

Background Information: You disagree with Nasser's actions in seizing the Canal, however, you believe the conflict should be resolved through diplomatic negotiations. Under no circumstances should Britain and France invade or engage in a war with Egypt. You also worry that a military attack would result in a loss of influence in the Middle East for America.

Some aspects to consider in this conflict from your perspective:

- The population of your country (do public opinion polls show they are in favor of another war?)
- Your allies (are they in favor of going to war?)
- Your military capabilities (do you have nuclear weapons?)
- The effects on the rest of the world (would it start wars between other countries?)
- All of your options (are there other more peaceful options that could be used to diffuse the situation?)
- The United Nations (how could the UN help resolve this conflict/could they?)
- Your reputation (would you lose your peace-keeping reputation as a nation if you were to engage in war?)

The United Nations - The UN is an international organization that acts as a world government. Their purpose is to provide a platform for negotiations between countries and to achieve world peace. The UN was established to replace the League of Nations post WWII.

Spheres of Influence- This term refers to a country that has a significant political, military, economic, or cultural influence over other areas or regions. During the Cold War, the world was split. There was the Soviet sphere of influence (communist) mostly in the East and the American sphere of influence (democratic) mostly in the West.

RESOURCES

U.S. Resources:

- ADST – We Don't Give a Dam: <http://adst.org/2016/06/dont-give-dam-feud-financing-aswan-high-dam/#.WkU-L9-nGUl>
- ADST – A Different Side of Nasser: <http://adst.org/2013/07/the-suez-crisis-and-a-different-side-of-nasser/#.WkU-d9-nGUl>
- ADST: The Suez Canal Company: Catalyst for an Egyptian Crisis: <http://adst.org/2018/01/suez-canal-company-unknown-catalyst-suez-canal-crisis/#.WnBwpYjwaUk>
- U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian: Suez Canal Crisis, 1956: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/suez>
- C-SPAN – Clips re Suez Canal significance: <https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?7047>
- History.com: Suez Crisis with summary, audio clips of speeches by President Eisenhower & U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles: <http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/suez-crisis>
- Cooley, Jennifer. "Primary Source Sets Toolkit." *State Historical Society of Iowa Educator Resources*, <https://iowaculture.gov/History>, iowaculture.gov/sites/default/files/history-education-pss-toolkit-final.pdf

U.K. Resources:

- Active History (UK) – Suez Canal Crisis: https://www.activehistory.co.uk/Miscellaneous/menus/IB/middle_east/1956_suez_crisis.htm
- BBC – Key Maps on how Suez Crisis unfolded: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5195068.stm
- BBC Programmes – A Very British Crisis: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/6045808.stm>
- BBC Timeline of Suez Canal Crisis: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5194576.stm
- BBC – Archival Audio: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/search?q=suez+canal>
- British Museum – Suez Canal Stamp: http://www.teachinghistory100.org/objects/teaching_ideas/suez_canal_commemorative_stamp

APPENDIX: MOMENTS IN DIPLOMATIC HISTORY ON THE SUEZ CANAL CRISIS

(1) The Suez Canal Company: Catalyst for an Egyptian Crisis



The Suez Crisis of 1956 had far-reaching implications not only for Egypt and the Middle East, but throughout the world. President Gamal Abdel Nasser had risen to power determined to rid Egypt of colonial influence and avoid Cold War alignment. When the U.S. and U.K. suddenly withdrew their offer to help finance construction of the Aswan Dam, Nasser accelerated his plan to nationalize the Suez Canal. Nasser's actions infuriated the British and French who were seeing a steady decline of their influence in the region with the rise of anti-colonial nationalism. The subsequent military incursion into Egypt by the British and the French was rooted in outrage at what these countries perceived to be an attack on their imperial interests. In a tripartite agreement, Israel agreed to launch an invasion force across the Sinai, at which point the British and French could intercede as peacekeepers. While this plan was later exposed, the British and other Western countries found it convenient, especially in the Cold War context, to paint Nasser as the aggressor. Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company and the canal remains in Egypt's hands to this day. Ambassador Raymond Hare comments on the crisis and shares his experience working with President Nasser. Ambassador Hare was interviewed by Dayton Mak on July 22, 1987.

“It was the Suez Canal Company that was nationalized, not the canal.”

Hare: I'd like to make a few observations about the 1956 “nationalization” by Nasser of the Suez Canal. The canal itself was NOT nationalized – the canal was always Egyptian. It was the Suez Canal Company that was nationalized, not the canal. You recall that Nasser had been attending one of those non-aligned meetings in Yugoslavia when, on his way back to Cairo, the announcement was made [in the press] that we were pulling out of our offer to help finance the Aswan Dam. It was obviously a blow to him and, when he got back, his counter was to nationalize the Suez Canal Company, something he had in mind for some time. [Secretary of State] Dulles intervened actively and in time came up with the idea of a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA). I don't know to what extent he thought it would work, but he was trying to avoid a conflict over the situation, a major problem. This was and remained our policy, and this is what got us into difficulty with the French and British as the situation developed. During that time I had many discussions, particularly with

Foreign Minister Fawzi, in Cairo. Fawzi was a delightful man, quiet and highly intellectual, in fact his manner of expression was so finely tuned that I used to say that I was going over to see the Foreign Minister and do a little knitting with him because everything had to be done so very delicately.

As I recall, the Egyptians had made several very affirmative suggestions for the solution of the canal problem, but they were quickly rejected by [British Foreign Secretary] Selwyn Lloyd. As you know, they, the British, had decided with the Israelis and the French on the attack on Egypt, and they didn't want any peaceful solution. What they wanted was a crack at Nasser [removing him from power]. This was also a dearly held ambition of Prime Minister Anthony Eden.

“Nevertheless, we did . . . take a very strong line against the British and French, much to their anger.”



During this period when the British and the French movement was in full swing I used to see Nasser fairly often at his request. It was rarely at the same place; we used to move around for our meetings. One time he asked to see me at the Army headquarters on the way to Heliopolis airport. On this particular day [future President] Sadat was sitting on a chair outside Nasser's office. Nasser said that there was a request that he wanted to make. He wanted to request American assistance against the British and the French. As we refined this a bit it turned out that what he meant was that he wanted American military assistance. In effect, he asked for intervention of the Sixth Fleet against the British and the French. I responded, “Mr. President, you have asked me a very serious question, as serious a question as one country can ask another – to intervene militarily against people who are our friends. Now do you mind if I ask you a question?” He said, “No.” “Are you asking my government for active military assistance against the British and the French or are you asking me, expecting that the reply will be negative, and that then you will be free to say, ‘Well, I’ve asked the Americans,’ and then you would be free to turn to the Soviets?” This was the only time I saw Nasser really angry. I said, “Wait a minute now. You asked me a hard question, and I asked you a hard question.” “No” he said. “I really meant it.” I said, “All right, thank you very much.” So I reported this conversation to Washington and got back a reply saying in effect “We would do everything we could in the United Nations.” That was the reply.

When I gave Nasser Washington's reply, I, of course, got a rather cold response. Nevertheless we did, in the United Nations, take a very strong line against the British and the French, much to their anger. Sometime later Nasser remarked to me, “You remember the time when I asked you that

question about helping us?” I said “Yes.” Nasser sort of chuckled. Nasser and I had many talks together. He liked to talk and discuss things. Except for the time mentioned above, most of our talks were about quite routine matters such as questions about property and that sort of thing. As I said, he liked to talk. If I saw him in the morning about ten o’clock he would breeze in smelling of lotion and all fresh. He used to sit up late at night, so he got up rather late. Frequently he would go over to his desk and pull out a paper that he was working on late the night before, and he would say, “Look what this is.” Very often they were questions of an economic nature that he had been working on, such as development plans for Egypt and the like.

“The Egyptians were appreciative of our position in the United Nations.”

Right after the Suez affair the Egyptians were appreciative of our position in the United Nations. But after several months they realized that we had not really changed sides – that we were not anti-French, anti-British, or pro-Egyptian. In other words, we had not changed our spots, and they became very unhappy. To add to their anger we had done some things that were quite unfriendly; we had refused to sell them certain things they badly wanted, and we had held on to some money of theirs. But this anti-American attitude gradually subsided for a time, largely owing to the PL 480 agreement...the remaining months of my time in Egypt were spent working on [this] agreement. My successor in Cairo once said that it gave rise to a sort of honeymoon period.

[Public Law 480 created the Food for Peace program, an international food assistance program that in this case would provide Egypt with much-needed wheat.]

(2) The Suez Crisis — And A Different Side of Nasser



Gamal Abdel Nasser was one of the most influential modern-day leaders in the Middle East. As part of the Free Officers Movement, he helped overthrow King Farouk I in 1952 [read about the [U.S. embassy's response to the 1952 Cairo riots](#)] and began modernizing Egypt. He took a hard-line approach towards Western domination of Egypt and the rest of the Arab world. On July 26, 1956 he announced he was nationalizing the Suez Canal Company.

This came on the heels of strengthened ties with the Soviet Union and recognition of the People's Republic of China, which in turn led the United Kingdom and [the U.S. to withdraw funding to build the Aswan Dam](#), seen as integral to Nasser's plans for modernization. Nationalization of the Suez Canal Company prompted an attack by the Israeli, British, and French military forces of Sinai and the bombing of Cairo with the objective of reestablishing Western control of the Suez Canal as well as removing Nasser from office.

The United Nations, supported by the United States, condemned the attack and pressured Britain and France to withdraw their forces. However, the Israeli forces remained until March 1957. A UN peacekeeping contingency, the first of its kind, was dispatched to the Suez Canal to ensure and oversee the withdrawal of foreign troops. Nasser's victory increased his popularity, which helped him create both the Non-Aligned Movement and promote pan-Arab unity. He is viewed as one of the most influential Arab leaders of the 20th century.

Raymond A. Hare, who served as ambassador throughout the Middle East, played a crucial part in mediating the UN intervention during the Suez Crisis and helped contain the escalating conflict. He was also on good terms with Nasser and in these excerpts provides some surprising insights on Nasser's traits as well as Hare's efforts to improve bilateral relations with Egypt.

He was interviewed by Dayton Mak, beginning in July 1987. James O'Brien Howard was a regional Agricultural Attache of the U.S. Foreign Agriculture Service in charge of Egypt, Sudan, Syria, and Lebanon and worked on the development of the agricultural infrastructure in Egypt and talks about how his wife and family were evacuated during the Suez Crisis. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart

Kennedy beginning in August 20, 1993.

The U.S. and others evacuate as UK, France and Israel attack Egypt

Raymond A. Hare



HARE: Turning now to my years as Ambassador to Egypt, I'd like to make a few observations about the 1956 "nationalization" by Nasser of the Suez Canal. The canal itself was NOT nationalized – the canal was always Egyptian. It was the Suez Canal Company that was nationalized, not the canal.

You recall that Nasser had been attending one of those non-aligned meetings in Yugoslavia when, on his way back to Cairo, the announcement was made that we were pulling out of our offer to help [finance the Aswan Dam](#) (an embankment dam across the Nile River). It was obviously a blow to him and, when he got back, his counter was to nationalize the Suez Canal Company, something he had in mind for some time.

United States Secretary of State John F. Dulles intervened actively and in time came up with the idea of a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA). I don't know to what extent he thought it would work, but he was trying to avoid a conflict over the situation, a major problem. This was and remained our policy, and this is what got us into difficulty with the French and British as the situation developed....

As I recall it, the Egyptians had made several very affirmative suggestions for the solution of the canal problem, but they were quickly rejected by [British Foreign Secretary] Selwyn Lloyd. As you know, they, the British, had decided with the Israelis and the French on the attack on Egypt, and they didn't want any peaceful solution. What they wanted was a crack at Nasser. This was also a dearly held ambition of British Prime Minister Anthony Eden....

I was sitting on the roof of the Embassy Residence one Sunday when a U.S. Marine guard came over with a "very important" message. The telegram was to the effect that something was going on in Israel, it wasn't clear what it was....So I called our staff together and worked through the night trying to puzzle it out. But we couldn't figure out any reason why the Israelis at that particular time should

be attacking Egypt. I don't think my friend [British Ambassador] Humphrey Trevelyan knew either in the beginning. However, soon after, in the evening, he came over and said "It's Egypt!" I heard it first from him.

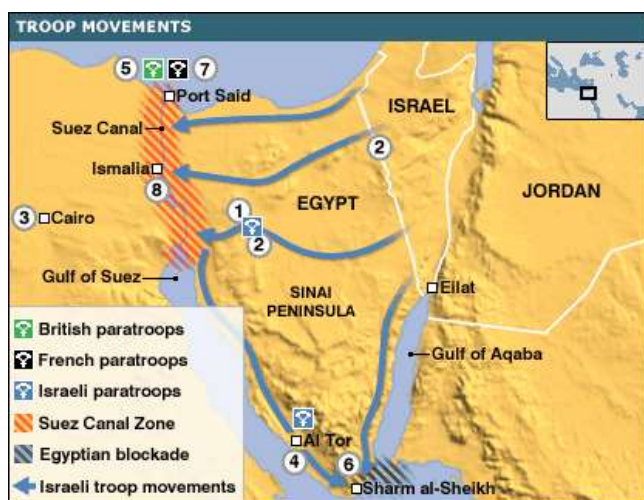
This caused us immediately to implement our evacuation plan, which actually took place in stages because the Israelis apparently jumped the gun a bit and had gone as far as really intended before the British and the French had gotten into their ships and lumbered around and gotten into the thing.

When it became clear just how serious the situation was, we began evacuation to Alexandria with the help of the Egyptian officials. One of our problems was that while we had this very carefully planned evacuation, the French, who had none, tried to scramble into our evacuation, which was a bit difficult. Also, our route to Alexandria was across a desert road which went around an Egyptian military installation.

By this time the British were really moving in, and their planes were flying around, making us rather nervous. I didn't want them dropping any bombs on our convoy, so I sent several urgent telegrams off to London, which I understand got to the desk of Eden who got very annoyed with one Raymond Hare for bothering him about this.

Anyway, eventually our group got to Alexandria and on to a couple of navy landing crafts which took them to other ships for the final evacuation to Malta or Cyprus, I've forgotten which, and they were eventually transferred to American civilian ships. A curious thing happened in the process, one which had a strange effect on many of our people, leaving them starry-eyed and wondering.

They were transferred to a small ship called the Chilton, as I recall. When they boarded the Chilton they were met by the ship's crew with a degree of warmth and friendliness that touched them deeply, so much so that whenever our group could talk about it afterwards tears would come to their eyes. The sudden spirit of camaraderie had come like a miracle, and they would talk about it as a sort of "Chilton miracle."



“It was one of the most traumatic experiences in our whole career”

James O’Brien Howard

HOWARD: There was considerable concern about security. The Embassy buildings were all within a compound with a wall around them. On this particular day, I was somewhere around town and I decided to stop by the Embassy and get briefed on what the latest news was.

When we got to the Embassy the gates were closed. That was a traumatic experience to drive up there and see those gates closed.

You may recall that the Brits were bringing out their dependents and the French were bringing out their dependents. We were not. We were saying that we were going to work with Nasser and saw nothing to worry about and left our dependents there.

This was a source of some anxiety for all of us in the Embassy. My home was out in Maadi, which is on the desert in a suburban area some distance from downtown Cairo. In this desert area lived a number of Americans. We had a network of communications. It was my job to contact six families and give the word, whatever the word might be. We wouldn’t depend on the telephone for fairly obvious reasons.

When the British decided to bring out their dependents, there was a big debate in the Embassy. The Ambassador brought in the DCM [Deputy Chief of Mission], the Administrative Officer, etc. and they debated until well into the evening what word they were going to pass out through this network. By the time it got to me, it was 9:00 in the evening. The word was that the Ambassador said the Embassy was watching things very carefully. There was nothing to be concerned about at the moment....

I have to get into my car and drive around to these six neighbors. One of these neighbors was a young Naval MD research officer who was over there on a Naval research project. He had just moved into his house and had been unpacking all day and hadn’t been into the Embassy.

I went up and introduced myself and said, “The Ambassador says to tell you you are not to worry.” His wife is standing there too.

“I am not to worry about what?” I told him about the Brits withdrawing their dependents, etc. This got him so upset he didn’t get any sleep all night.

Before the war happened, before the invasion, things had been getting somewhat better. It looked as though the UN was going to be able to negotiate a settlement. So, I talked to Pete Hart about resuming travel....

I got to Port Sudan and just as I arrived the hotel clerk said that my wife had called. This is in the middle of Africa and you know your wife is not going to call to say howdy. I didn’t want to show too much concern for obvious diplomatic reasons. I tried to call her but there wasn’t any chance of getting through to Cairo.

After asking, I was told that the next plane flew in the next morning. None of this news had reached Port Sudan. So when the plane arrived there was Jim Howard out on the tarmac.... Thank heavens it

was a British captain.

As he stepped out of the plane I said, “Captain, what’s happening around the world?”

He says, “Well, do you want to start with Hungary or with Cairo?” The Hungarian revolution was taking place. I said, “Well, Cairo was closer.” And he told me what had happened.

Later my wife got through a message saying that the Ambassador said I was not to come back but to go to Rome and join them there. Now think about that. I have a wife and two small children, an office and I am told not to come back.

Well, I got back to Khartoum, Sudan pretty quickly and here was Ambassador Pinkerton [from Lebanon] and a couple of assistants, that was all the staff he had, and Jim Howard sitting around this big radio with ears glued to BBC, listening to the news. Eventually I flew out from there via Libya to Rome.

Meanwhile, the decision had been immediate to evacuate the dependents. But how do you get them out? At first we were going to send in American planes to take them out. Winifred, my wife, was teaching math in the Cairo-American College, a high school, because they couldn’t get teachers due to the crisis.

All the American dependents went out and all but a small nucleus of the Embassy staff left too. Somehow our house became a source of information for that area out there in the desert. She said people were there until 10:00 that evening. She finally got the two small children asleep and the phone rang and she was told a plane was coming at 1:00 or 2:00 to take out dependents.

Since she had a diplomatic passport and could get through barriers easier than some others, she was told to be present with her two children and one suitcase a piece that she would be able to carry. She said, “My children have just gotten to sleep. Can’t I come on a later plane?” They finally agreed that she could.

Well, the plane got there and Nasser wouldn’t let it land and it had to go back to Greece. So it would have been a waste anyway. They finally — several days later — were allowed to go by car convey to Alexandria. You may recall that by that time [U.S. Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles had rattled the sword a bit and said that Nasser was going to allow an American ship to get in there and get those dependents or there would be trouble.



So she drove across the desert with these two small children and an Egyptian and got to Alexandria. There was antiaircraft fire and bombs were falling, but they were not hurt. She said that somebody struck a match to light a cigarette and was almost jumped on.

So they stayed that night and the next day they were loaded on this Naval vessel that had been sent in to bring them out. This was done on a 24-hours basis. It was a troop ship full of Marines. There were two compartments. Winifred was put in charge of the women and children in one of these two compartments. She said, "There were women who were pulled out like that, who didn't know where their husbands were or couldn't get in touch with them and didn't have any money, who were pregnant, etc. It was a terrible thing."

They sat there in the harbor for hours because Nasser wouldn't pull up the mines. They had to keep the kids out on the deck with life jackets in case they were bombed.... Finally Nasser did pull up the mines. The Egyptian ships were right under the edge of our ship, shooting, antiaircraft fire, using our ship for protection, which didn't make them feel any happier.

But, anyway, when they did bring up the nets, every ship in the harbor started out and one cut across in front of ours. By this time Winifred was privy to the captain's discussions with the key people. He said, "Don't worry, let him go first. If there are mines out there, they will harvest them."

Well, they did get out and went to Crete where they changed ships and then on to Naples where I met them....It was one of the most traumatic experiences in our whole career.

A request for U.S. assistance

Raymond A. Hare



HARE: During this period when the British and the French movement was in full swing, I used to see Nasser fairly often at his request. It was rarely at the same place; we used to move around for our meetings. One time he asked to see me at the Army headquarters on the way to Heliopolis airport.

On this particular day [Anwar] Sadat [close confidant and later President] was sitting on a chair outside Nasser's office. Nasser said to me that there was a request that he wanted to make. He

wanted to request American assistance against the British and the French. As we refined this a bit it turned out that what he meant was that he wanted American military assistance. In effect, he asked for intervention of the Sixth Fleet against the British and the French.

I responded, "Mr. President, you have asked me a very serious question, as serious a question as one country can ask another – to intervene militarily against people who are our friends. Now do you mind if I ask you a question?" He said, "No."

"Are you asking my government for active military assistance against the British and the French or are you asking me, expecting that the reply will be negative, and that then you will be free to say, 'Well, I've asked the Americans,' and then you would be free to turn to the Soviets?"

This was the only time I saw Nasser really angry. I said, "Wait a minute now. You asked me a hard question, and I asked you a hard question."

"No" he said.

"I really meant it." I said, "All right, thank you very much." So I reported this conversation to Washington and got back a reply saying in effect "We would do everything we could in the United Nations." That was the reply.

When I gave Nasser Washington's reply, I, of course, got a rather cold response. Nevertheless we did, in the United Nations, take a very strong line against the British and the French, much to their anger.

Sometime later Nasser remarked to me, "You remember the time when I asked you that question about helping us?" I said "Yes." Nasser sort of chuckled. We got over a tough one that time....

Nasser wanted to be non-aligned

Nasser and I had many talks together....When Nasser and I met about a particular matter or project, we wouldn't talk just about that subject. He liked to talk about many things. We could talk about world affairs, about area problems and just about anything.

In one of these conversations he told me his concept of how to handle the Palestinian matter. "As long as the Arabs and the Israelis are across an unmarked border or at least an unmanned border, there would be trouble.

The best thing, he said, "would be for the United Nations to station a force completely around Israel, and then just wait and see what happened." I think that is sometimes called the "refrigerator" concept, and while it had certain appeal, the idea was never pursued.

Another problem we discussed was the Lebanon situation, when Syria was so much involved there, with the support of Egypt. I remember that he told me: "You know, I wouldn't get involved there as long as one Lebanese faction opposed me. I would stay out of the place because it would be poison and I would be miserable" He was right. He was right!

We also talked about Yemen sometimes. He was interested in talking to me about Yemen as Egypt was having trouble down there, and they were thinking of moving in more heavily. I remember I

told him, “Mr. President, there’s one thing to remember about Yemen. Everybody, including the Romans, who went into Yemen got burned doing it. If I could give you any advice, stay out of there!” My advice was not followed, and Nasser had reason to regret it.



Then also we would talk about the Soviets. You recall that at the time of the British and French invasion threat, the Soviets did a lot of saber rattling, or missile rattling as you call it.

It became clear to me in talking to him that Nasser realized that this was a missile-rattling gesture rather than the real thing. At least he didn’t take it for the real thing. This leads me to say a word about his attitude toward the Soviets in general.

As Nasser would put it, his attitude was the same as he had toward the United States: Nasser didn’t want to be allies with either of us. He didn’t even want to be seen neutral, either; he wanted to be non-aligned, not tied to anybody, anybody at all.

“As for the Russians, he said, “We try to have correct relations with them, and we exchange visits occasionally,” which they did. But he added “If they ever interfere in Arab politics, then they will hear from us.” And sure enough, they did in Iraq. All the public relations facilities were turned loose against the Russians. Even in the mosques, which I would often visit because of my interest in architecture. I would hear the mullahs there preaching against the Russians. They turned it on really full blast....

Sometimes, toward the end of our conversations, we would go over the fact that really our relations ought to be better. Our discussions would go something like this: One of us would say, “Our relations ought to be better,” and we would agree to that. Then I would say, “The problem is, what do we do about it? We talk about having better relations, but what can we do to symbolize what we really mean?” He didn’t ever want to suggest anything that would be refused, he didn’t like that.

So he would say, “Oh, we should turn over a new page.” One day when he said that I said, “Fine. What should we write on the new page?” Then you would get a reply something like this. “You must understand Arab psychology better” or something of that kind. We always seemed to end up this way....

Turning over a new leaf



One day I went around to visit the Lebanese Minister to Cairo, Ghaleb Turk, whom I had known previously in Saudi Arabia. He asked me, “How are things going?”

I said: “All right.” And I told him much the same as I have just described. I told him that we’d had these conversations and we had agreed that we should have better relations, but I could never get Nasser to say anything specific about what they really would like us to do.

He said, “Do you mind? I have some good relations at the top of the government in the Presidency. Do you mind if I say a word about this?” I said I didn’t mind....

Shortly after that, Hassanein Heikal, an important journalist and confidante of Nasser, came to see me. Well, he bounced in and said “I hear you were talking to Ghaleb Turk.” I said that indeed I had. Heikal then asked, “Do you know what we want?” “That is what I am asking all the time. Can you tell me?”

He replied, “Yes. We would like PL 480 wheat!” Well, this fit right in to my own thinking at the time. This was something that we could easily do, as we had wheat practically running out of the bins. Mainly we were selling this PL 480 [Public Law 480, which established the Food for Peace program run by the U.S. Agency for International Development] for what we could call “wooden nickels” – that is, you got local currency in payment for it.

This PL 480 idea was to me an ideal answer. I felt strongly that in a situation in which the Russians were being aggressive in the area, we should not try to do them one better of the same kind. If we wanted to do something we should make it an American move, and preferably an American move that would have some broad appeal.

Well, here was an American move that would have some broad appeal. I telegraphed this back to Washington and got clearance to discuss the matter. Heikal came in to see me, and when I told him we were willing to discuss it he nearly fell out of his chair, he didn’t think we would do it. We did, of course, and the remaining months of my time in Egypt were spent working on the PL 480 agreement. My successor in Cairo once said that it gave rise to a sort of honeymoon period. Before this our relations with Egypt had been difficult....

Now finally, whenever you talk about Egypt at that particular period of time, Nasser looms very, very large. This is understandable because in a sense Nasser was Egypt at that particular time. He was not the typical hard-boiled dictator that one might think; he didn’t like blood, he didn’t liked

violence. He was rather restrained except for those speeches....



In considering Nasser one must understand that he was born of conspiracy. The revolution in Egypt had been brought about by a group of bright young officers. They had thought things out seriously and drawn on such sources as communism and Thomas Jefferson.

Nevertheless, their methodology had by circumstances to be undercover. Out of these years of conspiracy, Nasser, and I think most of that group, were willing to discuss matters with you, but they were always suspicious, and you had always to keep that in mind.

Now, one last observation about Nasser. There were always lots of visitors who came to Cairo and most of them wanted to meet Nasser. Some were notables...such as Hubert Humphrey...

But a fair number of those who came were what I called the “belligerent.” They saw in Nasser a dictator type and wanted to give him a piece of their mind. Over a period of time Nasser developed a marvelous technique of speaking to such visitors. And it was rather amusing, because these people who had gone in with eyes flashing used to come out with stars in their eyes.

(3) **We Don't Give a Dam — The Feud Over Financing the Aswan High Dam**



Egypt's agriculture has always depended on the water of the Nile; the river's perennial floods, while critical in replenishing the fertile soil, constantly threatened to wash away a season's harvest. The Aswan High Dam was built to regulate the river's flooding as well as to create hydroelectric power and a reservoir for irrigation. Its planning and financing in the 1950s played a major role in American-Egyptian diplomatic relations, and was in part responsible for precipitating the Suez Crisis in 1956. (Photo: Corbis)

Following the overthrow of King Farouk in 1952, new president Gamal Abdel Nasser viewed a new, larger dam as politically and economically vital for Egypt. The United States, looking to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East, offered to finance the construction of a dam as well as provide arms shipments to Egypt, on the condition that the weapons be used only defensively and that the U.S. supervise all training. Nasser, attempting to keep Egypt independent from U.S. or Soviet influence as well as increase Egyptian regional clout, demurred.

On September 27th, 1955, Nasser announced an arms deal with Czechoslovakia. This deal, along with Egypt's diplomatic recognition of Communist China, angered Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who saw Nasser as playing the United States and the Soviet Union against each other. On July 19, 1956, the State Department announced that the U.S. was withdrawing funding for the dam. A week later, Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, triggering a military response from Israel, Britain, and France.

Dulles' actions and behavior in regards to the Aswan Dam and lead-up to the Suez Crisis have long been scrutinized, many criticizing his impulsive decisions and prickly temperament. Others argue that Dulles was merely obeying Congress, who was concerned by the large amount of money committed and Nasser's unpredictability.

After the United States' withdrawal of funding, Egypt turned to the Soviet Union for financial support for the Aswan Dam. The dam's construction forced the relocation of over 100,000 people and several ancient monuments, including the two massive temples of Abu Simbel, which were carefully dismantled and reassembled along the shore of the new reservoir, Lake Nasser.

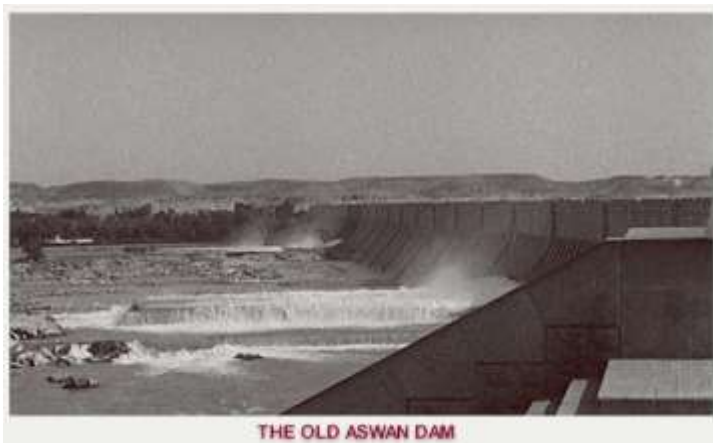
As Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in Cairo from 1955 to 1958, Parker T. Hart played a major role in

negotiations over the Aswan Dam's funding leading up to the Suez Crisis in 1956. Hart was interviewed by William R. Crawford beginning January 1989. James N. Cortada and John W. McDonald both served as Economic Officers in Cairo. Cortada observed Dulles and Nasser's maneuvering over U.S. financial support, while McDonald witnessed the construction of the dam under Russian auspices a decade later. Both were interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy, Cortada beginning in September 1992, and McDonald in June 1997.

Robert R. Bowie and Fraser Wilkins were both in Washington, D.C. during the lead-up to the Suez Crisis, Bowie as Head of Policy Planning, Wilkins as Director of Near Eastern Affairs. Wilkins was interviewed by Peter Jessup beginning in July 1988. Bowie was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 15th, 1988.

“The American loan would be based upon a prior agreement between the Sudan and Egypt on the amount of Nile water to be used by Egypt”

Parker T. Hart, Deputy Chief of Mission, Cairo, 1955-1958



HART: The United States, with an engineering organization called Alexander Gibb, Boston, had drawn up plans...for the feasibility of a High Dam on the Nile above the old Aswân [Low] Dam [finished in 1902]. We had a kind of inroad there to start with.

The British were very interested and, of course, we were sensitive to their sensitivity about taking over jobs and things that the British would normally have had in the past due to their preferred position in Egypt which was fading but it was still there in their minds.

They wanted to make sure that they didn't lose good contracts. It was an American-British proposition presented to the World Bank. Eugene Black was the head of the Bank.

During this period we are discussing, which was late 1954 to early 1955, this thing was ripening up. It was known that the Egyptians who had come out of World War II with a wonderful foreign exchange position of some £400 million — good, hard, solid Egyptian pounds of those days, equivalent to British pounds, had really — through the spendthrift vagaries of [King] Farouk and the revolution — lost practically all of it. They were down flat.

The question was how to finance this dam. Here I'll have to do the best I can to resurrect my figures.

It was thought that the dam would cost about £800 million to build, out of which about £400 million would have to come in the form of foreign exchange — hard currency — to pay for equipment, engineering skills, practically everything except the concrete and the hard labor which would be Egyptian.

Black and the Egyptians were in discussion and, after the revolution of course, the head of all economic concerns in Egypt at the time was [Finance Minister] Abdul Mon'eim al Qaysuni, who was a Western-educated Egyptian, very sophisticated and a good economist.

Finally, Nasser was given a proposition by the Bank in which the Bank said, "This foreign exchange will have to be provided partially by grant and partially by loan. The Bank is willing to make the loan provided approximately 50% would be covered by grants from guaranteed nonbank sources."

So you would divide \$400 million into two parts and half would be grant. A major element of the grant portion of the \$200 million would come from the United States, with a minor portion from Great Britain — as I recall it, 85% would be U.S. and 15% would be British.



To start the program off, the United States was prepared to grant at once about \$56 million and the British some fraction of their 15% — I can't remember how much. Both U.S. and U.K. would require, for the purposes of making these grants and to cover their own parliamentary situation and practices, an undertaking by Egypt to not only use this money in the way it was supposed to be used but to make certain reforms in fiscal management in allocation of financial resources.

The fiscal situation in Egypt was very confused. This meant some reforms concerning which the Bank had held discussions with Egypt. Qaysuni was sympathetic with this objective. Also — and this was a very key point — the American loan would be based upon a prior agreement in principle between the Sudan and Egypt with respect to the amount of Nile water to be stored by Egypt and how much was to be used by Egypt and how much would be reserved by the Sudan. In other words, a general international waters agreement would be required.

Nasser didn't like the Sudanese aspect at all. At this particular juncture you have to remember that this was late 1955. Sudan was still technically an Egyptian-British condominium, but actually was under British control. The Egyptian [foreign policy] under Nasser inherited a position on the Sudan which had been set by King Farouk: that the Sudan was really a part of Egypt and should be

considered as poised to rejoin Egypt.

Farouk, in fact, had proclaimed himself in October 1951 — before the revolution of July 1952 — King of Egypt and the Sudan. He did this while rejecting the Middle East Defense Agreement which the U.S. had proposed to Farouk's Egypt, an agreement which would have brought Egypt into an association with, but not part of, NATO.

Nasser was saddled with this policy question and he had already made his decision. He was going to do everything he could to get the Sudan to join Egypt. The Sudanese [National] Unionist Party of Ismail al Azhari, Nasser hoped would be the vehicle to accomplish this union as soon as the Sudan became independent of the British....He was doing everything he could in the framework of Sudanese politics to prepare the ground for Ismail al Azhari to win the first Sudan-wide election and to unite the two countries. He miscalculated....[After al Azhari became Prime Minister, it became clear that the Sudanese people did not want to be tied closely to Egypt, which led him to reverse his position.]...

Nasser didn't like this idea of tying up Egypt's commitments on water through the British. He'd be in a much stronger position if the Sudan were a part of Egypt. He could then dictate how the water problem should be handled.

“There was growing disillusion with Nasser and doubts about the ability to work with him”

Robert R. Bowie, Head of Policy Planning Staff, Washington, D.C., 1953-1957



BOWIE: The Aswan dam proposal was one of the efforts to try to see if we could bring Nasser into a

more cooperative relationship...This was a proposal that the United States, U.K. and the World Bank cooperate in providing the foreign financing, the foreign assistance, which was required for the building of a major dam on the Nile which would be both for irrigation and power. This was something that Nasser was very much interested in.

It was going to be an enormous undertaking which required I think \$1.3 billion, or something of that sort, of which a very large part had to come from domestic, internal resources of Egypt but of which I think \$400 million had to come from outside, foreign exchange. And that's what the U.S., U.K. and the World Bank were going to provide.

This proposal came right after Nasser had made the deal for Czech arms, which really were Soviet arms, which of course was very upsetting to Western purposes in the area because it would raise problems then about the arming of Israel and so on. Still, in cooperation with the U.K., and really under pressure by the U.K., the U.S. and the Bank offered to finance this dam in December of '55.

Then negotiations took place over the coming months and Nasser tried to improve the conditions that were offered. And he also objected very much to some of the requirements that the Bank said it had to have in order to make certain that Egypt did in fact devote the resources that were going to be required to the completion of the dam, if it was built.

“Nasser had said, ‘This is a denigration of Egypt. I won’t go for that’”

HART: Gene Black came to see me at the embassy after talking with Nasser....Black said, “I’ve talked to Qaysuni and he thinks it’s all right, but Nasser is redlining a lot of conditions that the United States has set down as prerequisites for actual disbursement. I’ve taken the position that all this is part of a Bank package offer. Nasser doesn’t even have to reply to these conditions set by the United States. They are U.S. statements, not calling for direct answer. He doesn’t even have to make a comment on them. All he has to do is say, ‘I accept the Bank’s proposition,’ but he won’t buy it.”...

I knew what the problem was going to be before he went in to see Nasser. When he came out he told the waiting press (as agreed with Nasser): “The situation is as follows. We have a substantial agreement, but there are some details that need to be worked out.”

Black gave me the text penciled and lined by Nasser, the things that Nasser would not accept. One blue-lined item concerned a prior agreement with the Sudan. This was very key. The other was the insistence on reform of his economic priorities in the various ministries to make sure that adequate money would be available throughout the project and that it was spent as it was supposed to.

Nasser had said, “This is a denigration of Egypt. I won’t go for that.”

Black told Nasser, “Look, we’ve got an agreement on everything else. Shall I say we have an agreement in general subject to a few little things?” and he said, “Yes. That’s all right.”

The press descended on Black as he came out of the office and he told them just that, but wouldn’t go into details. He went off thinking that there was a better than 50-50 chance for the project, something like an 85% chance perhaps, and he left. I wired, of course, the details of what he’d told me. It had a negative effect in Washington. There was silence for quite a while.

“The atmosphere was darkening all the time”



[Minister of State Anwar] Sadat stood up and made one of his statements hostile toward the United States aid program. He liked to tee-off on our aid program to Egypt. He had already launched one broadside about our sending over a lot of poultry that turned out to have a respiratory disease. He said, “Instead of sending us weapons, they give us sick chickens.” This made good headlines in the Egyptian press, and Ros al-Yussuf and other publications had a good time with that, with caricatures.

This time he went after us on something else — I don’t know what it was. He was pretty abusive. That turned people off in Washington. They had reports that Nasser’s people were agitating against us in Libya concerning Wheelus Field [a U.S. airbase outside of Tripoli]. The atmosphere was darkening all the time.

Dulles did another impulsive thing. Without consulting Bob Murphy, his right-hand man who was Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs and who had enjoyed the fullest confidence of the White House, he decided that he was going to withdraw from the high-dam proposal.

Ahmed Hussein, the ambassador of Egypt to the U.S., was in Egypt at this time. He returned with Nasser’s modified stance on the High Dam package, — what Nasser objected to — but stating that agreement with Nasser was at hand and affirming that matters of only secondary importance were outstanding.

When he got off the plane at National Airport, he was met by the eager press which had been following these negotiations as closely as they could. They asked, “What have you brought back with regard to the High Dam?”

He said, in effect “I brought back the Egyptian agreement. It’s now up to the U.S. Government to go ahead. There are just a few little things we have to discuss. In general, it’s agreed.”

Thus Ambassador Hussein gave an interview to the press before he had talked with Dulles. Dulles didn’t like that, either. Hussein then asked to see Dulles. Dulles had his own press notice already prepared. He handed the draft to Bob Murphy for an immediate go-over, and it was the first indication that Bob Murphy had — and he told me this himself, afterwards — that Dulles was going

to turn down the American participation in the High Dam. He was going to withdraw.

Bob Murphy called in NEA [Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the State Department] officers and others and they edited this draft in an effort to take some of the sting out of it. It had plenty of sting, regardless of what you said. In effect, what he did was to hear Ahmed Hussein and then hand him this piece of paper and say, “This is what our position is — sometime in the future maybe, but not now.”

“Congress was becoming more and more hostile to using American funds for this purpose”



Of course, Ahmed Hussein was crushed. He had been very strong for the American relationship. All his time as ambassador he worked very hard for it. He used to come in and argue with us like blazes about Israel and all those things, but basically you could see that he was hurt. He believed in the American relationship very fully....

Nasser had quality representation in the U.S., but he wasn't using it. Ahmed Hussein told me many years later that, when he came in to say farewell to Nasser before going back with his instruction about the High Dam and as he was walking out the door Nasser said, “By the way, Ahmed, don't be surprised if we take over the Suez Canal.”

Hussein said, “What!” Nasser said, “Yes.” Then somebody burst in on Nasser and Ahmed never had a chance to follow up and obtain from Nasser any elucidation or chance to argue.

As you know, Dulles withdrew the Aswan Dam offer, explaining that the provisions that Nasser had objected to were ones that Dulles felt could not be overlooked. Within a matter of ten days after the withdrawal, Nasser gave his speech in which he said, “We have now taken over that Suez Canal.”

BOWIE: More and more, Nasser was acting in ways which were seen as damaging on the Western side during the spring of '56.

And finally Congress was becoming more and more hostile to using American funds for this purpose,

responding to a variety of pressure groups. Cotton growers in the South thought that this irrigation would increase the amount of long-staple cotton and be damaging to them. Supporters of Israel saw this as building up Nasser. Nasser recognized Communist China in about May or a little earlier and that alienated the China lobby.

As I say, there was growing disillusion with Nasser and doubts about the ability to work with him, particularly over the decade, which would be required for construction of the dam, a feeling that if you carried through you might very well have so much friction over handling it and completing it that you not get any political benefit from it but would get hostility.

And finally Congress threatened to pass legislation which would have actually forbidden the use of any funds from foreign aid to support the dam. So in the middle of July Dulles finally, in consultation with the British, decided that they would simply withdraw the offer. And this of course was seen by Nasser as highly offensive: he considered it as a reflection, an effort to denigrate him; a week later, he nationalized the Suez Canal Company.

“He set a trap and Dulles fell into it”

James N. Cortada, Economic Officer, Cairo, 1955-1959

CORTADA: The position we took was serious reservations about its economic viability. Now, purely as a political measure, the United States, France, and England together persuaded the World Bank to make an offer to finance a beginning stage of the High Aswan Dam. But Nasser was a very devious guy and I seem to recall seeing something to the effect that when he visited Yugoslavia to see Tito, sometime around that period, that he told Tito he was going to nationalize the [Suez] Canal. The breakdown of the High Aswan Dam negotiations merely gave him the excuse to take that step, and how it happened was Dulles' own fault....

There was an agreement with the World Bank [and Nasser]. It was a document, signed, sealed, and delivered. A copy was in the back of Carr's safe. It was right there. The Egyptians had to meet certain requirements in terms of allocations of their resources.

What happened eventually was that, in my belief, Nasser had no intention of allocating Egyptian resources to the project in collaboration with the World Bank, the United States, France, and England. What he wanted was the Western countries and the World Bank to finance the High Aswan Dam, and get somebody else to finance the industrialization of Egypt, or vice versa.

And he knew very well that this wasn't going to fly. With that deviousness characteristic of his, he set a trap and Dulles fell into it.

Nasser instructed his Ambassador in Washington to go to Dulles and demand a yes or no to U.S. commitment for the financing. Dulles, with that arrogance of his, gave him a flat no. This gave Nasser the excuse he wanted to go ahead and nationalize the Canal, and appear before the world as a martyr victim of Western intransigence. It was quite a posture.

What Dulles should have done if he had any real diplomatic flair was to have told the Egyptian Ambassador: “You know, this is a very complex matter, maybe there ought to be other ways to do this which would give you more advantage. Let's meet two weeks from now and talk about this

again.” This would have deprived Nasser of an excuse for any action and put the monkey on his back.

Russia Takes Over

Fraser Wilkins, Director of Near Eastern Affairs, Washington D.C., 1955-1957



WILKINS: It was during 1955, you know, when it first became apparent that the Russians were shipping arms, through the Czechs, to the Egyptians. And the Egyptians were paying for it with Egyptian/Sudanese cotton.....Dulles was very much in favor of the Aswan Dam, particularly being prompted by Eugene Black. Black thought it was a great opportunity for the United States and European powers to do something important in Egypt, because of its overpopulation problem, and because of its lack of food....

As the world knows, in the fall of '56, when Dulles became aware of the arm shipments to Czechoslovakia to Egypt, he made a statement withdrawing the Aswan Dam offer “for the time being.” This is ignored by American and other historians.

But the fact of the matter is that Dulles received information in the form of an amendment, I believe, to one of the appropriation bills, saying that no more aid for Egypt if he went along with the Aswan Dam. Congress was nervous about our spending so much money out there, in the form of aid. This is the real reason that Dulles made that statement. He was prompted by the fact that our relations with Nasser were going from bad to worse....

After that the Russians picked up the deal. Instead of being a \$1.3 billion project, it became a \$600 million project under the Russians, and had never been extended. As a matter of fact, it's been a fiasco for them, too, because the Aswan Lake is much longer — it's 300 miles long — than was expected. It has more evaporation than was expected;...and malaria has returned....

They couldn't build enough electricity for Egypt. The river below the dam, going into the Mediterranean, is now so clear it has undermined all the bridges and banks, and they're collapsing. And there are no more shellfish at the mouth of the Nile and the Mediterranean. So...it's incomprehensible to me that this project could have been staffed-out by the Army Corps of

Engineers and other experts beforehand....

So much for the Aswan Dam. I wanted to say this about it, because I want to support Dulles. I think his intentions were correct. He thought it was good for the Egyptian people, but he was blocked by Congress in the long run. And then, of course, he was misled by the British, French, and Israelis in their intervening, and also by the Russians supplying arms to the Czechs through the Egyptians at that point.

Construction of the Aswan Dam and Relocation of Abu Simbel

John W. McDonald, Economic Officer, 1963-1966

MCDONALD: [I was reporting on the Aswan Dam's] progress of construction. They had the wrong design but they still did a magnificent job when it came to actually doing it. What they decided to do was basically to build an earth dam to block the Nile with earth. What they had to do then was dig an enormous canal out of the hardest granite in the world, for the Nile to pass through and around the dam itself, as opposed to having sluices through the dam as the U.S. had designed it to do.

So what they had to do was to dynamite this enormous gorge which the Nile was going to go through, which was a considerable length. And they found, and this was an anomaly, as you can imagine, at the height of the Cold War, that they needed U.S. equipment.

The Soviet equipment, particularly the trucks, enormous earth moving trucks, and particularly the drilling equipment and the drills. Their drills were not tough enough to get through that granite in which to put [the] explosives. So they had to arrange through us a negotiation to purchase American trucks and American drilling equipment. Which is a great loss of face to the Soviets right in the eyes of the Egyptians, but it just didn't work, their drills would break off because they weren't hardened steel....



It got pretty hot there. They worked around the clock, seven days a week, all year round. It would get

up to 130 degrees in the day and so they wouldn't work in that kind of heat, but they would work nights so they had enormous searchlights all over, which made it like daylight.

They had housing problems of all kinds. They had maybe 30,000 people working on that project, and they had to resettle people. It was a very complex, sophisticated project and I would go down there every three months or so and just report on what was happening and how they were getting along and what their problems were.

They also had to, because of the backup of Lake Nasser, they had to move Abu Simbel, one of the great monuments of 1400 B.C...

In 1400 B.C., the first peace treaty was signed in history. This was between the Hittites of Turkey, and the Egyptians. They signed it in what is now Syria. They had battled on the plains of Syria and they'd come to a standstill, basically, so they decided to have a peace treaty, in which they both agreed to make peace and go back.

It was clear there was no victory on either side. In my archaeological experience I went to Hattusa, which was the capital of the Hittite Empire in 2000 B.C. and beyond. There was an enormous monument, or what was left of it, that had been built to honor the Hittite victory over the Egyptians, in spite of the peace treaty which had been signed. And then in my Cairo experience I got down to Abu Simbel and that was a great monument built by Rameses II to honor the Egyptian victory over the Hittites! So the first treaty was signed and they went back and built monuments in their respective countries honoring their victory. So that's how peace was determined in those days.

But UNESCO did a magnificent job of cutting up the monument piece by piece and then rebuilding it higher up so that you can still visit it there now after the dammed lake had been filled. But [the dam] has had major ecological difficulties for downstream because the silt has not gone through and the fish...major difficulties, as predicted.

Educator's Guide (9-12+)

Teaching with Primary Sources: Document

Before Class Preparations

1. Select the source set and specific source you want the students to analyze from the primary source set website. Print off analysis worksheets.
- 2) Prepare the distribution of the document. You can make copies of the document for each student or for groups by either downloading the image from the website or using the [Printable Image Document Guide](#) to make copies of the document.
3. It might benefit the students to have the online source page displayed on a screen. If you can connect a projector to a computer, students can see the text-dependent questions, citation information, etc.
4. If the document is difficult to read in its original format, you can also supply students with the transcript, which is available on each source page below the description.
5. Have the specific source set teaching guide and this educator guide page in-hand to assist you in directing the analysis.

Objective: Get students to identify and note details.

Verbal Cues: Describe what you see. What do you notice first about the document? What does the text say? Do you see anything on the page beside words, like images or decorations? In your own words, summarize what the document says. Is there anything in the text that is strange or unfamiliar to you? What other details can you see?

Make sure students fill out the basic source information in the "About the Text" box. This will offer them basic introductory information about their source, i.e. the author, publication date, kind of document, etc.

Objective: Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the source.

Verbal Cues: What was the purpose of this text? What audience was this document targeting? Why did the author write this? Can you tell from the text what was important in the U.S. at the time the document was created?

Historical Context: What major events were happening in the world when this document was created? If someone created this document today, what would be different? The same? Do you know about other people, places and events from the same time as the document - does this help you better understand the document?

Encourage students to go back and forth between the observe, evaluate and question prompts; there is no correct order.

Objective: Invite students to ask questions that lead to more observations.

Verbal Cues: What did you learn from this document that you might not learn anywhere else? What questions does this document raise in your mind? About the author? What was happening when this document was created? How it was made? What other historical evidence could you use to help you understand this?

We want students to be able to answer this final question: What do you want to know, and how can you find out?

Whiteboard Comparisons: Have students examine a section of this text. Tell them to think about what they already know about this period in history, and have them each write one thing on a whiteboard in front of the class about the time period. Have them discuss how the text supports or contradicts their current understanding of this period. Can they see any clues to the document creator's point of view?

Letter Writing: After analyzing a document, have students pretend they have to write home to a family member about the topic, the person or the event that is discussed in the primary source. Have them write from a first-person perspective to their family member or friend as they describe the primary source in whatever way they see best.

Student's Guide (9-12+)

Analyze a Document

Title:	In your own words, summarize what the document says.
Publication Date:	Identify at least three things about this document you think are important.
Creator(s):	
Type of Document:	Describe anything about this text that looks strange and unfamiliar.

What was the purpose of this text? For what audience was the document made?

List two things the document tells you about life at the time it was created.

What major events were happening in the world during the time this document was created?

Do you know about other people, places and events from the same time as this document? If so, how does your knowledge help you better understand the document?

If someone created this document today, what would be different? What would be the same?

What questions does this document raise in your mind?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?