

## Chapter 1 : Suez Crisis - Wikipedia

*The Suez Crisis, or the Second Arab-Israeli War, also named the Tripartite Aggression in the Arab world and Operation Kadesh or Sinai War in Israel, was an invasion of Egypt in late by Israel, followed by the United Kingdom and France.*

In the past six years, the IMF has responded to a series of financial crises around the world by providing and coordinating large-scale packages of financial assistance while helping the affected countries reform their economic policies. To deal with this new situation, the IMF would have to respond more rapidly and more forcibly than ever before. When that "tequila crisis" was followed by outbreaks across East Asia in , in Russia and Brazil in , and in Turkey two years later, the accelerating demands of the coming century on the IMF began to look daunting. Background In the midst of a whirl of activity, it is easy to forget history. Nearly forty years before the pre-Christmas speculative attack on the Mexican peso, the IMF was drawn into its first international crisis, one that had many of the same aspects of speed and speculation that we recognize today as hallmarks of the globalization of financial markets. In this sense, did the twenty-first century really begin in ? On July 26 of that year, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal Company and unilaterally assumed control of the canal, displacing the international consortium that had run it for nearly a century. France, Israel, and the United Kingdom almost immediately began planning a joint military action to retake control while seeking to win international support for a diplomatic solution. One week later, however, Britain undercut the operation by accepting a United Nations resolution for a cease-fire. On December 3, the British government announced that it would withdraw its troops over the next few weeks. France and Israel also soon withdrew, and Egypt reopened the canal under its own control the following April. That this brief flare-up is universally regarded as a crisis is primarily because of the upheavals it engendered in political relations. The economic consequences were more subtle and temporary and would not by themselves have constituted an international crisis. For the United Kingdom, however, Suez was also a financial crisis. Throughout and , the United Kingdom had a current account surplus despite the disruptions to its international trade, but the value of its currency came under speculative pressure. The Bank of England was forced to deplete its U. These events unfolded at a time when the IMF was almost totally untested in crisis management. From its first financial operations in to the onset of the Suez crisis, the IMF had lent to member countries only sporadically and in small amounts see chart. The concept of stand-by lending subject to agreed policy conditions was still being developed and had been applied in only a few cases. It was not obvious that the IMF should play any role at all in the resolution of the economic or financial difficulties of the countries involved in Suez. Moreover, if the speculative outflow from sterling was not both large and sustained, the Bank of England had enough resources of its own and enough access to credit to fend off the outflow without IMF assistance. Nevertheless, the IMF was called upon to help finance the external payments imbalances of all four combatants. For Egypt, France, and Israel, this lending was conventional balance of payments support. It did not push the IMF into new activities, and was of interest primarily because of the political circumstances that precipitated it. None of these three countries had a convertible currency, and speculative financial pressures were unimportant. Those implications stem primarily from the rescue of the pound sterling from a speculative attack that created the first major financial crisis of the postwar era. Maintaining that rate was important for several reasons. Although the United Kingdom had not yet established full external convertibility it would do so in , its system of capital controls was fragmented and porous, and the pound was widely held as a reserve and investment medium. If they were to fall below that floor, the Bank assumed, this would be interpreted in financial markets as a signal that devaluation or even floating would have to be seriously considered. A second line of defense was needed. If the Americans would not provide bilateral financing, Macmillan expected to be able to count on the apolitical tradition of the IMF to permit the United Kingdom to draw the modest amounts to which it was virtually entitled. Success would depend almost entirely on U. Although Humphrey gave Macmillan no promises, the chancellor returned home confident that he could count on his American friends to help him maintain "the strength of sterling. Four days later, the British cabinet bowed to the relentless financial and diplomatic pressure and agreed to a cease-fire. As subsequent events demonstrated, however, the U. To get the

help he needed, Macmillan was forced into supplication. Macmillan tried unsuccessfully to arrange a meeting with Humphrey in late November, but he also tried to convey to him through emissaries that a failure to support sterling could have catastrophic political consequences, including a triumph for international communism. Such threats doubtless seemed fanciful to Humphrey, who replied simply that the United States would support the United Kingdom when the latter was "conforming to rather than defying the United Nations. A larger drawing, Humphrey argued, could cause "a run on the Monetary Fund, which might be as serious as a run on sterling. Without support, the parity would have to be abandoned. If the pound was to be saved, it would have to be saved on December 3. Left with no alternative, the British cabinet accepted the second half of the UN resolution and set a deadline of December 22 for a full troop withdrawal. The extent of bilateral support was still vague but it now could be counted upon and publicly announced as forthcoming. At the beginning of their meeting on December 3, Humphrey continued to insist that his government could not support a large-scale support operation from the IMF. When Macmillan revealed the November reserve losses in the House of Commons the next day, he was able simultaneously to announce that the United Kingdom would be making "an immediate approach" to the IMF as part of a broad effort to "fortify" reserves, although he was still circumspect regarding how much of the U. Speculators against sterling still had a one-way bet, but the odds were now pretty long against it. On December 6, as the Board meeting approached, Jacobsson wrote in his diary that "since the confidence factor played such a great role the amounts ought to be high enough to impress the market. On December 5, the U. Executive Director, Lord Harcourt, met with Jacobsson to discuss strategy for handling the financing request. He acknowledged that the credits would finance a capital outflow, but Jacobsson suggested rather stretching the point that, to the extent that these flows were in the form of "leads and lags" in payments, they were linked directly to the financing of the current account. Harcourt then made a more coherent argument: Up until this point, the IMF had treated the current and capital accounts as essentially separable. It also raised the specter of repercussions for the international financial system if the IMF failed to act on the British request. The Executive Board accepted this rationale and approved the request with one abstention Egypt. For the first time, the IMF had played a significant role in helping countries cope with an international crisis. Subsequently, it was called upon repeatedly to deal with other shocks to the financial system, notably the sterling crises and the gold pool crisis of the s, the oil shocks of the s, the developing country debt crisis of the s, and the financial crises in Mexico, Russia, and Asia in the s see chart. Although the IMF also began to lend regularly to help countries cope with the temporary payments effects of economic imbalances, that ongoing activity was quite small in amount relative to the occasional spurts in lending occasioned by financial crises. What has been lost in most discussions of these events is the striking modernity of the sterling crisis and its similarity to the Mexican and other crises of the s. What the United Kingdom faced in was almost purely a speculative attack on a stable currency against a backdrop of reasonably sound economic policies. As in the s, the most pressing requirement for resolving the crisis was to stem the speculative attack. In both cases, the crisis was precipitated by a clash of policy goals between maintaining a stable exchange rate and simultaneously establishing open markets for the currency. In both cases, a rapid response was essential. The length of time between the onset of the attack and approval of the financial package was almost the same. In both cases, the key was to post a large enough number to impress financial markets, convince speculators that a bet against the currency could not be won, and persuade investors to keep their money in the country. The required size of the rescue package was determined by market psychology, not economics. In neither case could the return of private sector investors be assured, but in both cases it eventually emerged spontaneously. A large multilateral package would have to be assembled to end the crisis, and the IMF was the institution best placed to do so. Because no one recognized these parallels in , the Mexican case appeared to be a much more radical departure from past practice than it actually was. When the IMF made an even more rapid and large-scale commitment to Korea in the midst of the Asian crisis in , it was building on a tradition that extended back not two years but more than forty. International Monetary Fund,

**Chapter 2 : The memory of the Suez crisis is still strong in Britain | World news | The Guardian**

*At the time of the Suez crisis, the United States had the military power to force its will on Egypt, and yet Eisenhower chose not to do so. Indeed, the United States made no military attempt to force Egyptian.*

The Suez Canal was opened in 1869, after ten years of work financed by the French and Egyptian governments. The canal instantly became strategically important, as 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 1956, 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. With the invasion and occupation of Egypt in 1956, the United Kingdom took de facto control of the country as well as the canal proper, and its finances and operations. The Convention of Constantinople declared the canal a neutral zone under British protection. Despite this convention, the strategic importance of the Suez Canal and its control were proven during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, after Japan and Britain entered into a separate bilateral agreement. The British denied the Russian fleet use of the canal and forced it to steam around Africa, giving the Japanese forces time to consolidate their position in East Asia. 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 attempt by German-led Ottoman forces to storm the canal in February 1915 led the British to commit 22,000 troops to the defense of Egypt for the rest of the war. And yet, at exactly the same moment, the canal was gaining a new role—as the highway not of empire, but of oil. The US imported another 100,000 barrels daily from the Middle East. 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 that 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. The kingdoms of Egypt and Iraq were seen as vital to maintaining strong British influence in the region. 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 its presence in the country. Added to this anti-British fervour was the role Britain had played in the creation of Israel. In October 1956, 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. 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 1956, British forces attempted to disarm a troublesome auxiliary police force barracks in Ismailia, resulting in the deaths of 41 Egyptians. Post Egyptian revolution period The examples and perspective in this article deal primarily with the United Kingdom and do not represent a worldwide view of the subject. You may improve this article, discuss the issue on the talk page, or create a new article, as appropriate. April Learn how and when to remove this template message In the 1950s the Middle East was dominated by four distinct but interlinked struggles. The first was the geopolitical battle for influence between the United States and the Soviet Union known as the Cold War. The second was the anti-colonial struggle of Arab nationalists against the two remaining imperial powers, Britain and France. The third was the Arab–Israeli dispute, and the fourth was the race between different Arab states for the leadership of the Arab world, [39] known as the Arab Cold War. In October 1956, 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. Egypt and the Arab leadership In regard to the Arab leadership, particularly venomous was the feud between Nasser and the Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri el-Said, for Arab leadership, with the Cairo-based Voice of the Arabs radio station regularly calling for the overthrow of the government in Baghdad. It will take a lot of stuff to do a job there". There was really a definite fear of hostilities, of an active Russian occupation of the Middle East physically, and you practically

hear the Russian boots clumping down over the hot desert sands. It was a source of constant puzzlement to American officials in the s that the Arab states and the Israelis had seemed to have more interest in fighting each other rather than uniting against the Soviet Union. American policy was torn between a desire to maintain good relations with NATO allies such as Britain and France who were also major colonial powers, and a desire to align Third World nationalists with the Free World camp. How can I go to my people and tell them I am disregarding a killer with a pistol sixty miles from me at the Suez Canal to worry about somebody who is holding a knife a thousand miles away? After he returned to Washington, Dulles advised Eisenhower that the Arab states believed "the United States will back the new state of Israel in aggressive expansion. Our basic political problem Zhou recommended that Khrushchev treat Nasser as a potential ally. Marshal Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, who also came to know Nasser at Bandung told Khrushchev in a meeting that "Nasser was a young man without much political experience, but if we give him the benefit of the doubt, we might be able to exert a beneficial influence on him, both for the sake of the Communist movement, and Nasser had first broached the subject of buying weapons from the Soviet Union in American public opinion was deeply hostile towards selling arms to Egypt that might be used against Israel, and moreover Eisenhower feared starting a Middle Eastern arms race. In , in order to limit the extent that the Arabs and the Israelis could engage in an arms race , the three nations which dominated the arms trade in the non-Communist world, namely the United States, the United Kingdom and France had signed the Tripartite Declaration, where they had committed themselves to limiting how much arms they could sell in the Near East, and also to ensuring that any arms sales to one side was matched by arms sales of equal quantity and quality to the other. The Egyptians made continuous attempts to purchase heavy arms from Czechoslovakia years before the deal. Nasser has the ambition to recreate the conquests of Islam. But his present position is largely due to the policy of the West in building up and flattering him". He accused Nasser of plotting to rule the entire Middle East and of seeking to annex Algeria, whose "people live in community with France". Frustration of British aims Throughout and , Nasser pursued a number of policies that would frustrate British aims throughout the Middle East, and result in increasing hostility between Britain and Egypt. 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. Nasser was our Enemy No. Nasser must therefore be

**Chapter 3 : Consequences of the Suez Crisis in the Arab World - Oxford Scholarship**

*Losing the military presence at Suez was one thing, but the loss of the canal's profitability, of which the British government was the substantial shareholder, was impermissible (Ferguson , ).*

The majority of these emerged from political, diplomatic and military failings associated with what was by common consensus the worst debacle in British foreign policy between and, perhaps, the invasion of Iraq. Essentially, it provided a long list of things not to do, errors to avoid. The Suez crisis occurred at a critical point in an on-going debate over the role and capabilities of the Royal Navy, facilitating the emergence of a viable and important future role. In doing so, it resolved " for a time at least " a bitter and high-stakes dispute over the value of naval power in general and naval aviation in particular. Since the early s, the role of the Royal Navy and even of sea power more broadly had come under concerted attack in Whitehall. This approach left little room for naval power; why seek to defend sea communications when the war would be settled quickly, by nuclear weapons? Some senior politicians and civil servants were convinced of the strategic logic of this case, while others went along with an approach that appeared to offer significant savings in defence spending. The Admiralty put up a spirited counter-case arguing that defence policy could not plan only for total war, let alone for only one form that such a war might take. Conventional forces, it insisted, including naval power, were an indispensable part of the deterrent to war; they would be essential to fighting any war if Britain was to survive; and they were vital for waging the cold war, which was bound to continue and even intensify as total war became less likely. The strategic logic of the Admiralty case was compelling but the financial implications were unpalatable; the Navy held on but only just and the assaults kept coming. Suez provided a much needed reality check. First, it was a reminder that while deterring or fighting total war with the Soviet Union was bound to be the main focus for policy, it was not the only game in town. Britain and the West more broadly had interests around the world that were important in their own right, as well as having a potential connection to the cold war. Indeed, with a deliberate resort to war by the USSR being viewed as unlikely, preventing the outbreak of minor conflicts that could escalate became an important element of avoiding war. The Suez crisis both demonstrated the need for military intervention overseas and also shed a harsh light on existing British capabilities for such operations. The second question concerned how such intervention should be conducted. Britain had hitherto relied on garrisons stationed overseas and on the use of air bases. These were expensive to maintain and as pillars of a strategy for intervention, they were being increasingly shaken by nationalism and decolonisation, resulting in the loss of bases or tight restrictions on their use. This vision appealed to those wanting a cheaper strategy as well as accommodating the reality of reducing access to overseas bases. It suited the Air Ministry which, focused on nuclear-armed bombers, was entirely content to see conventional, expeditionary air power fall primarily to the Fleet Air Arm. It also gave the Royal Navy a clear and viable role which attracted wider political support " at the same time as preserving capabilities that the Admiralty continued to see as essential for total war; hot war was de-emphasised in favour of warm and cold war. This concept was circulating and gaining some support before the Suez crisis; the lessons of the intervention greatly strengthened the case for it. Previous British planning had rested on the wealth of air bases in the region, yet in the event Libya, Iraq and Jordan had denied the use of these to Britain. The Anglo-French force could only use Malta, from which only medium bombers could reach Suez, and overcrowded and potentially vulnerable bases on Cyprus. From the outset, it was obvious that the operation would have to depend heavily on carrier-based air power. These carriers provided over 60 per cent of the fighter-bombers for the operation which proved more effective than the medium bombers , and carrier-based aircraft contributed over 65 per cent of the ground attack sorties. Their involvement was vital to gaining air superiority " even the Air Ministry accepted that Fleet Air Arm aircraft destroyed the majority of enemy aircraft " and to supporting the airborne and amphibious landings and the campaign on land that followed. This striking vindication of the utility of carrier-based air power caused considerable discomfort to those in the Air Ministry who had devoted so much effort over the previous years to dismissing its utility. While things have improved hugely in this area since the s, there are still some echoes of this sentiment today:

Airfield attacks continued until 4 November, by which time the Egyptian Air Force had been decimated. One particularly positive development at Suez was a major innovation in amphibious warfare. In addition to conventional parachute drops and amphibious landings from the sea, the operation saw the first ever helicopter assault, when 45 Commando Royal Marines was landed by a joint helicopter force operating from the converted light carriers HMS Ocean and Theseus. This brilliant improvisation by a rather cobbled together force indicated the way forward for amphibious operations. The Suez experience vindicated the maritime task force concept, with both carrier strike and amphibious forces demonstrating their utility. As a result, the defence review made presence and limited intervention east of Suez the core role of the Royal Navy. That this review was overseen by Duncan Sandys, the most bitter ministerial critic of naval aviation in the postwar era, makes the result all the more striking. The existing carriers would be retained and modernised, with a new carrier ordered in 1956. This new approach, in which maritime task forces acted as a stabilising presence and, if necessary, the spearhead of a joint intervention force, was repeatedly proved during the late 1950s and early 1960s. As the UK now looks once more to expeditionary operations, having escaped the strategic blind alley of continental garrisoning, these lessons of Suez again have relevance. Three of the five British aircraft carriers involved in the Suez operation. Courtesy of IWM A

**Chapter 4 : The Suez Canal Crisis | War in The Middle East**

*Israeli armed forces push into Egypt toward the Suez Canal, initiating the Suez crisis. The Suez Canal would soon be joined by French and British forces, creating a serious Cold War problem in the Middle East.*

In 1945, the globe was indeed still circled by British possessions and dependencies, from the Caribbean in the west to Singapore, Malaya and Hong Kong in the east. Much of the African map was still imperial pink. In reality, though, the sun had long since begun to sink over the British empire. The greatest possession of them all, the Indian subcontinent, had taken its freedom. Nationalist movements were flourishing in most of the rest, patronised by Soviet Russia and encouraged by the United States in its self-appointed role as leader of the free world. Britain itself was only beginning to emerge from postwar austerity, its public finances crushed by an accumulation of war debt. Still, there were powerful figures in the "establishment" - a phrase coined in the early 1950s - who could not accept that Britain was no longer a first-rate power. Their case, in the context of the times, was persuasive: We remained a trading nation, with a vital interest in the global free passage of goods. But there was another, darker, motive for intervention in Egypt: Though it may now seem quaint and self-serving, there was a widespread and genuine feeling that Britain had responsibilities in its diminishing empire, to protect its peoples from communism and other forms of demagoguery. Much more potently, there was ingrained racism. When the revolutionaries in Cairo dared to suggest that they would take charge of the Suez canal, the naked prejudice of the imperial era bubbled to the surface. The Egyptians, after all, were among the original targets of the epithet, "westernised or wily oriental gentlemen. They were the Wogs. Background King Farouk, the ruler of Egypt, was forced into exile in mid 1952. A year later, a group of army officers formally took over the government which they already controlled. The titular head of the junta was General Mohammed Neguib. The real power behind the new throne was an ambitious and visionary young colonel who dreamed of reasserting the dignity and freedom of the Arab nation, with Egypt at the heart of the renaissance. His name was Gamal Abdel Nasser. A source of bitter resentment among many Egyptians, that presence was a symbol of British imperial dominance since the 1920s. In 1954, having established himself as uncontested leader of Egypt, Nasser negotiated a new treaty, under which British forces would leave within 20 months. At first, the largely peaceful transition of power in Egypt was little noticed in a world beset by turmoil and revolution. The cold war was at its height. Communism was entrenched throughout eastern Europe; the French were being chased out of Indo-China and were engaged in a vicious civil war in Algeria; the infant state of Israel had fought off the combined might of six Arab armies, and Britain was trying to hold down insurgents in Cyprus, Kenya and Malaya. British politics, too, was in a state of flux, with a new generation of leaders emerging to preside over belated postwar prosperity. But when Winston Churchill resigned as prime minister in 1955, at the age of 80, he was succeeded by the last of the old guard: After a lifetime at the cutting edge of British statesmanship, Eden was a curiously inadequate man. He had the vanity that often accompanies good looks, and the querulous temper that goes with innate weakness. He had been foreign secretary throughout the war and again, under the old imperialist Churchill, from 1946 to 1951. For all his experience, he never absorbed the simple postwar truth: In July 1956, the last British soldiers pulled out of the canal zone. Eden was scandalised and, riding a wave of popular indignation, prepared a grotesquely disproportionate response: It turned out to be a smokescreen for military preparations. In September, Nasser made a defiant speech rejecting the idea of international supervision of an Egyptian national asset. By then, the die was cast. British and French troops, spearheaded by airborne forces, invaded the canal zone on October 29. Their governments told an outraged world that they had to invade, to separate Egyptian and Israeli forces, and thus protect the freedom of navigation on the canal. The reality was that the British and French, in top secret negotiations with Israel had forged an agreement for joint military operations. Israel, in fact, had the most legitimate grievance of the three invaders, for since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, Egypt had denied passage through the canal to any Israeli-flagged or Israel-bound ships. Israeli forces swept into the Sinai desert on September 29, two days before the Anglo-French invasion, and raced towards the canal. One column was headed by a young brigade commander who would go on to become prime minister: In less than seven days, the entire Sinai peninsula

was in Israeli hands. The Anglo-French invasion was a good deal more ignominious. Just eight days after the first airborne lands, the operation was halted under a ceasefire ostensibly ordered by the United Nations, but in fact dictated by the Americans. The Egyptian air force had been destroyed and its army mauled - though it put up spirited resistance both in the canal zone and in Sinai. There is little doubt that the invading allies, who had overwhelming military advantage, could have gone on to take undisputed control of the canal zone - albeit at a cruel cost. The greatest irony of the operation was that it was totally counterproductive. Far from bolstering Anglo-French interests, it had badly undermined the political and military prestige of both countries. And far from ensuring international freedom of seaborne passage, it had done just the opposite: The Suez canal was totally blocked. The diplomatic crisis Though Eden scarcely seemed to appreciate it, Britain was simply no longer capable of mounting a solo imperial adventure. In the Suez operation, British soldiers fought alongside French ones. More importantly, both fading European powers were allied with the youngest but already most potent force in the Middle East: They most obviously included the Soviet Union and its allies, who were given a glorious opportunity to attack western imperialism and deflect world attention from their own brutality in crushing the simultaneous Hungarian uprising. Much more telling than Soviet condemnation was the disapproval of the Eisenhower administration in the USA. Washington was appalled by the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of the canal zone and the Sinai. The action threatened to destabilise the strategically vital region, and strengthen Soviet links with liberation movements around the world. It raised global tensions in an age dominated by the nuclear arms race and recurring superpower crises. More viscerally, it was viewed with distaste as a nakedly imperial exercise in a post-imperial age. Eden, a master of self-delusion, thought he had received a nod and wink of approval for the invasion from John Foster Dulles, the US secretary of state. He should have checked with Dwight D Eisenhower, who was enraged by the action. The final straw for Eden came when the Treasury told the government that sterling, under sustained attack over the crisis, needed urgent US support to the tune of a billion dollars. The invaders were ordered to halt, and await the arrival of a UN intervention force. The political crisis The Suez crisis provoked a mighty, if predictable, wave of jingoistic fervour in the rightwing British press. There was a tide of genuine public support for "our boys" and a widespread mood of hostility towards Nasser. But at the same time - and arguably for the first time - there was a countervailing popular wave of revulsion against imperialist aggression. Hugh Gaitskell, not exactly the most radical of Labour party leaders, railed passionately against the war. So did Liberals and leftwing groups. Their stand was not hugely popular - the circulation of the Manchester Guardian, which fiercely opposed the war, fell markedly during the crisis - but the anti-war movement was a dramatic, even traumatic, shock for the nation. What fatally undermined the Conservative government, however, was the dissent in its own ranks. Less than 50 years ago, there were plenty of Tories who still believed in the virtues of empire. Two junior ministers, Edward Boyle and Anthony Nutting, resigned from the government in protest against Suez. Eden himself was shattered by Suez, politically, physically and emotionally. On November 19, just three days before the last of the British invaders finally left the canal zone, he abruptly took himself off to Jamaica to recover, leaving behind Rab Butler in charge of the cabinet. On January 9, , Eden resigned. The Conservative mandarins who controlled the leadership promptly took their revenge on Butler, seen as the leading liberal in the party, by elevating the more rightwing Harold Macmillan to Downing Street. Conclusion It may now seem astonishing to those who were not alive during the Suez crisis that Britain was prepared to take part in such an imperial adventure so recently. Even to those who clearly remember it - including this writer - it seems an anachronism; an atavistic throwback. And yet, though it took place well within living memory, Suez was also a link with a not-so-distant past in which imperialism was a matter of pride rather than a term of abuse. Indeed, it marked definitively the transition between those two things. British soldiers would go on fighting in various corners of the shrinking empire - east Africa, Aden, Malaya, Borneo and the Falklands - for another 25 years or so. The difference, after Suez, is that they fought largely to defend local regimes and systems, rather than to impose the will of London. The years immediately following Suez saw a slew of new countries on the world stage which had formerly been colonies and dependencies. There is little doubt that the end of the imperial era was greatly accelerated by the squalid little war in Egypt.

Chapter 5 : Suez and the end of empire | Politics | The Guardian

*The Suez crisis both demonstrated the need for military intervention overseas and also shed a harsh light on existing British capabilities for such operations. The second question concerned how such intervention should be conducted.*

It connects the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. This is important for ships traveling from Europe to and from the Middle East and India. It took over 10 years and an estimated one and a half million workers to complete. The canal was first opened on November 17, He wanted to build the Aswan Dam as a major part of the improvement. It had been controlled by the British in order to keep it open and free to all countries. Nasser seized the canal and was going to charge for passage in order to pay for the Aswan Dam. They decided to use the canal as a reason to attack Egypt. They secretly planned that Israel would attack and seize the canal. Then the French and the British would enter as peacekeepers taking control of the canal. Then the British and French jumped in. The United States ended up forcing the Israelis, the British, and the French to withdraw in order to prevent conflict with the Soviet Union. Results One result of the Suez Crisis was that the esteem of Great Britain was never quite the same again. It was clear that the two world superpowers at the time were the United States and the Soviet Union. This was the Cold War and when something had an impact on the interests of the United States and the Soviet Union, they were going to get involved and assert their power. It was in both of their interests to keep the canal open. He resigned shortly after the crisis ended. The Suez Canal is still open today and is free for all countries. It is owned and ran by the Suez Canal Authority of Egypt. The canal is miles long and feet wide. Nasser ended up gaining popularity both in Egypt and throughout the Arab world for his part in the event. The crisis is known in Egypt as the "tripartite aggression". Activities Take a ten question quiz about this page. Listen to a recorded reading of this page: Your browser does not support the audio element. To learn more about the Cold War: [Back to the Cold War summary page.](#)

**Chapter 6 : Israel invades Egypt; Suez Crisis begins - HISTORY**

*Suez Crisis, ( ), international crisis in the Middle East, precipitated on July 26, , when the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, nationalized the Suez Canal. The canal had been owned by the Suez Canal Company, which was controlled by French and British interests.*

The Gulf War The Suez War, also known by the other names of Suez Canal Crisis and Tripartite Aggression, was a short lived conflict that has had long standing complications for all those involved. The Suez War is named after the Suez Canal in which the conflict was a major factor. This canal is not simply a canal like any other, in fact it was the most important man made canal in the world as it made trade between Europe and Asia quicker, easier and more reliable. The issue with the Suez Canal is that it is currently While this may not be an issue today, historically it has had huge implications for Egypt, its neighbouring countries and western European powers like Britain and France. This assessment actually led to consolidation in some areas, this was namely the Suez Canal and the Middle East. The Middle East has long been known to be a vast oil field offering wealth through oil and the Suez Canal has always been known as a geographical and strategic waterway. As of the end of the Nineteenth century Britain still held colonial power of Egypt, including the Suez Canal waterway that ran through it. After World War II and with the Cold War starting Britain decided to consolidate its stronghold on the canal for future use because of its geographical location. The strength of military might from the British in the area to the point that the British had military installations everywhere, including a garrison holding around eighty thousand troops. The problems started after World War II for two reasons, first the British were consolidating, but also the Egyptians were becoming increasingly unhappy with the British. By the Egyptian government had also grown to have a dislike for the British along with their people so they cancelled a treaty that had been in place since giving the British lease of the Suez Canal. The British decided that with their large garrison as a deterrent and their treaty still being valid, that they were not going to withdraw from the canal. Over time the hostilities towards the British were to build up into a crescendo that started conflict. But before this could happen another key move occurred. The British wanted American support but did not get any; this was because the US wanted to lower British dominance over the area so they could build their own influence. This also included a reference to the initial builder of the canal as a code word for Egyptian troops to move in and take control from the British. The British could not get anyone to hear its complaints so decided to flex its military muscles so not to lose face and control of the region. This actually meant that the British and French gained an alliance against Egypt. Both the British and French wanted to depose Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser so they could both protect their influence and colonies in the region. Israel was then brought into the situation as they wanted to strengthen its southern borders to open up shipping in the region. The military intervention started. The Suez War On October 29th the conflict started in earnest. After this Israel started an operation called Operation Kadesh where they invaded the Sinai Peninsula taking control very quickly. This involved land, air and sea attacks. On the 30th October the British and French did however put an ultimatum forward to both Israel and Egypt, with no reply they both started a bombing campaign on the 31st October. Egypt responded by sinking all 40 ships on the canal and closing it to further ships. The French redeployed five hundred Paratroopers from Algeria to Egypt and air dropped another five hundred or so paratroopers. Combat sorties by planes around this time accounted for many as bombing raids and soldier drops occurred continuously. Some soldiers of the British 45 Commando Regiment were dropped in by helicopter and met resistance. It took time and effort but eventually they managed to overpower the resistance with the support of tank regiments and other troops. The British dead number 16, with the French losing 10 and Israelis losing In December Israel refuses to give Gaza back to Egypt, an issue it still suffers with today. British and French troops also leave Egypt. The start of sees the nationalisation of all French and British banks in Egypt, Israeli ships being barred from using the Suez Canal and the first ships from Britain paying the toll to the Egyptians for using the canal. The occupation and conflict officially ends in March with a resounding victory for Egypt.

**Chapter 7 : The Suez Crisis ( ): Gamal Abdul Nasser & Arab-Israeli War – SchoolWorkHelper**

*The Suez Crisis was precipitated by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's decision in July to nationalize the mile Suez Canal, which had been jointly controlled by Great Britain and.*

Share via Email British soldiers stand guard during the Suez crisis. Observer Picture Library British punters have been hearing a good deal about the Suez crisis recently: It has certainly received closer attention in the UK than the other great global event of late October-early November - the near-simultaneous Hungarian uprising: In , Suez still seems like a big deal for Britain because it is remembered as the end of empire and great power status. But another reason is the parallels that are now so often drawn between it and the - still continuing - war in Iraq. Suez also seems to matter far more to Britain than the other players in the drama. But much water has flowed down the Nile since then. Later wars overlay its memory. Nor is it much remembered in Israel, whose attack in Sinai on October 29 triggered the Anglo-French ultimatum the following day and invasion a week later. The war of is cited for having ushered in a period of calm in the conflict with the Arabs. And in it was overshadowed by another, even briefer war but with more far-reaching consequences - the occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. Memories have faded in Cairo and Jerusalem partly because the pre-war status quo was so quickly restored. British troops left Egypt and were replaced by UN observers by December By the spring of the Israelis withdrew from Sinai and dismantled their short-lived military administration in Gaza. The novelty for both countries was that these events were driven by American pressure, then an unfamiliar feature of the Middle Eastern landscape. President Dwight Eisenhower was furious with the British prime minister, Anthony Eden, and ensured that a ceasefire was put in place only hours after British and French troops landed at Port Said. Israel was in a similar position. Immediately after the war its prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, went into biblical overdrive and proclaimed a "third kingdom of Israel" - but still had to pull out his forces a few months later under threat of sanctions from Washington. Nevertheless, what Israelis still call the "Sinai campaign" gave them a dizzying sense of their military prowess - a young officer named Ariel Sharon commanded the paratroop force that launched the war. In the decade that followed, the country built up its confidence by taking in a million new Jewish immigrants, modernising its economy and strengthening its armed forces - as well as developing a nuclear capability. But there were other consequences too. Palestinians, then thought of as little more than refugees, began to think of building their own organisations and a capacity to act independently of Arab states that had subordinated them to their own interests. Arabs were always to remember the war as the "tripartite aggression" in which Israel served as a tool of imperialism. Thus they dismissed as a "big lie" the denial - which happened to be true - that in American and British planes were helping the Israelis, as the British and French had indeed done at Suez. In Egypt, the nationalisation of the canal is still celebrated as an act of pride, defiance and national independence: But Nasser died in His legacy has been blurred by the pro-American policies of his successor Anwar Sadat, who signed a peace treaty with Israel in , and by Hosni Mubarak, who followed him. And not all the consequences were good for Egypt. It is this more recent and continuing conflict that has reinforced the memory of Suez as a byword for British failure, duplicity and humiliation. Like Iraq today, Suez aroused strong emotions in a country not often given to displaying them publicly. In the words of Peter Hennessy, in his much-praised new book on the s, *Having it so Good*, "the political scars of Suez went - and remained - very deep". Thus the sense of enduring trauma that makes this 50th anniversary so painful. And here is the verdict on Suez of a more establishment figure, the military historian, Sir Michael Howard: It was for me what Munich had been for a slightly older generation and Iraq would be for a younger; but whereas Munich and Iraq were understandable if deplorable acts of realpolitik, the sheer irrationality of the Suez adventure still fills me with melancholy amazement.

**Chapter 8 : SUEZ SIXTY YEARS ON: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROYAL NAVY – Defence-In-Depth**

*Whatever its long-term outcome, the Suez crisis was significant on many levels. It was one of the first times that U.S. foreign policy diverged from that of France and Britain.*

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Creation of the Canal In Ferdinand de Lesseps, a French former diplomat, persuaded the Viceroy of Egypt, Mohamed Said, to permit the construction of a shipping canal through the miles of desert between Africa and Asia. Construction began on 25 April and the canal was opened in November complete with a statue of de Lesseps dominating the harbour. Said, who died in 1863, was succeeded by his nephew Ismail. Britain was therefore committed to protect the canal. During the two World Wars, the Suez Canal came under attack. Soon after the outbreak of World War One, Britain declared Egypt a protectorate and British and Indian forces were sent to protect the canal. This attack was beaten back and by British defensive lines had been driven deep into the Sinai desert to prevent any further attempt. The defeat of Turkey in 1918 resulted in much of the Ottoman Turkish empire being divided between Britain and France, leaving Britain in control of the oilfields of what is now Iraq. The fighting ebbed and flowed until 1941, when Axis forces seemed poised to break through to the Suez Canal. In 1942, Britain gave nominal independence to Egypt, but it was some years before an agreement was reached. A British and Commonwealth counter-offensive in December 1942 drove the Italians out of Egypt, but in March 1943 the Italians, reinforced by the German Afrika Korps, attacked again and pushed the Allied forces back. The fighting ebbed and flowed along the North African coast until the summer of 1942, when the Axis forces seemed poised to break through to the Suez Canal and beyond. Their new offensive, launched on 1 July, lasted most of the month, but the Allied lines held. The canal was safe once more. Attacks on the British garrison soon followed and in January 1943 the British government authorised an operation to disarm the Egyptian paramilitary police force in Ismailia which was orchestrating the violence. This was successful, but the violence continued. Riots in Cairo of an unprecedented scale followed, culminating in attacks on Saturday 26 January on British property and the expatriate community, thereafter known as Black Saturday. It was agreed that British troops would be permitted to return if the Suez Canal was threatened. He had three goals: On 19 October a treaty was signed by Nasser and by Anthony Nutting, British minister of state for foreign affairs. The agreement was to last for seven years. British troops were to be withdrawn from Egypt by June 1956, and the British bases were to be run jointly by British and Egyptian civilian technicians. Egypt agreed to respect the freedom of navigation through the canal, and it was agreed that British troops would be permitted to return if the Suez Canal was threatened by an outside power. In April 1955, Eden succeeded Winston Churchill as prime minister. As the last British troops left Egypt, Nasser was completing the purchase of Soviet-made aircraft, tanks and arms from Czechoslovakia, which might help him to realise one of his goals, the destruction of Israel. Despite anti-western demonstrations in Egypt, in January 1956 the United States and Britain had pledged funding to help finance the construction of a new High Dam at Aswan. The US, however, became convinced that the Dam project would not be a success and wanted to reduce expenditure on foreign aid. On 19 July, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles informed the Egyptian ambassador in Washington that his government had decided that it would not provide funding for the construction of the dam. The British foreign secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, followed suit and withdrew the British offer of aid. On 26 July 1956, President Nasser nationalised the Anglo-French Suez Canal Company, declaring that he would take the revenue from the canal to finance his dam. The United States, however, made it clear that unjustified military action would not be tolerated. The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 was followed by the first Arab-Israeli War, and a renewed upsurge of Arab nationalism made the Middle East a volatile region. The United States had emerged from World War Two as a global superpower and, as a former colony itself it was committed to overseeing the decolonisation of the globe. Furthermore, the spread of communism fostered by the Soviet Union was seen by the US as a threat to western democracy. A secret agreement was made that Israel should attack Egypt as a pretext for an Anglo-French invasion of Suez. But Egypt, which was looking to the Soviet Union for armaments, refused to sign. Iraq later withdrew from the pact, which was renamed the Central Treaty Organisation, became ineffective in preventing the Cold War from reaching the Middle East. In January 1956, Guy Mollet was elected prime

minister in France and promised to bring peace to Algeria, a French colony, in the throes of a nationalist uprising. But the presence of a million French settlers there made a withdrawal from Algeria politically impossible and his attempts to resolve the situation escalated the violence. The French government had been meeting secretly with Israel and invited Britain to join the negotiations. On 29 October, the Israeli attack was spearheaded by an airborne drop to seize control of the Mitla Pass. The next day, Britain and France issued ultimatums to both sides to stop the fighting immediately. The Israelis continued their operations, expecting an Egyptian counter-attack. Militarily the operation was well on its way to being a great success. On 5 November, some three months and 10 days after Nasser had nationalised the canal, the Anglo-French assault on Suez was launched. It was preceded by an aerial bombardment, which grounded and destroyed the Egyptian Air Force. Soon after dawn, soldiers of 3rd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment, dropped onto El Gamil airfield, while French paratroopers landed south of the Raswa bridges and at Port Fuad. Within 45 minutes, all Egyptian resistance on the airfield had been overcome and Royal Naval helicopters were bringing in supplies. With El Gamil secured, the British Paras moved eastwards towards Port Said, meeting their first serious opposition en route. With air support, they overwhelmed the Egyptian forces then stopped and dug-in overnight because the beach area of Port Said was to be bombarded next day during the seaborne landing. On 6 November, the sea and helicopter-borne assault went in. Royal Marine Commandos, together with British and French airborne forces supported by British tanks soon defeated the Egyptian forces, capturing men, vehicles and many of the newly purchased Czech-manufactured weapons. The Anglo-French forces had reached El Cap, just south of Port Said, but were not yet in control of the entire canal when they were stopped. Militarily, the operation was well on its way to being a great success. US President Dwight Eisenhower was incensed. World opinion, especially that of the United States, together with the threat of Soviet intervention, forced Britain, France and Israel to withdraw their troops from Egypt. In Britain too there had been widespread outrage. A United Nations peacekeeping force was sent in to supervise the ceasefire and to restore order. Eden told the Commons: He was at last asked whether there was foreknowledge of the Israeli attack and on 20 December in his last address to the House of Commons, recorded in Hansard, he replied: Guy Mollet, the French prime minister, survived longer despite fierce criticism, but his government collapsed in June over the taxation he imposed to pay for the Algerian War. Find out more Books Divided We Stand:

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*The Suez crisis is often portrayed as Britain's last fling of the imperial dice. In , the globe was indeed still circled by British possessions and dependencies, from the Caribbean in the west.*