

A few of the British papers were severely critical of Sir Anthony Eden and his Government right from the time that Nasser seized the Suez canal and the British Government, as a precautionary measure, began to send troops to Cyprus. They talked of "sabre rattling" and tried to persuade themselves and other people that the dispatch of troops to Cyprus was done with a sinister purpose. They had said similar things at the time of and after Munich. These papers are never friendly to a Conservative government, and this was a good opportunity for them to throw a few bricks at it. As I have said, Sir Anthony Eden is a Knight of the Garter, and he would not have that distinction if he were not an honourable man. During the week of August 6 Sir Anthony broadcast a speech on the Suez canal. What he said can be summed up in three paragraphs which were quoted in the London *Sunday Times* of August 12. This is a paper, with which many of you no doubt are familiar, owned by Lord Kemsley. Sir Anthony said:

First, the freedom of the canal is vital to Britain's economic life. Secondly, to stake that vital interest upon the will of a single power, especially one that has already shown itself untrustworthy, is something we cannot accept. Thirdly,—

And I would draw special attention to this.—we do not seek solution by force but one achieved by the widest international agreement.

That was the opinion of Sir Anthony Eden during the first week of August. The *Sunday Times* took the attitude that there was nothing in those three points to justify charges levelled by Egypt and her sympathizers, and also by some critics in Britain, of sabre rattling, jingoism and repudiation of the United Nations.

The *Sunday Times* continued that for Britain to make itself militarily prepared for whatever might befall, in the light of what Sir Anthony had said, was logical, and, this paper was inclined to think, it would be fully endorsed by the majority of the British people, who sought peace and who respected their international duty, but who refused to be forced to the wall in the name of any one sovereignty.

The *Sunday Times* dealt with the matter at some length, but I would like to quote the last paragraph of its editorial to show what I mean when I say that there was pressure, if not direct at least indirect, on Sir Anthony Eden to look after the interests of Britain. This is what the *Sunday Times* says in its last sentence:

Our military preparations are not aggressive but precautionary and as such, essential. We must keep our heads cool and our powder dry.

The London *Times*, which, as everybody knows, is an excellent newspaper, independent in politics but normally supporting the

government of the day, had a leading editorial on Tuesday, August 14, in which it pointed out the very difficult position Great Britain would be in if its supply of oil from the Middle East were seriously interfered with. It pointed out that before the Second World War most of Great Britain's oil came from the western hemisphere, and even as late as 1947 two-thirds of it was drawn from the Caribbean and the United States; but eight years later, by 1955, four-fifths of Britain's imports of oil were received from the Middle East.

I am trying to point out some of the important economic difficulties which faced Great Britain as a possible result of the seizure of the Suez canal by Colonel Nasser.

In 1955, nearly 1,500,000 tons of oil from the Middle East were used in steel-making in Britain; 300,000 tons for the making of glass and ceramics; over 500,000 tons for gas-making; 176,000 tons by the Central Electricity Authority, and over 800,000 tons for central heating. Last year 67,000,000 tons of Middle East oil came through the canal, of which 14,000,000 tons were destined for North America. About 40,000,000 tons came by pipe line from the Mediterranean. Slightly over half of all Europe's supply and over half of Great Britain's came through the Suez canal.

I mention these figures to point out how very serious the blocking of the canal is to Great Britain. Let me quote the last sentence of the London *Times* editorial:

Nasser, by his act of brigandage—

Please note the word "brigandage".—has delivered a threat to the Middle East countries as well as to Great Britain.

Further pressure appeared in the press of Great Britain every day. Letters were written calling Nasser a dictator, pointing out the economic dangers which threatened Britain if the canal were not kept open and free, urging ships not to pay dues to the new National Egyptian Suez Authority, and stating that nothing short of territorial internationalization of the canal zone could furnish an adequate guarantee against Egypt's denying use of the canal to Israel and other nations to whom she was not friendly. As honourable senators are well aware, Egypt has denied Israel use of the canal for the past five years, despite a resolution of the United Nations that she must not do it.

I read these articles and letters of opinion from readers very carefully every day, and I wondered what would be the outcome. The London *Times*, in a leading editorial published on August 27, took to task seriously those who were inclined to sympathize with