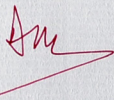


MR TURNBULL

You asked about the Suez precedents for Debates, Statements, and their timing, in relation to military action. There was an enormous amount of Parliamentary activity connected with Suez. That is set out in the attached annex. The essential point from these precedents, however, is that at each stage of the escalation of hostilities, there was a Statement to the House and/or a Debate at the time.



DOMINIC MORRIS

3 January 1991

c\suez (kw)

- 27/7/56 Prime Minister's Statement announcing Nasser's expropriation of the Suez Canal.
- 30/7/56 Statement by the Prime Minister on non military counter measures.
- 2/8/56 Government Day debate led by Prime Minister announcing protectionary military measures (build up of forces in East Med and call up of reservists). Also announced conference of principal maritime powers in London. Agreed through usual channels that Parliament would be recalled after the Conference had met.
- 12/9/56 Parliament recalled. Prime Minister made Statement on state of maritime powers conference and warned Egypt of steps which would be taken if it did not comply with conference findings (it was at this point that Gaitskill began to turn nasty: one useful quote: he said that he would be satisfied if the Government would declare that it "would not use force except in accordance with the Charter of the UN").
- 23/10/56 Foreign Secretary's statement announcing UN activity.
- 30/10/56 Prime Minister's Statement announcing Israel's incursion into Sinai and Anglo French "request" to Egypt for military forces to move temporarily to key positions in Ismailia, Port Said and Suez (and if Egypt did not respond within twelve hours the forces would move anyway). This followed by a full Adjournment Debate that day.
- 31/10/56 Further Adjournment Debate led by Prime Minister reporting move of forces and UN activity.

- 1/11/56 First of a regular series of statements by Defence Secretary reporting UK military action. Followed by full Opposition Day debate.
- 2/11/56 PNQ from Gaitskill on UN Resolution calling for ceasefire.
- 3/11/56 Prime Minister led Adjournment Debate on UK French response ("nuts") to the UN Resolution.
- 5/11/56 Statements by Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary on UN and military situation (reporting Anglo French paratroop landings). House pro-rogued.
- 6-8/11/56 Covered fully in Debate on Address.
- 22/11/56 Interim Statement on Middle East situation by Lord President.
- 29/11/56 Foreign Secretary's Statement on UN activity.
- 3/12/56 Foreign Secretary's Statement on UN activity.
- 4/12/56 Prime Minister's Statement on Gold and Dollar reserves (i.e. run on caused by sterling crisis).
- 5-6/12/56 Government Day debate on Middle East led by Foreign Secretary.
- 20/12/56 Further exchanges in which Prime Minister participated during Christmas Adjournment Debate.
- Christmas recess. Sir Anthony Eden resigned.