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**Post 1952 Egypt and the British-Egyptian
Relations (1952-1956)**

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Dedication

To my Family ...

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Abstract

The history of Egypt during the 1950s holds an important significance. After the military coup led by the Free Officers in 1952 under the leadership of Jamal Abd Nasser, Egypt emerged from a dominated status into an independent and sovereign position despite some controversial policies. On the other hand, the British interests in Egypt were threatened by the shift of paradigm and their attempts to intervene in Egypt ended with a failure of its policy and the Egyptian political success.

The research aims to evaluate changes brought by post 1952 Egyptian government led by the Free Officers in addition to the British policies and reactions regarding those changes. The period that the research focuses on represents an important phase in modern history due to its intersection with multiple regional and international factors that fed the rising tension between Britain and Egypt. This tension between the two countries led to a military confrontation during the Suez Crisis 1956 in which several countries were involved. The conflict ended after the Soviet threat against Britain and its allies proving the success of Nasser's active diplomacy and the failure of the West's military solution.

Keywords:

British-Egyptian Relations, the Free Officers Group, British domination, 1952 Coup, Jamal Abd Nasser, Nationalism, Suez Crisis 1956.

Abstrait

L'histoire de l'Égypte au cours des années 1950 a une signification importante. Après le coup militaire mené par les Officiers Libres en 1952 sous la direction de Jamal Abd Nasser, l'Égypte est sortie d'un statut dominé pour devenir dans une position indépendante et souveraine malgré certaines politiques controversées. D'un autre côté, les intérêts britanniques en Égypte étaient menacés par le changement de paradigme, et leurs tentatives d'intervention en Égypte se sont menées par un échec de sa politique et le succès politique égyptien.

Cette recherche vise à évaluer les changements apportés par le gouvernement égyptien après 1952 dirigé par les Officiers Libres et les réactions britanniques concernant ces changements. La période sur laquelle porte la recherche représente une phase importante de l'histoire moderne en raison de son croisement avec de multiples facteurs régionaux et internationaux qui ont alimenté la tension croissante entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Égypte. Cette tension entre les deux pays conduisit à une confrontation militaire lors de la crise de Suez en 1956 à laquelle participèrent plusieurs pays. Le conflit a pris fin après la menace soviétique contre la Grande-Bretagne et ses alliés prouvant le succès de la diplomatie de Nasser et l'échec de la solution militaire de l'Occident.

Mots clés :

Relations anglo-égyptiennes, le Groupe des Officiers libres, domination britannique, Coup d'État de 1952, Jamal Abd Nasser, Nationalisme, Crise de Suez 1956.

ملخص

إن تاريخ مصر خلال الخمسينات من القرن الماضي يحمل أهمية كبيرة. بعد الانقلاب العسكري الذي قاده الضباط الأحرار عام 1952 بقيادة جمال عبد الناصر ، خرجت مصر من مركز المسيطر علياً إلى مكانة أكثر استقلالاً و سيادية على الرغم من بعض السياسات المثيرة للجدل. من ناحية أخرى ، تعرضت المصالح البريطانية في مصر للتهديد من خلال التغييرات في الساحة المصرية ومحاولاتها للتدخل انتهت بفشل سياستها ونجاح السياسة المصرية.

يهدف البحث إلى تقييم التغييرات التي طبقتها النظام المصري بعد 1952 بقيادة الضباط الأحرار بالإضافة إلى السياسات وردود الفعل البريطانية فيما يتعلق بهذه التغييرات. الفترة التي يركز عليها البحث تمثل مرحلة مهمة في التاريخ الحديث بسبب تداخلها مع العديد من العوامل الإقليمية والدولية التي غدت التوتر المتزايد بين بريطانيا ومصر. أدى التوتر المتصاعد بين البلدين إلى مواجهة عسكرية أثناء أزمة السويس 1956 التي شاركت فيها عدة دول. انتهى الصراع بعد التهديد السوفيتي ضد بريطانيا وحلفائها مبيناً نجاح دبلوماسية جمال عبد ناصر النشطة وقشل الحل العسكري الغربي.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

العلاقات المصرية البريطانية , مجموعة الضباط الأحرار , الهيمنة البريطانية , انقلاب 1952 , جمال عبد الناصر , القومية , أزمة السويس 1956.

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General Introduction

Throughout the British occupation and dominance over Egypt, the Egyptians expressed their rejection of the British. The latter's influence over Egypt was not similar to the other colonies. Egypt had an important economic and geostrategic value. The Suez Canal that was owned mostly by Britain and France represented a valuable gain that held political and economic significance. In addition to the Suez Canal, the location of the country within the Middle East and next to Israel constituted an important and strategic foothold in the region. Furthermore, the British established one of the most strategic military bases in Africa and the Middle East that is located in the Canal Zone.

The Egyptian struggle against the British dominance took several forms and strategies before 1952. Politicians, activists, and insurgents struggled for the independence of the country against Britain and the dominated monarchy. Eventually, the change occurred after the emergence of a military group that developed inside the Egyptian army. In 1952, a group called the Free Officers successfully managed to lead a military coup putting an end to King Farouk's monarchy. After the coup, the Anglo-Egyptian relations saw escalating tension especially after Nasser's accession to power in 1954. The relation between the two countries entered a new phase in which Egypt gained a sovereign and influential role at the regional and international level. After the coup, Egypt became the scene of multiple regional, international, and internal conflicts. First of all, the emergence of the Free Officers and their arrival to power was followed by subsequent interior political crisis in Egypt. Second, after the coup, the new authorities' policies clashed with the British and the West adopting anti-Western and anti-imperialist policies.

The tension between Britain and Egypt reached the climax in 1956 after Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal where Egypt was attacked by Britain, France, and Israel. The Suez Crisis was not simply an interest based military conflict, the conflict represented a defiance between a coloniser and a colonised. The aggression ended after the Soviet intervention that forced the aggressors to withdraw despite the success of the military operation. The four years that followed the coup and ended with the Suez Crisis represented an important period in the history of both countries. Within a short period of four years, Egypt emerged as victorious after the Suez Crisis despite the controversies about Nasser's policies. The British on the other hand were obliged to leave Egypt after the humiliating end of the Suez Crisis.

The period chosen for the research holds a significant historical importance. It started with a military coup in 1952 and ended with a military confrontation in 1956. Within a short period of four years, a radical change swept Egypt transforming it from a dominated monarchy to a regional and international power. On the other hand, Britain witnessed the opposite proving the failure of the British policy and the loss of its influence over Egypt especially during the Suez Crisis in 1956.

This research conducts a descriptive and analytical approach to evaluate the development of post 1952 Egypt until 1956. Focusing on the internal and foreign policies, it is important to explain the various stages in which the Egyptian political situation took shape and its impact on the Anglo-Egyptian relations. The research also aims to answer three main questions. First, what was the impact of the new regime led by Mohammed Naguib at first and Nasser later on the Egyptian foreign and internal policies after 1952's coup? What were the British reactions and attitudes regarding the political and Geostrategic changes in Egypt after 1952? What were the leading factors to the outbreak of the Suez Crisis and its outcomes on Britain and Egypt?

To answer the aforementioned questions, a variety of resources, primary and secondary, were used to insure the objectivity and authenticity of the research data. The work is composed of three main chapters. The First Chapter provides a historical context of the evolution of the British colonial policy in Egypt. Furthermore, this part explains the various forms of the Egyptian rejection of the British influence over Egypt that led to the 1952 coup.

Throughout the second chapter, detailed descriptions and analysis are devoted to study the events of July 1952 revolution and its impact on the Egyptian internal and foreign policies. Additionally, this chapter provides an analytical evaluation of the foreign and domestic policies of the new regime led by Mohammed Naguib and Nasser between 1952-1956 in addition to the British stand regarding those changes.

Lastly, the third chapter deals mainly with the Suez Crisis of 1956 due to its significance in the history of both countries. Throughout the chapter, a detailed chronology of the events will be provided while analysing the political and geostrategic aspects of the conflict. Also, the last part deals with the immediate impact of the crisis on both Britain and Egypt.

Chapter One

**The Political Scene in
Egypt before 1952 in Light
of the British Domination**

Introduction

The history of Egypt contains an important historical relevancy. The first half of the twentieth century marked the origins of the modern Egyptian society. During that period, Egypt witnessed an active social and political mobilization in light of the British occupation. It was also a scene of multiple regional and international conflicts. However, the focus of the Egyptians was the achievement of full independence from the British dominance. So, focusing on this period provides useful insights for better understanding of the political and historical events that took place during the next decades.

1-Historical Background of British-Egyptian Relations before 1952

Throughout history, Egypt was the subject of a number of conflicts, wars, and instability. For various reasons, the land was conquered by several empires and states such as the Romans, the Muslims, and last, the British influence in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Egypt is one of the unique British colonies in that it was the only colony that witnessed a direct military confrontation with Britain during the Suez Crisis in 1956. The conflict ended with destructive results for Britain. On the contrary, Egypt under the leadership of Jamal Abd Nasser emerged as the victorious in spite of human and material casualties.

During the nineteenth century and after the end of the French campaign led by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1801, Egypt suffered from severe economic deficiency. The reforms introduced during the nineteenth century to develop the economy were insufficient because the army exhausted the national treasury in addition to the mismanagement of the economic affairs. What made the situation worse was the Egyptian lack of valuable resources such as oil, coal, or minerals that the rising industry needed during that period. Economic stability was difficult to maintain. After years of economic struggle and mismanagement, the Egyptian

economy collapsed. Consequently, the European countries intervened in the Egyptian affairs after the failure of the latter to repay its debt in 1882, mostly to Britain and France.

Unlike the other African countries, Egypt did not possess sufficient natural resources which made it difficult to cope with its growing demography (Metz 104). However, its strategic geographical location gave it an important significance. Egypt's location was seen as the connection between the three continents; Asia, Africa, and Europe. Furthermore, the construction of the Suez Canal in 1858 by the "Suez Canal Company" gave Egypt a great geostrategic importance. The private company was owned mostly by French and British shareholders in addition to other Europeans. The canal links the Mediterranean and the Red sea. It also provides a shorter naval passage between the western and the eastern hemispheres.

The history of the British influence over Egypt dates back to 1882 when Britain intervened to seize control of the economic affairs of the country, following the collapse of the Egyptian economy. However, British control over Egypt remained informal under the leadership of the Khedivate¹. During that period, Egypt remained officially under the Ottoman Empire. This period is commonly referred to as the veiled protectorate. The British influence was centred on economic affairs, mainly the control of the Suez Canal zone. After the intervention, several armed conflicts broke as a reaction to the British dominance over Egypt such as Urabi Revolt in 1881. Yet, the British oppressed those uprisings in a short term. During the veiled protectorate, Egypt became more westernized. It witnessed a large spread of westernized schools, missionaries, and liberal parties such as Ouma party During the late 19th century and the beginning of the 1920s (البشري 39).

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 between the Allies and the Central Powers encouraged the European countries to declare protectorate over the Central Powers'

¹ The Khedivate was the Ottomans' viceroy that ruled Egypt between 1867-1914.

colonies and territories. Consequently, Britain declared Egypt as a protectorate in November 1914. Tension rose between the British authorities and the Egyptians. The situation worsened in 1919 after the deportation of Saad Zaghlul along with other members of the Wafd¹ delegation to Malta because of their political activities that condemned the British dominance over Egypt. The Wafd party founded by Saad Zaghloul² in 1918 took hostile and critical attitudes towards the British control of Egyptian affairs. Because of their decision, manifestations and disturbances occurred across the country claiming their return. These mobilizations and political activities continued until the official declaration of the Egyptian independence on 28 February 1922.

The British managed to set a strong influence and dominance over Egypt especially after the Anglo-Egyptian treaty that was signed in London on 26 August 1936 (Morsy, “The Military Clauses” 89). The treaty ensured a gradual evacuation of the British army from the Egyptian land except for 10,000 militants stationed in the Canal Zone. The pact stated that Britain would intervene in case of assault against Egypt. This treaty guaranteed the continuity of the British dominance over Egypt despite the declaration of the Egyptian independence (Morsy, “The Military Clauses” 68). Several politicians and activists such as Hassan Al Banna and Mustapha Al Nahass saw the British control of the Suez Canal and the existence of its forces as an indicator of the continuity of the British colonization of Egypt.

Later, during the Second World War (1939-1945), Egypt was the field of various battles and confrontations between the Nazi forces and the allies. Prolonged battles such as battle of Alamein in 1942 was one of the conclusive and decisive battles that took place in

¹ The Wafd party was an Egyptian liberal nationalist political party that emerged during the early 20th century.

² Saad Zaghloul was the is the founder of the Wafd party and a nationalist activist.

Africa during the Second World War. At the same time, tension grew between the Monarchy under King Farouk and the Wafd party around the monopoly of the army (Morsy, “Indicative case” 93). On the other hand, the British authorities kept interfering indirectly in the Egyptian domestic political affairs.

The growing public consciousness and political awareness among Egyptians had developed after the spread of religious and political groupings, activities and parties across the country. The Palestinian war of 1947 helped enriching the public opinion more about regional and international issues. Moreover, the conditions in the Canal Zone became more and more critical (Vitalis 96). The British troops became a frequent subject of guerilla attacks. The situation worsened after the killing of 50 Egyptian policemen in the city of Ismailia on the 25th January 1952. During the next day, riots and disturbances broke out in Cairo, the so-called Cairo Fire or the Black Saturday¹. During this critical period, a group of young officers led by Muhammad Naguib and Gamal Abd Nasser overthrew the existing monarchy led by King Farouk. The action was welcomed by the Egyptian population and it was seen as the end of the corrupt Monarchy and the British influence.

2-Origins of Political Activism in Egypt during the Early Twentieth Century

Egypt’s experience with the political activism dates back to the early years of the twentieth century. Multiple political currents and ideologies emerged especially during and after the World Wars. The rise of political activism in Egypt came as an outcome of decades of interaction and experience with the occidental political and institutional model. It came

¹ Disturbances and riots that started after the British assassination of Egyptians policemen in 1952.

² The King of Egypt who ruled the country during 1936-1952.

after a long period of stagnation where traditional dynasties and institutions had ruled Egypt for centuries before the French and the British occupations. This part gives a descriptive overview of the main parties, associations, and activists that led the political uprising at this period.

The official declaration of the end of the British protectorate over Egypt motivated activists, politicians, and nationalists to engage more in politics. Some of them took radical and critical stands regarding the existing Monarch such as the leaders of the Wafd Party and the Muslim Brotherhood group. Others took adherent positions, such as the Saadists and the National Party. After the declaration of the end of the British protectorate over Egypt in 1922, the Wafd party drafted the first constitution in 1923. Saad Zaghlul became the first elected prime minister in 1924. He managed to gather the masses for the independence cause. Strikes and manifestations broke across the country against the British protectorate and the monarch.

The Wafd Party managed to set close and strong contact with the masses through professional associations, students' unions, and labour movements in addition to the charismatic character of Saad Zaghlul as a leader which helped the party strengthen its ties with the masses. The party's revolutionary ideology and the struggle for the independence cause placed it in direct conflict with the King and the British authorities (Ghanem 04). So, the Wafdists aimed to gain more influence in the Egyptian political institutions through the parliament, the government, and electoral support. Yet, the party's programs were not revolutionary and rebellious as their ideologies. In other words, the economic plans were purely capitalistic. And their political orientations were purely liberal, secular, and western inspired (Hinnebusch 100). Unlike other political currents, the Wafdists did not adopt any communist or radical conservative stands. The only revolutionary aspect of their struggle was the independence cause.

Another crucial movement that appeared after the official declaration of the British protectorate in 1922, even though it was not established as a political party, was the Muslim Brotherhood. It was founded by Hassan Al Banna in March 1927 in the city of Ismailia. At first, the group was considered as a religious association meant for religious matters (البشري 109). The activism of the group increased and became more influential after the displacement of Hassan Al Banna to Cairo in 1932 as a school teacher. To counteract the influence of foreign missionaries that spread across the country in rural and urban territories, the group insured the extension of their activities all across the country. The group managed to gain remarkable support among the lower-class Egyptians. Mobilizing as a religious and social service association gave the group easy and fast access to a broader range of supporters, especially among the poor and lower-class people. The group became more politicized during the late 1930s adopting highly critical attitudes and discourses against the existing regime. The movement's political activities intensified through funding strikes, gatherings, and newsletters. In 1941, the Muslim Brothers presented for the first-time electoral candidates for the parliamentary elections. After the forties, the Muslim Brotherhood activities flourished in Egypt despite the imprisonment of their leader, Hassan Al Banna¹, in October 1941 (Munson 488). In 1949 the Muslim Brotherhood became the largest organization in Egypt that included more than 300,000 active members (Munson 489). The group leaders also managed to set close relations with the Free Officers -a secretive group within the Egyptian army- who led a military coup in 1952. Unlike the other nationalist parties, the Muslim Brotherhood's discourse was mainly religious and less nationalist rejecting any sort of occidental values and ideologies.

¹ Hassan Al Banna was the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and a Muslim scholar known for his reformist thoughts.

The labour movement in Egypt also witnessed an unprecedented development in a matter of few years only. After 1919, labour unions spread across the country. By 1922, 102 trade unions were established most of which were located in Cairo, Alexandria, and the Canal Zone. (Deeb 187). These labour organizations were often mobilized by various factors. During the early 20th century, workers in Egypt suffered from low wages, bureaucracy, and racial discrimination especially in foreign enterprises. Consequently, labour activism was the only way for the working class to express their unrest and frustration. Furthermore, the movement witnessed a fast politicization where many unionists joined the political activities. Politicians, intellectuals, and the public opinion pushed the labour activism increasingly towards the political field in the light of the British occupation and socio-economic aggravation.

Along with the rising political activism, the relations between political activists and parties with the king were characterized by constant disagreement. The Monarch was a subject of direct and constant criticism regarding his policies and the British dominance over the Egyptian Sovereignty even after the official declaration of the independence. For instance, the king dissolved the Wafdist government led by Mustafa Al Nahass in 1937. This happened after the Wafdists' attempts to expand their parliamentary authority. Instead, the King opted to support four main adherent parties such as the Saadists, the Constitutional Liberals, and the Egyptian National Party. The coalition of these minor parties that represented mainly aristocratic and landlords guaranteed the exclusion of populist activists and parties from political authority (البشري 85).

Despite the king's attempts to isolate the rivalling parties, other groups emerged and remained in hideout. The continuity of the British interference in the Egyptian policy and their military existence in the Canal Zone pushed the secretive political activities to continue despite the imposed restrictions and sanctions. In addition to the aforementioned political

organizations, another important group emerged and developed within the Egyptian army; it is called the Free Officers. They managed to gain strong influence over the high ranking military officers within the Egyptian army paving the way to a major shift in the Egyptian history.

3-The Emergence of the Free Officers

The thriving active political activism during the early twentieth century also reached the Egyptian military apparatus. The different ideological currents that emerged in the political sphere in Egypt influenced the new Egyptian generation especially after the Second World War. The continuity of the British influence after the formal independence of Egypt in 1922 became a subject of controversy and criticism. The Struggle against all forms of British imperialism became a target of all political activists during that period.

The Idea of creating a movement or body that englobed the young Egyptian military officers emerged during the forties. During that period the British intervention in the Egyptian political affairs became more apparent and provocative. Rebellious and revolutionary tendencies thrived among the Egyptian high-ranking officers. Meanwhile, Jamal Abd Nasser managed to establish important relations among young and senior military officials. The first initiation of forming the movement ended with the formation of a small cell in which Nasser took the leading role (التكريتي 109).

The movement remained hideous without public activities. Their meetings and discussions were held in discretion. The unique feature of the Free Officers was their varied ideological background. The group's members belonged to different ideological currents. There were communists, Muslim Brothers, and even Liberals. However, the founders of the group agreed about the exclusion of any sort ideological activities within the group. (Botman 350). After all, the main focus of the Free Officers was the anti-imperialist struggle against the British occupation.

Their frustration with King Farouk's Monarchy deepened after the humiliating defeat of the Egyptian army in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Khaled Muhyiddin, a member of the Free Officers movement, stated that "some of the soldiers returned desperate, and others returned full of rage and revenge against those who were responsible for the failure" (77 محيي الدين). As a result of the humiliating consequences of the Arab Israeli War, Nasser started considering a plan for a revolutionary overthrow of King Farouk. In 1949, nine officers formed the Free Officers' committee and Nasser was elected as a chairman of the group later in 1950. After this reorganization of the movement, the road towards the revolutionary coup started to materialize (Metz 55). Meanwhile, the situation in Egypt was deteriorating. Political disagreement and the growing of British militarization and interventionist policies in Egypt resulted in the mounting of anti-imperialist and hostile attitudes against the British.

On the other hand, Guerrilla attacks intensified targeting the British soldiers and military barracks. The Free Officers encouraged those operations with the co-operation of several armed units that belonged to the Muslim Brotherhood. There were several members of the Free Officers who were either members or adherent to the Muslim Brotherhood. These relations became stronger after the Arab Israeli War. Nasser himself visited the training camps that were organized by the Muslim Brotherhood to form insurgents (حمودة 37).

The Free Officers also succeeded to establish friendly foreign relations with the United States' officials. In 1950, a military training programme was initiated between the Egyptian and the US government to send 300 Egyptian military officials to the US. The purposes of this initiation consisted of providing Egypt with the military and intelligence expertise that the Egyptians lacked. Several members of the Free Officers such as Hassan Ibrahim, Abdel Latif Baghdadi, and Ali Sabri, benefited from the training program (Lucas 17). The most important gain of the program was the establishment of communications with several US high ranking military and CIA officials.

So, the evolution of the Free Officers went through different stages. The first stage was informal in which the movement was merely a subject of casual meetings and random revolutionary discussions. The engagement and activism of the group became more active during the late forties. This process was a result of different circumstances and conditions that took place within Egypt during the first half of the twentieth century. Their secretive engagements and strategic planning within a short period enabled them to set a powerful and influential foothold in Egypt.

4-The British policies in Egypt during the First Half of the Twentieth Century

4.1-The British Imperial Policies in Egypt during the Early 20th Century

The British imperialism in Egypt witnessed several stages and methods. The first stage, the Veiled Protectorate, was merely an economic or interest-based intervention that focused on insuring and maintaining the British interests. But Egypt remained formally an Ottoman province. Later after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the British imperial policy stepped to be a formal protectorate in which its interference expanded to influence more political and strategic aspects. However, the policy changed to be less direct after the Egyptian independence. Still, the British ensured the continuity of their dominant policy and the existence of its military forces in the Canal Zone.

During the beginning of the twenties Britain started to reconsider its colonial policies in Egypt. After the events of 1919 that broke because of the deportation of the Wafd delegation, the British Colonial Office realized that the political parties and activists could not be marginalized. The British tendencies altered offering full autonomy of Egypt. Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for War, came to Egypt for an inquiry of the disturbances that broke during 1919. He strongly believed in the idea of granting the Egyptians full autonomy,

stating that: “in order to deflate the Wafdist cause, Egypt should be offered independence and a treaty of alliance that would guarantee Britain’s imperial interests” (McNamara 14).

In addition to the independence decision, the British also planned for a defense treaty with Egypt. The last step was the important one, this treaty guaranteed the British imperial interests in Egypt and the whole region of the Middle East. So, the British altered the direct colonisation to a defense treaty that ensured the continuity of the British influence and interests in Egypt. According to the third paragraph of the British declaration of February 1922, the United Kingdom sought a treaty that ensured the security of the communications between Britain and Egypt, a defense alliance, the protection of the British interests in Egypt, and a settled agreement concerning the case of the Sudan (“The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty” 445).

The treaty also came as a reaction to other regional and international factors that influenced the British imperial policies. The change of the climate in east Africa was a result of the expansion of fascism in Libya and Ethiopia. The Mussolini’s expansion was considered a threat to the British imperial interests in Africa. So, the treaty was a wide scale policy to protect the British interests and rival the Italian expansionism in Africa. (Morsy, “Farouk in British Policy” 193).

Concerning the political situation in Egypt, Britain decided not to undertake any direct or public political intervention in the Egyptian internal affairs (Latimer 474). After 1919 uprising, the British did not want to cause any disturbances or social mobilizations against their interests. So, the British influenced the Egyptian political affairs using proxy elements, such as the King, and governmental agents. Additionally, the already stationed troops mostly in the Canal Zone were used as a pressure card against any threatening indications.

The British dominance was sensibly planned by the Colonial Office. Britain carefully guaranteed and insured every chance that supported its imperial policies. They also arranged

for the environment in which King Farouk was raised and educated. The British Ambassador, Sir Lampson, suggested to King Fouad, the father of King Farouk, to send the 14-year-old Farouk to Woolwich for his preparations and education. Lampson's decision was already discussed and welcomed by the Foreign Office and King George V who showed great interest in the idea (Morsy, "Farouk in British Policy" 96). This step was set to guarantee King Farouk's growing in a British-friendly environment to constitute an Anglophile monarch later.

Even though Britain gave nominal independence to Egypt in 1922, the sabotage and guerilla attacks spread during the forties. The British became a frequent subject to guerilla attacks. Their efforts failed to eradicate those armed groups. The insurgents belonged to several groups and ideological currents. Organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Young Officers were the main supporters of those insurgencies (Ryzova 257). The British responded by conducting limited military operations and arrests.

4.2-The Early British Reactions towards the Rising of Nationalism in Egypt

Since the early years of the British influence over Egypt, British authorities faced various forms of political and armed rejection. Since the oppression of Urabi's revolt on 13th December 1882 by the British forces, Britain followed a firm and strict policy to eliminate any sort of resistance or political opposition in Egypt. The British used direct military operations in case of armed resistance, or institutional and political pressure and sanctions in case of political activities. However, the rising political activism along with the growing national consciousness of independence cause evoked more tension between the colonial authorities and both liberal and religious national activists (Wahiba 40).

In order to understand the British reaction towards nationalism, there must be a clear understanding of the concept and its manifestations in the Egyptian context. The concept of nationalism came as a reaction of various social and political mobilizations that took place during the late 19th century and the early 20th century. Along with those mobilizations, the

idea of creating an independent and sovereign nation and chasing the British colonizer flourished. The goals of this ideological mobilization consisted a threat to the British colonial and imperial interests not only in Egypt, but in all British colonies.

Concerning the armed uprisings, colonial authorities followed a severe policy of eradication and extermination of any type of armed activities (Cab-128-26 50). For instance, the British took a decisive stand against the Urabi Revolt. The latter managed to lead an armed mutiny and seize control of Cairo and Alexandria after overcoming local forces. Still, the British naval forces intervened putting an end to the armed rebellion. After that, the leader of the rebellion was exiled in December 1882 to Ceylon. Urabi's forces were incomparable with the heavy armed British forces. Britain did not find it difficult to subdue the rebellion in a head to head confrontation (Metz 42).

Later, during the early years of the twentieth century, armed activities became limited to smaller guerilla groups called "Fedayeen" who were mostly supported by the Muslim Brothers. The latter contributed to the rise of radical religious nationalists who preferred armed struggle. The Guerilla warfare and Hit-and -run techniques were difficult for the British forces to eliminate. Furthermore, the insurgents spread across the country, especially in the Suez Canal Zone where most of the British forces were concentrated. The attacks against the British troops became more frequent. On the other hand, colonial authorities put more sanctions against the Muslim Brotherhood group and its political sympathizers. Politicians, members from the group, and even religious figures were jailed. The group's activities and all kinds of gatherings were prohibited by both local and British authorities. However, these procedures did not prevent the armed guerilla operations against the British army.

In addition to the military struggle, the first half of the twentieth century witnessed a thriving nationalist political activism. It was a result of the emergence of a new educated class from different ideologies and backgrounds. After 1919, the British became aware of the effect of nationalist ideology in Egypt. Marshal Allenby, the Commander of British Middle Eastern forces who was promoted to be a High Commissioner, persuaded the Cabinet to accept the proposal that consisted of granting Egypt formal independence acknowledging the Khedive of Egypt as the only legitimate king (McNamara 14). This step was introduced to compromise with the growing claims of independence and to contain the growing popularity of the Wafd Party who managed to gain a large popularity. Suddenly, the British attitudes shifted towards the Wafdists. The Foreign Office decided to involve the Wafd as an important ally due to its influential popularity among the Egyptians (Morsy "Britain's Wartime" 69). Consequently, the British managed to sign a defense treaty with Egypt after compromise with King Farouk and the Wafd Party in 1936.

Another political current that was vigorously sanctioned by the local government under the British pressure was the communists. After the end of the Second World War and the outbreak of the Cold War, the communist ideology became a symbol of all revolutionary movements across the world that defies imperialist, retroactive, and corrupt systems. In Egypt, communists became subject to sanctions and persecutions due to their anti-capitalist ideology that mobilized against all forms of western imperialism. Two years before 1951, more than 100 communists were imprisoned, sentences ranged between 4 to 5 years (البشري 501).

In other words, the British authorities in Egypt used all direct and indirect measures to put an end to the growing nationalist ideology. It was urgent for the Foreign Office to set the circumstances that guaranteed the continuity of the British influence over Egypt. At the same

time, Britain wanted to insure stability in the region for the safety of her interests and better management of the Suez Canal, a valuable and strategic possession.

5-The Mounting of Anti-British Attitudes in Egypt

The British operations and existence in Egypt caused numerous armed resistance and political rejection among Egyptians. The history of Egyptian resistance towards the British dates back to the early British occupation of the politico-economic life in the late nineteenth century. Urabi's revolt for example, was one of the most known military resistance against the British interference in the Egyptian domestic affairs. Ahmed Urabi, an army officer, led a rebellion against the Khedivate in 1879. The rebellion took place as a rejection of the spread of corruption under the Khedive Tewfik Pasha and the foreign influence over the internal affairs of Egypt. The Egyptian high-ranking officers, land owners, businessmen were mainly foreign settlers. They were from British, Turkish, French and even Italian origins enjoying more privileges. Urabi managed to take control of Cairo and Alexandria creating a real threat to the foreign interests in Egypt. Yet, his uprising was sooner oppressed by the British intervention in 1882 (Pinfari 92).

Urabi's revolt was a significant event in the Egyptian history. It was one of the fewest mass organized rebellions which actually faced the British army in many battles. At the end of the rebellion, the British forces took the opportunity to install its military units in the Suez Canal for a long period of settlement even though the British assault was considered at first a short-term operation intended to protect the British interests. Lower class people and religious imams and elites were the only supporters of the uprising.

After the British intervention in 1882, the political situation in Egypt witnessed a kind of stability. Until the First World War, the British presence was unofficial. The annexation of Egypt took place after the outbreak of the First World War. Post-World War period

witnessed a shift in the Egyptian status. The foundation of the League of Nations in 1919 created a new international political institution that supported the right of independence for colonized territories. The period also witnessed a thriving growth of political activities within the colonies, especially in Egypt such as the progressive and revolutionary Wafd Party. iLater, in 1919, protests and manifestations broke out across the country and even in the Sudan after the arrests of Saad Zaghlul along with other members of the Wafd Party. The political parties had a considerable impact on the Egyptians. They contributed to the rise of consciousness among the lower-class people. Their discourses, speeches, and mottos influenced the Egyptians and enlightened them about political issues (البشري 98)

One of the main causes that led to the rise of anti-British attitudes among the Egyptian masses and politicians was the betrayal of the British authorities. The British decision to deport the Wafdist leading members to Malta caused a wide scale outbreak of manifestations and disturbances during 1919. People were irritated after the deliberate British interference. Spontaneous manifestations and mobilizations broke across the country. This reaction was seen as sign of the growth of public consciousness regarding political and public issues. Those manifestations pushed the British to reconsider their policies in Egypt.

Other political groups and associations were stronger and influential on the masses such as the Muslim Brotherhood for example. The group's aims were mainly reformists and anti-imperialists (423 Zollner). They considered the British influence as an occupation even though Egypt was declared officially independent in 1922. Unlike the liberal Wafd Party, the Muslim Brotherhood members held an extreme and hostile view regarding the foreign intervention of Britain. The Muslim Brotherhood had a great impact on the lower-class Egyptians. They used to organize various charity works in major cities and in the countryside. In other words, they mastered the art of persuasion. They also participated in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 with several armed groups (Munson 496).

The escalating hostility and violence towards the British reached a peak in 1952. On 25th January 1952, the city of Ismailia witnessed a two-hour confrontation between the British forces and Egyptian policemen caused the death of fifty Egyptian auxiliary policemen. The British attack triggered numerous violent manifestations and attacks against foreign investments and properties. The event caused several human casualties and considerable financial and material losses.

Conclusion

The British dominance over Egypt continued despite the declaration of the Egyptian independence in 1922. The Egyptians' reactions towards the British escalated and guerrilla attacks increased in the Canal Zone during the late forties and the early fifties. On the other hand, the Free Officers' group became larger and more organised within the Egyptian army. The rising of hostility and rejection of the British influence and the dominated monarchy would change radically the political situation in Egypt during the next few years.

Chapter Two

**Post 1952 Coup Egypt and
the Anglo-Egyptian
Relations**

Introduction

The Anglo Egyptian Relations witnessed a drastic change during the fifties. The Egyptian political scene before 1952 was characterized by successive difficulties. The mounting of hostility against the British reached a critical stage leading to uncontrolled public mobilizations. Meanwhile, the Free Officers managed to establish strong influence within the army. These circumstances led to a military coup in 1952 that changed the order and the balance of power. After the coup, the Egyptian domestic and foreign policy was radically reformed by the new authorities leading to a gradual escalation of conflict between Britain and Egypt.

1-Towards the Coup

The period between 1950-1952 was the most difficult for the Egyptian government and King Farouk's Monarchy. After several decades of British interventionism and social and political deteriorations, new political counterparts emerged in Egypt claiming the right for independence and social integrity. Consequently, the situation in Egypt reached a critical climax before 1952's coup. Along with those disturbances, the political conditions and security witnessed an unprecedented disorganization and chaos.

Since the Egyptian defeat in the 1948's Arab-Israeli conflict, the people's confidence in King Farouk's monarch and his policies declined (Chaudhri 130). The failure of Egypt along with the other Arab countries in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 made the people and activists put into question the Anglo-Egyptian alliance and relations. Also, the Egyptian government and the media tried to put the blame on the British claiming that they helped the Israelis (Gibb 443). The end of the conflict was preceded with constant exchange of accusations and criticism between politicians and the palace that revealed the vulnerability of the Egyptian regime.

The Anglo-Egyptian relations also reached a critical stage during the last two years

before the coup. The call for the abolition of the treaties and relations established with Britain became a constant demand of politicians such as the Wafdists, radical nationalists, and the communists. The Wafd government under the leadership of Mustapha Al Nahass faced intense pressure from Egyptians to abolish the defense treaty signed with Britain in 1936 and a complete and unconditional evacuation of all British military forces from Egypt. Some went further and claimed for the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Later on 8 October 1951, Nahass officially announced the abrogation of the defense treaty of 1936 which was later signed and approved by the King. After this decision, the British military existence became striped out of any legitimacy which made it even more critical for the government to take further decisive and daring acts against the British.

Along with those problems, the Free Officers organization managed to establish crucial contacts with the Americans through the military attaché of the American embassy in Egypt (حمودة88). It was important for the Free Officers to guarantee international approval and relations for future plans. These factors made the Free Officers the strongest and the most influential part in Egypt.

During the year of the coup, Egypt witnessed a governing crisis. Between January and July, four cabinets succeeded one another². Egypt suffered a state of political chaos. Some speculated that the communists or the Muslim Brotherhood would rival the unstable circumstances and lead a radical change taking advantage of the state of disorder (Botman 350). However, the Egyptian government could not undertake crucial steps against the British. Actually, the number of the British troops stationed at the Suez Canal reached 25,000 personal, which was a violation of the 1936's treaty that limits it only to 10,000 soldiers (Tignor 489). So, the Egyptian regime found itself in an impasse of the British domination and the insisting nationalists and populations.

² The government crisis emerged after a wave of resignations and dismissal of several governmental officials and prime ministers due to the critical social, economic, and political circumstances during 1952.

In addition to the political crisis, the pre-coup period witnessed rapid augmentation of sabotage attacks, guerilla operations, and manifestations that broke across the country causing a severe state of disorder and delinquency. Furthermore, the British assassination of 50 Egyptian auxiliary policemen in the city of Ismailia on 25 January 1952 triggered the outbreak of manifestations and violence especially in the capital Cairo. Unexpectedly, on 23 July 1952, the Free Officers led an organized and cooperative campaign against the King and all military high-ranking officers. They also controlled all the military barracks situated in the capital zone. The campaign was successfully conducted seizing the power and dissolving the monarchy of King Farouk.

2-The Coup's Aftermath and the British Attitudes

On July 23rd, 1952, the Free Officers arrested several military high-ranking officers who were loyal to the king. The next step was to take control of the military bases and barracks situated in the capital. Next, by July 25th, Alexandria, where King Farouk lived, fell into their control. Later, the coup leaders contacted the British Embassy to inform them about the atmosphere, affirming that the operation was mainly a reformist move against the king and the Egyptian domestic affairs (Thornhill 895). They also insured the safety of the foreign residents and interests. The same precaution was followed with the Americans; however, the Free Officers' attitudes and relations with the Americans were different. Actually, the group contacted the Americans several months before the coup reassuring and negating any communist tendencies or orientations (Thornhill 894).

After the outbreak of the coup, King Farouk tried desperately to call the British to intervene against the Free Officers. Yet, he received no answer. The British reaction was unexpected. After all, it was unexpected from the British not to undertake any reaction against the coup. During the first day after the coup, the Egyptian ambassador in London conveyed Farouk's insisting demands for immediate intervention. The King went further having heated

call with the chargé of the British embassy in Egypt, Michael Creswell. The former urged the British to intervene through the troops stationed in the Canal Zone. After all, the British did not undertake any direct or firm decisions as it was anticipated. The British stand was a result of reconsideration of its policies in Egypt that discarded military interventionism (Thornhill 896).

After the success of the coup, the Free Officers formed the Revolution Command Council (RCC) that englobed the military officers who were responsible for organizing the coup. Next, Ali Maher, the former prime minister, was responsible for forming a civilian government. Yet, the Free Officers appointed Mohammed Naguib, former Major General, as their leader. The choice of Mohammed Naguib as their front leader was quite significant. He was one of the most respected military officers. During the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, he was shown by the press reports as a hero, that's why he became more famous as a war hero for Egyptians. So, the Free Officers wanted to benefit from his charismatic character to gain the public support and confidence. Additionally, Mohammed Naguib participated in the coup's plan only few months before. The choice of Naguib shows the extent of the planning and readiness of the operation. Later, on January 1953, The RCC announced the abolition of the 1923's constitution providing a new one later on February that governed the transitional period for three years (التكريتي 176).

Concerning the British, they did not undertake any direct intervention even though their army in the Canal Zone reached 80,000 when the coup broke out (حمودة 88). The British could have easily foiled the coup. Their stationed military units in the Canal Zone were heavily armed, better equipped, and more organized than the inferior Egyptian military. Instead, the British followed a "wait and see" policy without showing any formal approval or denial of the changes brought after the coup. However, Creswell warned the Foreign office of the seriousness of the case and the RCC intentions. He also suggested a reserve plan in case of

any deterioration of the situation in Egypt. Actually, the Foreign Office discussed the possibility of a striking military operation against the coup leaders if they acted against the British interests in Egypt. Creswell also suggested the mobilization of one of the British fleets next to Alexandria as a warning sign for the new regime (McNamara 24). This attitude was maintained and insisted upon after the first contact between representatives of the Free Officers and the British embassy in Egypt on the 23th July. During this meeting, the British were insured by the leading officers that the coup attempt was limited only to interior affairs. The British warned the group from any threat of foreign or British residents and interests (Thornhill 895). Consequently, the Free Officers, managed to secure the British stand along with the American one.

In light of the circumstances that followed the coup, Britain favored a close relation with the RCC instead of a political system dominated by the anti-British Wafd Party. Britain wanted to reinitiate negotiations with the RCC for a new defense treaty after the abolition of the previous one by the Wafd Government. The British went further by co-operating with the Americans to force the Egyptians to reach an agreement with the British through the financial and economic aids. For instance, when the minister of finance, 'Abd al-Jalil al-'Imar, visited the US to negotiate with the IMF and other financial institutions the economic aids and loans, he was informed that Egypt would be provided with economic aids once an agreement was established with the British (Alterman 55).

So, the period that followed the coup was characterized by an insisting effort from the British to persuade the new regime to sign a new defense treaty. Yet, they did not neglect a military intervention in case of the failure of negotiations which effectively happened later in the following years. Meanwhile, the RCC was heavily occupied with arranging the domestic affairs after a radical change of the political sphere.

3-The Political and Economic policies of the New Republic 1952-1956

3.1- The policy of Mohammed Naguib's Regime 1952-1954

The emergence of the Free Officers in the Egyptian politics was accompanied by several political reforms and changes to gain public and foreign approval. The overthrowing of Farouk's monarchy by the group was declared claiming responsibility of freeing the country from corruption and imperialism. Yet, the Free Officers had to ensure foreign support to prevent any military interventions or embargos. It was very important for the new government to insure domestic and foreign stability after the radical change of July 23rd revolution.

The period that preceded the coup was characterized by the dominance of the private ownership of most of the country's capital. Additionally, the rate of poverty and unemployment reached a critical rate among the Egyptians. After the revolution, a wave of social reforms was taken to limit the influence of the aristocrats. For example, the new regime presented a law that restricted the private ownership of lands to 1 acre. Such acts were initiated to restrain the influence of land aristocrats and create new relatively prosperous and wider social class of peasants in rural areas. Still, those reforms were mainly concerned with agricultural affairs at the beginning. Moreover, The Free Officers contacted the US embassy on 19 August 1952 asking for economic and industrial experts in order to help the reconstruction of the Egyptian economy (Alterman 52). Such a request held double significance; it provided the Egyptians with the required expertise to launch its economic programs and ensured the American stand and support of the Egyptian policies.

The Egyptian politics also witnessed a sweeping change after the coup. The new regime undertook a severe action against some political parties after the abrogation of the 1923 constitution on 10 December 1952. This was preceded by a campaign of arrests and

sanctions against certain political parties and activists. The Communists for instance were the first who conflicted with the new regime opposing the revolution's orientation under the leadership of the RCC. The situation worsened when several unionists and communists clashed with military troops in the region of Alexandria on the 13th August 1952. The events took place when textile workers in Kafr al-Dawwar went on series of strikes and manifestations claiming for the improvement of their working and living conditions. The intervention of the army under the command of the RCC resulted in the death of two soldiers and several workers (Botman 357). As a result, the gap broadened between the new regime and the political activists. After those events, politicians and activists started to question the authenticity of the new regime especially after the RCC's reaction vis-à-vis the manifestations that took place only few months after the coup.

Concerning the issue of Suez, the new regime did not accept the continuity of the British military existence in the Canal Zone. The issue of the Suez military base was evoked by the Egyptians during every British attempt to negotiate with the new regime. The Free Officers informed the US officials before the coup that they would terminate the British military occupation of the Suez Canal along with other issues (Aoudé 03). The RCC's stand caused considerable tension between Britain and Egypt where it seemed difficult to negotiate with the RCC. So, the leaders of the coup aimed at chasing the British military from Egypt using any means available, even if it required negotiations.

The group of the Free Officers emerged as heroes after the coup naming it the 23rd July revolution. They promised the Egyptians with better future of prosperity and justice for the large lower-class Egyptians. Their slogans and mottos celebrated the end of corruption and the dependency on the British. However, the policies of the new regime witnessed a slight deterioration from the expected goals. The military influence over the social and political affairs of Egypt resulted in more controversy and conflict after the coup. Also, the foreign

relations with Britain during the first two years after the coup were characterized by cautious vigilant diplomacy without involving in a direct conflict (Thornhill 896).

3.2- The Rise of Nasser to Power and the Horizon of a New Paradigm 1954-1955

After the nomination of Ahmed Naguib to the presidency, the Egyptian domestic policy witnessed several relative socialist reforms. However, those reforms were restricted to certain economic aspects. Along with those socialist and economic reforms, the RCC made several decrees and acts creating new complex intelligence system that gave advanced and unprecedented authorities for the military institutions. These changes resulted in a state of unrest among politicians and opposition due to the growing militarization of political authorities (البشري 157). Additionally, the division of stands and tension emerged between the RCC members. Some of them including the president Mohammed Naguib preferred the restoration of the civilian rule and political activities. He also refused the fact of being a president with no authority (Thornhill 914) . Actually, he had nearly the same powers as the other members of the RCC. On the other hand, Nasser and the majority of the Free Officers held opposite opinions favoring the continuity of the transition policies and military control.

The peak of the tension occurred after Naguib's resignation on the 22nd February 1954. This resulted in several manifestations among the population and within the RCC itself. Consequently, Nasser and the other Free Officers urged him to cancel his resignation in order not to cause further disagreement and conflict among the RCC and the army. Naguib was reappointed on the 28th.

On the 5th of March 1954, censorship was lifted and arrested politicians and activists were released. Nasser on the other hand became a prime minister in April. Suddenly, a wave of press reports talking about the growing delinquency and Naguib's collaboration with the Wafd overwhelmed the media. Naguib became subject of accusations and rumors that

suspected his authority. Those campaigns were not arbitrary. In fact, Nasser admitted to William Lakeland, the US political Secretary, in a meeting that he followed a tactic of letting the situation in Egypt aggravates in order to show the downsides of liberating political life. On the other hand, Nasser used the opportunity to gain more influence on the military to prevent further mutinies. In November 1954, Nasser managed to overthrow Naguib after accusing him of collaboration with the Muslim Brotherhood (McNamara 25). Nasser's arrival to power was followed by a decision of banning all political parties and the termination of elections. He finally managed to acquire full authority to continue the negotiations with the British to accomplish complete military evacuation from the Suez Canal.

In January 1954, Nasser issued a decision to dissolve the group of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brothers joined the long list of banned parties. The decision was applied even though the group's nature was not considered as a political party. Yet, their popularity among the lower-class Egyptians was not tolerated by Nasser who wanted to eliminate all kinds of popular organizations that rivaled his authority. Furthermore, Nasser's policy towards the group worsened after the failed assassination attempt committed by one of the Muslim Brothers on October 27, 1954 in a public speech. The incident was followed by hundreds of arrests among the group that targeted most of its leaders and members. More than 1000 were Sentenced to death and most of the prisoners became subject to torture and abuse in the prisons (حمودة112). Nasser's extreme intolerance of the political parties generally and the Muslim Brothers specifically became subject to controversy due to its damaging impact on the Egyptian political sphere. The way The Muslim Brothers were treated using military judiciary process instead of civilian trials was unprecedented even during the Farouk's monarchy and the British influence. Additionally, Nasser's political reforms produced a dichotomist and paradoxical regime that ranged between ambitious and anti-imperialist foreign policy and authoritarian and militarized domestic rule.

The controversy Nasser's regime lies in the radical socialist policy adopted. After he became president, He went further presenting more socialist reforms redistributing lands, improving the healthcare and educational system. Also, he set advanced nationalizing plans for private industrial and commercial companies to provide the incomes that covers the social programs. These reforms strengthened Nasser's popularity presenting him as the hero who disposed of feudal system of *pashas* and *Affendias*¹. One of the most important future projects that was previously planned is the construction of Aswan High Dam. This project consisted of constructing a large dam in the city of Aswan in the south of the country. Egypt received various tempting offers to finance the project. The US offered 56 million dollars grant in addition to the facilitation of getting further 200 million from the World Bank. On the other hand, the Soviets offered a 200 million loan (Bagley 201), but the Egyptians favored the American offer in order not to lose the support of an important ally.

Concerning the foreign affairs, Nasser's rise to power gave him full monopoly over the Anglo-British negotiations. His primary foreign aim was reaching an agreement with the British that ensured Egypt's sovereignty and the evacuation of the British military from Egypt. Exactly on 15 October 1954, the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations reached an agreement about the British military withdrawal from the Canal Zone and the closure of the military base. In addition to that, Egypt accepted the condition of the reactivation of the base in case of Soviet assault against any British ally in the region (Kerr 70). The British military was replaced by civilian contractors in order to maintain and operate the canal. However, the defense treaty faced several obstacles. The British wanted to involve non-Arab countries in the agreement such as Turkey and Iran to establish a larger and stronger regional coalition.

¹ *pashas* and *Affendias* are high class Egyptians that englobed princes, land owners, and high governmental and military officials. The two terms are derived from Turkish language during the Ottoman rule over Egypt.

Yet, Nasser refused their involvement because he believed in an exclusive Arab coalition (Bagley 202). After the British evacuation from the Suez Canal, the Anglo-Egyptian relations witnessed a rising tension in light of the Cold War.

The rise of Nasser to power was accompanied by the growth of nationalist orientation in the Egyptian policy. The urge to found a sovereign state oriented the new regime for socialist policies. Nasser described the changes brought after the 1952' coup during Mohammed Naguib's presidency merely as an incomplete revolution that achieved only political changes with no effective social reforms. He believed in the necessity of a radical change that achieves social revolution and welfare for the Egyptians (Lama 34). So, He needed to gain the support of the Egyptian population in addition to the other countries within the region and the global powers. His policies in the Arab region advocated for more Pan-Arabic solidarity against the rivaling imperial powers. During Nasser's period, Nationalist ideology became more apparent in the Egyptian domestic and foreign policy.

Even though Nasser followed an extreme socialist orientation concerning the domestic policies, his advocacy for nationalism was accompanied by severe intolerance of communism and Conservatism. His abolition of the political parties and activities was proceeded by the creation of several political populist organizations to fill the emptiness created by the absence of the banned political parties (عبد الرحمن 174). Organizations such as the "Liberation Rally" that was created on 10 February 1954 were deployed by the RCC in order to monopolize and mobilize the popular scene (Metz 59).

After Nasser's succession to power, he advocated a common ideology exclusive for Arab countries. During the 1950s, the ideology of Pan-Arabism¹ flourished in the light of

¹ Pan-Arabism is an ideology that advocated for the unity and solidarity between Arab countries.

anti-imperialism and independence movements. Nasser favored the ideology in order to englobe all Arab countries forming a regional alliance. His model of Arab nationalism and solidarity was a mere extension to the early twentieth century model initiated by the Arab revolution against the Ottoman Empire (Dawisha 34). The similarity between the two models lies in Nasser's opposition to the involvement of Turkey in the defense treaty with Britain after 1954. Also, Nasser tried to convince Arab countries to strengthen the Arab collective security pact in order to rival the Anglo-American intervention in the Middle East (Danielson 38). Overall, Nasser's Arab unity and solidarity also referred to as "Arab nationalism", or "Arab socialism" became an urgent priority for Nasser to achieve his foreign policies. His thoughts and ideology became clearer after the publication of his book, *Egypt's Liberation, a Philosophy of the Revolution* and a preface he wrote to a pamphlet on *Oil and Arab Policy* where he explained the strategic, political, and cultural importance and power of the Arab World. He believed in the emergence of the Arab countries as a leading power:

Our countries in their central position between East and West, North and South are, in relation to the other countries of the world, like a capital city of a state. Why should we not fill the role of a capital and direct the countries of the whole of humanity? In our land, sky, and sea we possess immense resources, the envy of numerous countries of the East and West. Why should we not try to use our resources to secure our place and direction in the world, to regulate the balance of forces for the whole of humanity (qtd. in Kennedy 539).

Nasser explained his ideology as an intersection of three dogmas, Pan-Africanism, Islamism, and Pan-Arabism. Later, Egypt involved in an active foreign policy in which efforts were directed to support the independence movements across the world and in Africa

especially. The use of media and press was a crucial element in the nationalist propaganda. For instance, Sawt al-Arab (Voices of the Arabs), an Egyptian radio station, transmitted its international broadcast in several Asian and African countries with several languages backing the independence causes. Such active engagement in foreign affairs gave Nasser a worldwide popularity especially in those countries. One of the main events that contributed to Nasser's cause was his participation in the non-alignment movement in Bandung conference in Indonesia 1955. The conference witnessed the attendance of several Afro-Asian presidents in which Nasser was one of the main actors of the conference along with Nehru, Zhu Enlai, and Sukarno. Besides, Nasser earned the Symbolism of the Conference with his young age and military uniform emerging as one of the leading figures of the event (Shimazu 17). On the other hand, those domestic socialist policies and active foreign diplomacy broadened the rupture between Egypt and the west.

4-The Rise of Tension between Egypt and Britain 1954-1955

Since the outbreak of the military coup led by the RCC, Britain followed a cautious policy regarding the new radical change. During Mohammed Naguib's presidency, the Egyptian authorities were occupied in rearranging the domestic policies. Meanwhile, the RCC had several communications with the US and Britain in order to reassure their positions regarding the coup. Yet, after Nasser's arrival to power in 1954, the Anglo-Egyptian relations witnessed a gradual deterioration due to Nasser's attitudes. The British Officials were always surprised by Nasser's unpredictability. The British ambassador, Ralph Stevenson described Nasser as an "astute" and manipulative politician. Jefferson Caffery, The US ambassador in Egypt, viewed him as the only strong personality that could conclude an agreement with Britain. On the other hand, Parker T. Hart, an American official, described Nasser's complex character as smart and "immature" (Thornhill 916).

The British main aim was to reach a defence alliance with Egypt in order to form a regional alliance in the Middle East. The Evacuation agreement on 27 July 1954 was a step forward to the regional alliance that guaranteed the possibility of the reactivation of the Suez Canal base. Yet, The Anglo-Egyptian co-operation reached a dead end and the possibility of a defence pact faded due to several factors.

One of the main factors that led to the disagreement between Britain and Egypt was the circumstances of Baghdad Pact¹. Britain urged to form a regional coalition block in reaction to the spread of the communist influence. Nevertheless, the British intentions to enlarge the list of the involved countries clashed with the Egyptian priorities. Nasser refused the addition of non-Arab countries into the alliance, Turkey and Pakistan for instance. So, the British strategic and political plans in the Middle East contradicted the ideological principles set by the new regime of Nasser. The British on the other hand tried desperately to convince Nasser to join Baghdad pact. On February 1955, Anthony Eden visited Cairo in order to discuss the issue of the defence alliance with Nasser hoping to convince him. Still, Nasser again refused the British request (Metz 60). Instead, he wanted an alliance exclusive to Arab countries in which Egypt played the leading role. Furthermore, the disagreement between the two countries worsened in light of the active diplomacy of Nasser in the world.

The British efforts to create a regional alliance ended with the creation of a regional pact without the involvement of Egypt. In 1955, Britain signed a defense agreement with Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran. The British intended to achieve several goals through this agreement. First of all, the regional pact stood as a counter measure against the spreading communism that dominated large territories in Eastern Europe and Asia. Secondly, The

¹ Baghdad pact also known as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), is a defense alliance that includes Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan Iran, and Britain. It was signed in 1955 as an attempt to face the spread of communism during the Cold War.

British aimed to maintain their influence in the Middle-Eastern region through the military alliance. Iraqi nationalists, on the other hand, viewed the British defense alliance agreements merely an extension of the British Imperialism (Jasse 140). The pact was also a British attempt that targets the growing political status of Egypt in the Middle East.

Nasser's effort to create a regional block of Arab countries was faced by the British intervention through the pact. The declaration of the pact caused a rupture between and within the Arab countries. After the Jordanian participation in the pact on December the 13th, several ministers resigned denouncing the Jordanian involvement and later a new government was formed (Baghdad pact 213). Furthermore, tension arose between Saudi Arabia and Egypt against Jordan and Iraq on the other hand because of the participation in the pact.

Nasser's activism against western imperialism became a leading motto of his foreign policy. His propaganda and support for the independence cause intervened with the imperial policies and interests of the West. The Egyptian media and the radio broadcasts reached Afro-Asian nations. The Egyptian Information's Minister, Abdel-Kader Hatem, concluded that: "President Nasser and the Egyptian People did all they could to foster the cause of African freedom, which was ably championed by the Egyptian information media" (Collier 124). Additionally, Nasser's support for the independence causes reached the British colonies in Africa. He had close relations with the Ghanaian nationalist Kwame Nkrumah. He also supported Patrice Lumumba in the Congolese struggle for independence. (Gordon 56).

The Anglo-Egyptian relations were strongly affected by the Cold War. Nasser tried to be pragmatic and neutral as much as possible. He kept close relations with the United States and relatively cautious ones with the British. But the urge of creating a new Egyptian power led Nasser to change his orientations towards the East. Unlike Britain and the US, the Soviets advanced unconditioned offers to Egypt in order to strengthen their relation with Egypt and

rival the West. The Soviets also wanted to set a strong foothold in the Middle East through the economic and political co-operation with Egypt. Nasser's attempt to bring Egypt as an independent sovereign regional power was not welcomed by the British and the French who considered it a threat to their interest in the region (Uzer, and Uzer 111). Meanwhile the world was involved in Cold War, and Nasser's pragmatic strategies and his alternation between the East and the West failed to keep Egypt totally neutral.

The most important event that intensified the situation between Egypt and the west was the Arms deals with the east. One of the most important points that Nasser insisted on was the creation of a stronger and well-equipped Army in order to build a leading nation. The Egyptians suffered from the lack of heavy armament and military equipment. Also, Most of the Egyptian arms were outdated. On February 28th 1955, the Israeli Army launched a military operation named the "Black Arrow" where several Egyptian military barracks were attacked in Gaza strip and the Egyptian army was humiliated (Skaggs 09). After the event, Nasser demanded a considerable arm deal from the West. However, the USA advanced some conditions that were seen by Nasser as unbearable which resulted in changing his orientation towards the Eastern bloc. Nasser stated that the Western powers "armed Israel and refused to arm us so that we remain under their yoke and sphere of influence and at their mercy" (Chaudhri 136). The result was Nasser's accomplishment of an arms deal with Czechoslovakia where Egypt received advanced military equipment in exchange of rice and cotton. The agreement caused a shock in the Western bloc. Nasser's maneuver to moderate his army and create a regional power caused a general unrest in Britain, US, and the neighboring Israel.

Conclusion

The conflict between Britain and Egypt caused a severe diplomatic and political crisis. The problem was aggravated due to various regional and international circumstances that nourished the conflict between the two countries. The failure of the British to include Egypt within a regional defense alliance was followed by the growing of Nasser's active foreign and domestic activism that clashed with the British interests. This clash led the two countries towards critical direct confrontation during the following years.

Chapter Three

**The Suez Crisis 1956, and
its Immediate Outcomes**

Introduction

After Nasser's accession to power in 1954, a strong wave of nationalist reforms swamped the Egyptian economy. The British interests in Egypt were severely damaged especially when the new Egyptian government started taking control of foreign assets. The British "wait and see" policy became difficult to maintain in light of the tension between the two countries. Nasser's attitudes regarding the British and the West in general brought Egypt in a direct military conflict with Britain in 1956.

1-The Road Towards the Nationalisation of the Suez Canal

The new tendencies of the Egyptian government led to several drawbacks at the level of its foreign relations. Nasser's aims to strengthen the Egyptian army established strong relations with the USSR. His aims grew after the creation of Baghdad Pact which the Egyptians regarded it as a British attempt to isolate Egypt from the rest of the Arab world (Sorby 130). Moreover, the British Officials convinced the Americans not to provide Egypt with the required armament demanded by Nasser (McNamara 42). The Soviets on the other hand took the opportunity to gain a strategic foothold in the Middle East. The circumstances and the tension resulted by the Cold War was the main influential factor on the Anglo-Egyptian relations.

The arms deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia triggered a heavy impact in the West proving Nasser's unpredictability. He did not want to be dependent or attached to the Western influence. Nasser rejected an offer presented by the United States that consisted of providing military equipment accompanied by military contractors and personnel in order to maintain that military equipment. The offer deprived the Egyptians from the military expertise and kept them in complete dependence on the American military experts in order to operate or maintain the military apparatus (Lucas 64).

On September 1955, Nasser surprised the world by an enormous arm deal with Czechoslovakia. The contract supplemented the Egyptian army with 100 T-34 and IS-3 tanks in addition to several artillery and armoured vehicles. Also, the agreement offered 80 Mig-15 jet fighters that shocked the US army in the Korean War in 1953 (Skaggs 03). Nasser on the other hand expressed his enthusiasm about the deal in a military exhibition in the same month stating: “Today I hear a clamor here and a clamor there when we are able to obtain for the army, without conditions or restrictions, the weapons it requires in order to accomplish the revolutions’ objective of creating a strong national army, which will protect the true independence and freedom of Egypt” (qtd. in CIA, FBIS 02).

Unlike the Americans, the British along with the French felt obliged to undertake more severe precautions against the Egyptian government despite Nasser’s insistence that the arm deal was only for defence purposes (Sorby 133). The British had more residents and Economic interests in Egypt. Furthermore, the future of the Suez Canal Company and the military infrastructure in the Canal Zone that they counted on it for the regional defence plans became threatened by the new strategic status of Egypt.

Tension grew and Nasser drifted away from the West whereas the British aims for a future defence plans with Nasser faded away. Meanwhile, the relation between Egypt and the Soviets grew. After all, they both profited from the arms deal. The Egyptians possessed advanced arm equipment to renovate their military in addition to the fact that the payment was provided only through agricultural exports –rice and cotton-. On the other hand, the Soviets won a strategic and important ally in the Middle East and the arm deal ensured the military power of the Egyptian to secure themselves against any Western assault caused by the Cold War.

After Czech-Egyptian arms deal, the revolutionary project of the construction of Aswan's High Dam was still dependent on the US and British financial assistance. The West felt more peculiar about Nasser's developed relations with the East. The Egyptians' friendly relations with communist regimes such as China and Eastern-European countries in light of the Cold War and the rise of anti-Western attitudes pushed the US and Britain to reconsider their financial aids to Egypt. Meanwhile, the Soviets presented a tempting offer to finance the construction process in addition to providing technical support in exchange of the Egyptian involvement in military defence negotiations (Awan 117). These circumstances led to the American withdrawal of its support in July 1956. This moment represented the climax of tension that preceded the nationalisation of the Suez Canal.

2-Nasser's Nationalisation of the Suez Canal and the Mounting of Tension

Since the arm deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia, the relation between Egypt and Britain reached a no-return point. Even the moderate friendship established with the Americans deteriorated. Meanwhile, the Egyptian and Soviet diplomacy witnessed several meetings between the two countries' officials discussing economic and commercial issues (Laron 46). Because of that, the Americans and the British suspended their financial support for the Aswan High Dam. The latter was so important for the Egyptian economy. The construction of the dam insured the needed water quantity for the irrigation and hence better agricultural productivity because it was the basis of the Egyptian economy. The West's decision to terminate the financial aid placed Nasser in a critical situation where decisive measures were needed as alternatives to provide the cost of the Aswan project that reached more than 1 billion dollars (Cleveland 302).

The withdrawal of the financial offer was declared on 19 July 1956. Only few days later, Nasser announced the nationalisation of the Suez Canal company on the 26th July.

Nasser's decision held several connotations that aimed to achieve numerous ends at the same time. First, the timing of the decision was quite significant. It came within a short period after the withdrawal of the Anglo-American offer. The seizure of the Suez Canal was meant as a direct response of the West's decision. Second, the act of nationalisation strengthened popular support of Jamal Abd Nasser. The Egyptians welcomed Nasser's decision. It was the final step towards achieving full sovereignty. In a way or another, the event helped strengthening Nasser's status among the Egyptians.

The British on the other hand gave a huge importance to the Suez Canal Company in order to prevent the reoccurrence of nationalisation that occurred in Iran where its oil company was nationalized by Mossadeq's government in 1951. The British were surprised by Nasser's move because the latter accepted the continuity of the concession made between Britain and the Khedive of Egypt that expires in 1968. After the event, The British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, initiated a reactive policy of sanctions gathering international support (Pearson 20).

Eden tried to internationalize the Suez case by organizing several conferences in London where Britain invited a long list of countries to mobilize international support against Nasser's government (سالم 171). The British Prime minister went further describing the act of nationalisation as a theft that need to be replied on severely (Cleveland 302). Furthermore, on the 23rd September 1956, Britain and France applied a complaint against Egypt in the UN Security Council. The case was vetoed by the USSR without achieving significant results. Even though Eden believed in the ineffectiveness of the UN resolutions, they were obliged to present the case in the Security Council to gain international support (Pearson 69).

The nationalisation of the Suez Canal meant further advantages for the Soviets in the Middle East. After the nationalisation of the canal, the Egyptians increased their military arrangements and cooperation with the USSR as preparation against any hostile assault (Bass

7). Those policies widened the breach between Egypt and the West. So, Nasser's relations and diplomacy became centred around the Eastern Bloc and the Non-Alignment countries.

In addition to Britain, the French and the Israelis were deeply affected by the nationalisation of the Suez Canal. The French owned a large percentage of the Suez Canal Company's Shares. They also supported the possibility of military intervention against Nasser's regime (McNamara 48). After all, The French always held suspicious and hostile attitudes regarding Nasser's policy, especially his support of the independence causes in the French colonies and the guerilla insurgencies in Algeria. The Israelis on the other hand were also threatened by the event. The navigation of the Israelis' ships was threatened by the transfer of the Suez Canal ownership to Egypt. The Israeli-Egyptian relations already suffered from critical tension due to the 1948's Arab Israeli war and the frequent Israeli attacks against the Egyptian army in the West Bank. France and Israel were the first to initiate the possibility of military intervention in Egypt because they had more concrete interests in the region (Warner 231).

So, Egypt witnessed a rapid change after 1952 at the level of regional and foreign policy. This change was generated due to several factors. The nationalist ideology introduced by Jamal Abd Nasser brought Egypt from the British dependence status into a relatively strong and sovereign position that clashed with the Western interests in the Middle East. The Situation worsened due to the involvement of the Soviets in the Egyptian case in light of the Cold War. Nasser tried to set Egypt in a neutral position between the Eastern and the Western blocs in which the Egyptian interest held the priority. His strategy was successful at the ideological level in which Nasser did not endorse the Communist ideology as did China and Vietnam for example nor did he adopted Capitalism as a state policy. Yet, in reality, those policies drifted Egypt more towards the Soviet Bloc where the situation escalated towards military confrontation with the West.

3-The Outbreak of Conflict and the Tripartite Aggression

Tension between Egypt and the West culminated since the military coup of 1952. The failure of coming to terms between Britain and Nasser in light of the Cold War led to the one of the most critical military confrontation in the Middle East. The Nationalisation of the Suez Canal by Nasser damaged and deprived the French and the British from their political and economic interests in Egypt. Israel's geo-strategic interests in the region were also threatened by the growing power and sovereignty of the neighbouring Egypt. Consequently, the British and the French naval forces were gathered in the Mediterranean next to the Egyptian shores while the Soviets considered it as a provocation (Smolansky 585).

It was obvious and expected that the Anglo-French-Israeli coalition was preparing for a military plan. The British forces in the Mediterranean region were ordered for preparation and alert for future war possibilities. The French also were highly prepared for the plan which they saw as an opportunity to hit Nasser with a destructive attack. On the other hand, the Americans showed less readiness for the military actions. They were convinced that economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure were the best strategy to deal with Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal (Lucas 335). The French, however, regarded the intervention as an urgent containment operation that needed to be undertaken without further delay. The head of the French Council, Guy Mollet stated that:

Perhaps, in the end, we would convince the U.S. in favour of a common programme... but we would lose valuable time, and possibly even the chance to act.... as for British participation, any delay is likely to be fatal. I know Eden personally, and I am absolutely convinced that he is an enthusiastic supporter of common action...but his domestic situation is deteriorating (Lucas 335).

The Egyptian military forces lacked the proper readiness against the sweeping military assault by the British coalition. Most of the advanced and offensive Air forces were concentrated in Sinai Peninsula, whereas the rest of military airplanes were piston-based fighters and bombers stationed in the Nile Delta Zone. Also, most of the Egyptian naval and land forces were located both in Alexandria and the delta zone (Suez Background 02). The Egyptian army was inferior to the British, French, and Israeli forces. So, it could not provide proper defense plan against the Tripartite attack. If the army was scattered between the Canal Zone, Nile Delta, and the Sinai Peninsula, its effectiveness would be lost whereas if they supported certain territories, others will be left vulnerable.

On the 23rd October 1956, Britain along with Israel and France reached a joint agreement to wage a military action against Egypt in order to fulfill several aims. The plan of the action consisted of two parts. The first part involved an Israeli attack on Sinai Desert from the eastern front. The Israeli raid was meant to look like one of the military operation that they used to conduct in Sinai and Gaza Strip. After 36 hours, the Anglo-French forces would intervene to control the situation as an excuse. The strategy was deliberately planned in order to make it look like a legitimate intervention for maintaining order in Egypt rather than a hostile assault (هيكل 605).

According to the plan, on the 29th, the Israeli Army launched a wide scale military campaign named “Operation Kadesh” occupying Sinai Peninsula reaching the east front of the Suez Canal. The Israelis used fast and decisive air raids targeting the airbases located in Egypt in order to paralyze Egyptian air forces. The Land forces were also moved from the Israeli borders for fast and conclusive raids. The Israelis managed to capture the Gulf of Aqaba, Sharm el Sheikh, and other strategic spots.

4- The Soviet Threat, International Pressure, and the End of the Aggression

The Self-initiated military operation led by Britain, France, and Israel took place within a critical period. The international climate was agitated by the Cold War. The Soviet-American rivalry for interests brought several countries into a scene of confrontation. Along with the international conflict, The Disagreement and opposite stands that appeared between the United States and Britain concerning Egypt and other cases, Britain was already suffering from the destructive economic drawbacks of the Second World War. Additionally, the growth of the United States' political and economic status made it difficult for the former imperial powers, Britain and France, to seize the monopoly of power in the Middle East and in other regions (McNamara 59).

The Soviets already set stronger position in the Middle-East through the co-operation with Egypt. The Military and economic relations between the Eastern Bloc and Egypt witnessed an accelerated growth after Nasser's rise to power. These relations became more apparent and daring to the West after the Czech-Egyptian arm deal of 1955. The West was always suspicious about the growing economic activities and relation between the USSR and several under-developed countries in Africa and Asia. The Eastern powers such as USSR and China managed to provide and finance many projects in countries like Cambodia, India, Burma, Yemen, and most importantly Egypt (Sino-Soviet Bloc 02). These interest-based relations made it difficult for the Soviets to ignore the West's intervention in Egypt.

The Soviets took a critical stand denouncing the British attempts to regain control on the Suez Canal. They condemned the London Conferences that took place in August 1956 to provide support against Egypt (Smolansky 584). The USSR expressed their full support to Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal considering it a legitimate act that concerned the Egyptian sovereignty. The soviets' support for communist and allied countries was strongly

manifested especially in Hungary few days after the end of the Suez Crisis. On the 10th November 1956, the USSR army intervened in Hungary to subdue the Hungarian uprising that threatened the Soviet interest in the country.

The US policy during the early twentieth century contradicted with the Europeans' imperialist policy. The United States and the UN supported the right of colonized countries for independence. Consequently, The Americans distanced themselves from the tripartite military operation. They warned Israel to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula otherwise they would cease their military and financial aids. As expected, the US presented a draft to the UN Security Council after the outbreak of the war. The draft consisted of US proposal for immediate Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, commitment of the other powers not to intervene in the Crisis, and the ban of aids provided to Israel (Bass 12). The Americans also opposed a British demand to receive financial loans from the IMF (Schaub 44).

The International support similarly was inclined in favour of the Egyptians. Even some of the Commonwealth countries such as Pakistan and India displayed great support for the Egyptian cause. Both countries sent letters for Eden condemning the military operations led by the British coalition against Egypt. They also threatened to leave the Commonwealth in case of the continuation of the military aggression against Egypt (627 هیکل). Furthermore, manifestations and sabotage attacks broke across the world against the French and Israeli embassies.

The shocking response finally came from the Soviet Union in November 1956 after several communications between the Egyptian Ambassador, the Soviet officials, and the soviet leaders, Nikolai Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviets finally intervened by sending threatening letters to Britain, France, and Israel. The text of the letters held a clear and hostile tone against the aforementioned countries. The Soviets literally threatened Britain, France, and Israel by nuclear response. The USSR ordered the aggressors to withdraw their

forces from Egypt unconditionally otherwise there would be decisive nuclear measures against them.

The threatening message sent by the Soviets caused a heavy and shocking impact on Britain. The British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, tried to contact the American president and other officials to discuss the Soviet threats, but he received no response (هيكل 637). The three countries became suddenly isolated within the international sphere. On the other hand, Britain along with France and Israel realized the fact that they could not withstand the possibility of nuclear confrontation with the Soviets especially after the Americans' refusal to side with Britain.

On the 6th November 1956, Britain announced a ceasefire. The recurrence of international pressure and condemnation against Britain and its allies led to the cease of the military operation and a military evacuation from Egypt. The sequence of the events went through unexpected course in which the world witnessed an unprecedented nuclear tension between the East and the West in light of the Cold War. Also, The British withdrawal from Egypt was accompanied by disastrous impacts on Britain at numerous levels.

5-Britain after the Crisis

The British alter for the military assault along with France and Israel was meant to be a decisive and short-term operation against Nasser. The nature of the operation was planned to appear like an intervention to maintain order after the Israeli attack. However, the agreed plot was so transparent that it did not hide the interventionist nature of the operation. The international reaction and the American stand did not tolerate the Tripartite aggression. Furthermore, the consequences of the event caused severe damages to the British economy and diplomacy.

After the heavy impact of the Soviet threats, the British sensitivity and consideration of exterior and threatening factors became so apparent. Later, the British became subject to more daring attacks. On the 6th of November 1956, General Keightley, Commander in Chief of the Middle East Land Forces, reported that two Canberra B-6s were fired by Syrian meteor jet fighters after they flew over Syria for reconnaissance mission. One of the two planes wrecked in Lebanon. On the afternoon of the same day, the supreme commander of the NATO informed London that a probable Soviet jet aircraft violated Turkey's airspace. The next day on the 7th November, a large and unidentified Jet aircraft flew over Cyprus at more than 16 000 meters (Lucas 410). These acts caused considerable concerns in the West and made Britain reconsider its policies in light of the new circumstances and the Soviet threats.

The outbreak of the conflict and the military operations in the Suez Canal led to a complete blockade of the Canal; consequently, the circulation of ships through the waterway became impossible. The closure of the Suez Canal caused a critical economic situation in both industrial and underdeveloped countries suffered due to the drop of shipments, the circulation of goods, and the lack of raw materials (Office of National Estimates 03). The British officials always regarded the Suez Canal as one of the most important elements for the survival of the British economy (Stanley 91), but Nasser's nationalisation of the canal caused serious financial difficulties for the British.

In addition to the blockade of the Suez Canal, another complication occurred when the Syrian army received a direct order from the military officials to sabotage oil pipelines and pumps that lead to Western Europe and Britain (هيكل 630). This step resulted in a complete stop of the oil flow. After the cease of oil flow, the British treasury was struck by severe financial and currency losses that reached millions of pounds. In addition to that, on the 4th November 1956, Arab OPEC countries announced that oil production would be reduced with 25% during November (Hellema et al. 37). On the 22nd November, the British Foreign Office

sent a letter to Washington explaining the difficult economic and financial situation experienced after the crisis hoping for further financial discussions (FO 03).

The result of the conflict made the flaws of the British policy more transparent. Not only that, but it led to a critical stage in the Anglo-American relations. The British government suffered from public embarrassment after the refusal of the American President and officials to respond to Eden's calls after the Soviet threats. The American response came later when the assistant of the American president told Eden that "the president was informed about the Soviet threats and he does not consider them meant for the United States" (637 هيكل). The British choice not to inform the US about the military action widened the breach and disagreement between the two countries.

Concerning the Middle East, the British military assault ruined all chances for future co-operative relations with the other Arab countries. The possibility to establish further and advanced defense alliances within the Middle East became more difficult after the British policy during the Suez Crisis and hostility grew between Britain and some Arab countries such as Syria and Saudi Arabia (Cohen 77).

The British and Western relations with the underdeveloped countries also were threatened by the Soviet active diplomacy. The events of the Suez Crisis promoted new images and prospects of the Soviets and the West. The threats and intervention of the USSR provided it with more acceptance among the third world as the anti-imperialist state especially after the nuclear threats that brought the world close to the first nuclear war (probable repercussions 6). For the British, the status of world power collapsed in light of the Suez Crisis events. The humiliating outcomes of the military operation marked the end the British Empire and its influence over the former colonies. The British role in the world faded more during the next decades while the US rivaled the USSR for world dominance.

6-Egypt after the Crisis

The military operation during the Suez Crisis was a complete disaster for the Egyptians. The Egyptian military suffered from destructive effects of the military aggression. Egypt was attacked from several fronts by three major military powers. The Military readiness of the Egyptian army was not accustomed to such military scenarios. However, the intended goals set by the aggressive countries were not achieved. Actually, the outcomes fell into the Egyptians' interests even though the aggression was successful at the military aspect. In light of the imperial history of Britain and France, the Suez aggression appeared like an attempt to restore their imperial foothold against the Egyptian sovereignty. So, the unexpected outcomes of the crisis actually strengthened Nasser's nationalist policies whereas the British political status suffered from gradual decline.

Nasser's participation at Bandung Conference provided him with international acceptance and support especially among communist and non-aligned countries (Ginat and Noema 884). The evolution of the events from the nationalization of the Suez Canal to the Tripartite aggression promoted Nasser as the rebellious who stood alone against imperialist powers. His charismatic character was strengthened after the end of the crisis which enabled him to proceed in his ideological and political activism of regional and international nationalism.

The success of the nationalization of the Suez Crisis and the failure of the aggression to restore their control over Egypt encouraged Nasser's domestic policies of nationalizations and encouraged him further to advance in his socialist reforms. After the crisis Nasser drafted a new constitution in which the ban of political parties remained. Instead, on the 28th May 1957, the "Nationalist Union" was created as a merger of the social and economic associations and organization such as civil society and smaller labour associations. This step

was initiated in order to proceed with the socialist reforms of Nasser's domestic plans (التكريتي 182). Seeking populist support and acceptance became a priority for Nasser especially among middle and lower-class Egyptians. After the outbreak of the conflict, he ordered the army to distribute arms on civilians to fight against the invaders (هيكل 645). The choice of including the civilians in the conflict along with the soldiers gave Nasser considerable support and trust among the Egyptians. Nasser's strategy proved that emotional and symbolic war could make the difference against the overpowering western militarization. The aftermaths of the Suez Crisis proved that the era of militarism ended and the active diplomacy and international pressure could make the difference in conflicts.

Nasser also guaranteed the support of the UN. The imposed ceasefire and the total evacuation of the Israeli military forces from Sinai Peninsula, was accompanied by the deployment of the UNEF (United Nations Emergency Force). These forces were positioned along the Egyptian-Israeli borders and Gaza Strip. The decision guaranteed an international block against the Israelis who used to attack the Egyptian Army frequently between 1952-1956. Nasser successfully guaranteed the immunity against the rivalling and growing militarism of the neighbouring Israel.

The seizure of the Suez Canal was the main issue of the Crisis. The military operations during the Suez crisis caused a temporary closure of the canal. Several ships sank at the level of the canal after they were targeted during the military operations. The wreckage of the ships prolonged its reopening process that lasted until March 1957. After its reopening, the Egyptian government imposed a firm and strict policy vis-à-vis the Canal's activity. Nasser imposed several restrictions against western and Israelis' ships. Meanwhile, the Soviet ships enjoyed unique advantages and freedom of circulation through the canal (Present Suez Issues par. 02). After all, the intervention of the USSR was the key element of the Egyptian success.

This escalation of the hostile attitudes by Nasser caused more tension between Egypt the West in light of the UN imposed ceasefire.

Conclusion

The Anglo-Egyptian relations reached a critical climax during the Suez Crisis. The nationalisation of the Suez Canal was not accepted by Britain and France. The British alter for military option to solve the Suez problem without international approval proved to be a fatal error. The Soviet intervention and threats along with international condemnation isolated the tripartite countries. On the other hand, the Egyptians emerged as victorious wining international support and strengthening their hold on the Suez Canal despite the heavy casualties. The Suez Crisis proved that diplomacy and politics are decisive means of managing conflicts.

General Conclusion

Egypt remained under the British influence for decades since the 19th century. Yet, the situation changed drastically during a short period of four years after the emergence of the Free Officers. The latter managed to lead a radical change shaping another reality for Egypt. The Free Officers led a complex policy of militarisation, active diplomacy, and populist mobilisation to strengthen their power. Furthermore, Nasser's accession to power was characterised by several controversial internal policies. His implementation of a socialist and nationalist model caused a total paralysis of political activities after the ban of political parties.

Despite the controversy of Nasser's regime, He successfully managed to mobilise the population ensuring public support of his legitimacy. Nasser's internal struggle with the politicians and opponents within the military junta generated controversial outcomes. For instance, thousands of politicians were imprisoned in addition to the struggle between Nasser and Naguib. Yet, his regional, nationalist plans and anti-imperialist struggle promoted him as a nationalist leader.

The conflict between Egypt and Britain also consist a turning point in the international political context. The consequences of the Suez Crisis proved that the era of direct and conventional domination ended. The new Egyptian authority after the coup was able to defy and win against the British dominance. Unlike the other colonized countries, Egypt was defied by multiple Western powers at the same time during the Suez Crisis in 1956. At the beginning of the conflict, Egypt faced the tripartite coalition with an inferior army in which the Egyptians suffered from numerous casualties. However, the international condemnation of the aggression and the Soviet intervention that sided with the Egyptians proved to be a decisive tool of managing the crisis.

The British resort to military solution proved to be a failure that caused a heavy impact on Britain. The British along with the French and the Israelis became isolated at the international sphere. Furthermore, the conflicting stands and disagreement between the United States and Britain concerning the Suez issue effected the relations between the two countries. The British status as a world power faded away after the crisis in light of the US and Soviet rivalry during the Cold War. In other words, the emergence of the United States after the Second World War as a powerful and influential state was accompanied by a gradual decline of the British status which became clear after the Failure of the British strategy to maintain their influence over Egypt.

To sum up, the history of the British existence in Egypt lasted for a long period. However, within four years, a small military group managed to launch a sweeping change that positioned Egypt in a head to head confrontation with the British. The Free Officers under the leadership of Nasser followed a policy of regional and international mobilisation under revolutionary ideologies such as Nasserism and Pan-Arabism. The Anglo-Egyptian conflict was concluded by the Failure of the British policy in the Middle East in addition to the rise of Egypt as a regional and international power despite the controversies of Nasser's policies.

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