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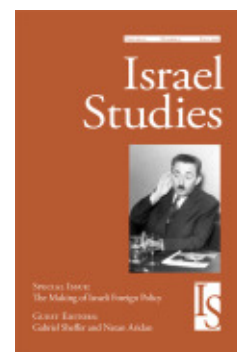
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The Protocol of Sèvres: British/French/Israeli Collusion Against Egypt, 1956

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The Protocol of Sèvres: British/French/Israeli Collusion Against Egypt, 1956

INTRODUCTION

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM HOLDS THAT THE Suez/Sinai crisis of 1956 was a significant turning point in the history of the Middle East and in international relations. The failure of the British and French to impose their will on Nasser and regain control of the Suez Canal marked the irrevocable decline of European imperialism. The United States and the Soviet Union filled the vacuum in the Middle East as they did elsewhere. Despite losses on the field of battle, Egypt won in the international political arena, and Nasser emerged as the primary leader of Egypt and the Arab world. Israel gained a striking military victory in what many considered the “second War of Independence” and enjoyed a decade of relative calm on its land borders and free navigation from Eilat through the Red Sea. On the level of individual histories, 1956 established the reputations of Nasser and Dayan. It destroyed Eden and contributed to the downfall of the French leadership.

The events surrounding the Suez/Sinai crisis of 1956 and the war itself have been a subject of continuing research for the past 40 years. While the historiographical issues have been long settled, there has been continual fascination with discovering new documentation. Perhaps the primary reason has been the charge that the war was a product of “collusion” between Britain, France, and Israel. It has long been held that the leaders of these three governments dissembled, not only before their own citizens, but before ministers and responsible officials in their own governments about the decision to initiate war. While many guessed at the true relationships between Britain, France, and Israel shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, finding authoritative documentation has engaged the best efforts of a legion of scholars and journalists for the past 40 years.¹

Key elements of how the war was planned and unfolded have been

published by various participants in more or less authorized forms since the early 1960s. Nevertheless, until recently important documentation has been missing. In 1986, in accordance with the thirty-year rule permitting the publication of sensitive official documents, I was able to publish the relevant portions of Ben-Gurion's diary of 1956. In addition to revealing much of the Israeli involvement in the conflict, the diary contains perhaps the clearest and most "official" account of the final negotiations leading to the signing on 24 October 1956 of the document detailing the British-French-Israeli "collusion"—the Protocol of Sèvres. The diary also discusses and quotes extensively from four other documents that were vital to putting the Protocol into operation. First, there was an "Annex" in which the French promised air and naval protection to Israel from possible Egyptian retaliation. There were also three brief letters in which the leaders of the British, French, and Israeli governments confirmed what was concluded at Sèvres and thereby gave operational authorization for the timetable and terms of battle outlined in the Protocol. The first was the letter of 25 October from British Prime Minister Eden to his French counterpart, Guy Mollet. The second, from 26 October, was a letter from Mollet to Ben-Gurion which included Eden's letter as an appendix. The third was Ben-Gurion response to Mollet of October 26. With this circle now complete, Ben-Gurion gave the order that evening to prepare for the initiation of hostilities. This series of documents is presented here—the Protocol and Annex, presented in the original and in translation, together with the accompanying correspondence.²

The meeting at Sèvres brought together a handful of political leaders and military experts from Britain, France, and Israel. The key French officials involved were Prime Minister Guy Mollet, Foreign Minister Christian Pineau, Minister of National Defence Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, Director-General of the Defence Ministry Abel Thomas, Deputy to the Chief of Staff for Air Force Affairs General Maurice Challe and his deputy, General André Martin. Members of this group shuttled back and forth to Paris and even London. The British legation was the smallest and the most mobile, with its members traveling from London to Sèvres. Present at various stages during the two days were the British Foreign Minister Selwyn Lloyd, Patrick Dean, who was Deputy Secretary of State from the Foreign Office and Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, and Donald Logan, a Private Secretary to Lloyd. The Israeli delegation was lead by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, who was accompanied by Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan and Director General of the Defence Ministry Shimon Peres. A

handful of others—notably Asher Ben-Natan, Representative of the Ministry of Defence in Europe, Mordechai Bar-On, head of Dayan's office, Nehemia Argov, Ben-Gurion's military secretary, and Yosef Nachmias, the Deputy Director of the Defence Ministry—were ready to render assistance either at the villa in Sèvres or from Israeli offices in Paris. This representation reflected the understanding that the meeting at Sèvres was designed to coordinate a military campaign. Indeed, it was a council of war.

Few other civilian or political leaders in each of the governments knew that the meeting was to take place or learned in detail what transpired until after agreement had been reached and fighting was about to commence. The written agreements were never distributed or shown to responsible officials. All participants to the negotiations and those who became party to their results took very seriously the penultimate clause of the Protocol: "The arrangements of the present PROTOCOL must remain strictly secret." The British were so secretive that Eden had the British copy of the Protocol burned when he discovered that agreements at Sèvres had been drafted into a written document and signed by his representative. To this day there is scarcely any reference that can be found in official British records that the meetings at Sèvres ever took place. Eden even tried to have the French destroy their copy. The French demurred, noting that the Israelis insisted on keeping their written record. In time, the French copy was misplaced, possibly by Thomas, and is apparently unrecoverable. Indeed, even the Israeli original has disappeared; however, photocopies of the original been found. One was deposited in archives of the Ministry of Defense. A photocopy of the Ministry's photocopy was transmitted to the Ben-Gurion Archives in Sede-Boker in 1986. Another photocopy has recently been discovered in the private archives of Meir Amit who served as Chief of Operations during the Sinai Campaign. It is from the copies of the Protocol and Annex deposited in the Ben-Gurion Archives in Sede-Boker that the texts presented here have been prepared.³

The three parties were preparing for military action for different reasons. Israeli grievances with Egypt were independent of British and French interests and complaints. Conventional scholarship and the testimony of Israeli leaders, particularly Ben-Gurion, was that the large-scale Egyptian arms deal in September 1955 with the Soviet ally, Czechoslovakia, was the catalyst that confirmed that the anticipated "second round" of war with Egypt was inevitable and probably in the offing. Israel, fearing that the balance of power with the Arab states would turn against her, began to prepare for conflict, including the possibility of a preemptive strike. Nasser's decision to limit the rights of passage through the Straits of Tiran and

continuing border problems provided justification for action. Precisely when conflict might erupt became a matter of ongoing discussion.

For their part, the British and French were outraged by Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal Company on 26 July 1956. Still operating under the belief that there were vast and significant imperial interests East of Suez that justified intervention abroad, both governments immediately initiated campaigns in international forums to pressure Egypt for a reversal of its action. At the same time they undertook discrete discussions for coordinating joint military action. Each also had separate grievances. The French were aggravated and concerned by Nasser's active assistance to rebels in Algeria which the French considered part of France itself. The British were apprehensive that Nasser might exert pressure to oust them from Jordan and Iraq. Reasserting control over the Canal appeared an effective and necessary way to preserve traditional imperial interests. In the process, the British and French hoped to topple Nasser.

To join the distinct national interests of the three parties against a common enemy proved a nearly impossible task. The tensions between Israel and Britain were a particular hindrance. In fact, until Sèvres, they had not negotiated directly about this crisis. The French, who managed to find common ground separately with the British and with the Israelis, served as the intermediary in this unlikely *ménage à trois*. Prior to Sèvres, even the best French efforts could not bring about agreement between the three parties.

The British and French situation became critical as summer turned to fall. Diplomacy failed to undo Egyptian nationalization of the Canal. At the same time, there was public discussion of military intervention as a very large military force was assembled. The approach of winter, however, raised the possibility that the soldiers would have to be sent home without seeing action. The operating metaphor employed by British and French leaders was that of "Munich." They imagined they had an historic obligation to avoid disaster by standing up to a Hitler-like leader. Along with personal moral conviction, there were practical doubts. By October, they were desperate to find a pretext for independent military action that could enlist support of both their own peoples and world opinion. The meeting at Sèvres was intended to insure that Israel would provide them with one.

When Ben-Gurion boarded the plane for the flight to Sèvres, he did so with great anticipation as well as doubt over the prospect for agreement. Israel's negotiating advantage lay in not having to provide the pretext at a time required by the other parties. On the other hand, Ben-Gurion was tempted by the prospect of an alliance with leading Western powers. This would provide a kind of recognition for which Israel, living within armi-

stice lines rather than recognized borders, deeply yearned. In his diary aboard the long flight to Sèvres, Ben-Gurion wrote that a successful alliance with Britain and France could produce a turn of events that would totally restructure the Middle East into a region in which Israel would have security and an important role. He labeled this plan “Fantastic.”

At the same time, he recorded great misgivings about the prospects of establishing an effective plan of action particularly because of his suspicions of the British. In fact, he was not certain the British would be present or who would represent them. He went to Sèvres at the invitation of only the French on a plane they provided. Moreover, so difficult and tenuous had been the preliminary discussions that, since August 1956, negotiators for the three countries had been able to produce only a succession of “scenarios” of possible action. The meeting at Sèvres represented the last chance for joint action.

“Sèvres” is a private villa located in a Paris suburb of that name. Meetings were held in various rooms, sometimes simultaneously, during meals and throughout the day and evening. The arrival of Selwyn Lloyd toward the end of the first evening, Monday, 22 October, totally surprised the Israelis. This was the first time senior French, British, and Israeli officials had met together. The exchange between Lloyd and Ben-Gurion was direct and candid—even mutually antagonistic—as both sides set forth and argued for their positions. Ben-Gurion openly mistrusted the British and resented being exploited while subject to possible treachery. A sense of the exchange is captured in Ben-Gurion’s diary:

I explained to Lloyd my reasons for the [delay of] two days [before the British join the attack]. And he said that the new plan—to attack the airfields the next morning—is totally new. England would be condemned for having taken such an action. I asked him: Why should we take upon ourselves an act for which we would be condemned? He said that Nasser was our enemy and he denied us our rights. I said that he had been doing it for years and no one had protested.+

Indeed, the British wished to distance themselves from any responsibility for, or connection with, Israeli action even as they attempted to establish when the attack might begin and what would be its objectives and extent. Lloyd returned to London later that evening without anything substantial concluded, although their confrontation had also produced clarifications necessary for progress to an agreement.

Pineau followed Lloyd to London on Tuesday, 23 October, to salvage the meetings and hammer out an agreement. On his return to France the same day, it appeared that the elements for an agreement were beginning to fall into place. By that evening, it was clear that it might be possible to produce a mutually acceptable plan the next day.

On the 24th, Donald Logan and Patrick Dean arrived from London and the work of formulating the Protocol began in earnest. Parties to the final formulation were two to three representatives from the different sides. In one room, discussions continued, while in an adjoining one, a preliminary draft was typed on simple paper, without letterhead and with spaces for the date of the attack left blank. After the draft was brought before the group and the dates were filled in, Ben-Gurion insisted that the document be signed by leaders representing the different parties. This was done. As required by the Protocol's final clause, each of the parties departed with the intention of seeking ratification by the home governments and with the understanding that the other parties were to be notified of such action. Satisfied that Israel had finally signed an alliance with major European powers, Ben-Gurion folded the protocol twice and put the document in his pocket. The resulting quarter-folds are still evident on the remaining copy.

The Protocol of Sèvres is terse and direct. It establishes that Israel was to launch an attack in the Sinai on the evening of 29 October and head for the Canal Zone. It then provides the principles of the British and French ultimatum that was to be presented to the combatants on the following day. The key part is the demand for a withdrawal of Israeli and Egyptian troops from the Canal Zone and for Egyptian agreement to permit a "temporary" stationing of British and French troops in "key positions" along the Canal. Anticipating Egyptian refusal, the Protocol calls for joint British-French action against Egypt early the next day, 31 October.

The remaining operational clauses of the Protocol and the Annex answered Israeli aims and concerns. The Protocol allows for Israeli occupation of the Egyptian side of the Gulf of Akaba and the islands in the Strait of Tiran so as to ensure freedom of passage for Israeli shipping. The British promise that they will not implement their treaty of assistance to Jordan should that country come to the aid of Egypt during the hostilities. The French, in the Annex, offer Israel an "aerial umbrella." In effect, Israel could attack Egypt, confident of security in the air and along its border with Jordan. With these guarantees, Israel accepted responsibility for creating the necessary pretext for British and French intervention. The exact sequence and timing of the military operations and the mutual obligations the

parties were to undertake are succinctly detailed. The final clause sets forth that the provisions of the Protocol will become binding on approval of the three governments.

With this document in hand, Ben-Gurion returned to Israel. The next day, Thursday the 25th, the French Annex guaranteeing Israel air protection was signed, as were the letters confirming the contents of the Protocol by the heads of the British and French governments. For Israel, verbal agreements were not enough. Without these signed documents, delivered on Friday, 26 October, Israel would not have initiated war with Egypt at that time. So great were Ben-Gurion's suspicions of the British, that he notes in his diary: "This[Eden's] letter is typical of the British Foreign Office for it can be interpreted in various ways, while the French state clearly to what they have committed themselves, as was discussed with them without adding or subtracting."⁵

With the Protocol, the Annex, and the letters from Eden and Mollet in hand, Ben-Gurion gave approval that evening for undertaking final preparations for military action. In confident anticipation of agreement by his Cabinet, Ben-Gurion wrote Mollet that his government approves "with great pleasure" the Protocol of Sèvres. It is noteworthy that both Eden and Ben-Gurion exchanged letters with Mollet, not with the each other. The French remained the essential intermediary.

The next day, Saturday, 27 October, Ben-Gurion finally met with and gained the approval of the ten members of his party serving in the Cabinet. On Sunday, 28 October, he informed the full Cabinet and, after something of a mock discussion—Ben-Gurion noted in his diary that the members of his party who had been informed at the Saturday meeting acted as if they were hearing the news for the first time—the Cabinet gave its approval. That evening, after dining with the President of Israel, Ben-Gurion notified him of what was about to take place.

As provided by the Protocol, Israel sent its forces into Egyptian territory in the evening of 29 October. The British and French accordingly issued their pre-arranged ultimata on 30 October. Israel, accepted the terms. The Egyptians, as predicted, did not. On 31 October, the British and French began an aerial bombardment during the evening rather than before dawn as planned. That was the first of a series of delays that, despite extensive consultations and preparations, marked a surprisingly vacillating and improvisational military campaign. On 6 November, the "diplomatic clock" ran out as world public opinion and American and Soviet pressure forced the British and French to halt their invasion without achieving a clear military victory or toppling Nasser.

The failure of the British and French effort was inherent in the conception that led to the collusion at Sèvres. The British and French leadership came to Sèvres because of the need to invent a pretext that would enable them to mobilize public support for a foreign intervention they believed many of their citizens and much of world opinion would otherwise oppose. Their assessment of popular resistance was correct. The pretense produced by the Protocol of Sèvres proved an inadequate instrument for resolving their dilemma.



Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Director-General of the Ministry of Defence Shimon Peres, February 1956.

Courtesy of the Israel Government Press Office.



Caricature drawing by Dayan on plane returning from Sèvres. The sketch is dated by Dayan on 25 October 1956. It depicts a gentleman with the top hat who is labelled in Hebrew "England," the lady "France," and the little fellow in typical Israeli shorts and hat "Israel." The map is of "Egypt," featuring the Canal Zone. Dayan represents "England" and "France" as deferring to "Israel" with their hands outstretched and saying, "After you!"

Courtesy of the Ben-Gurion Institute Archives in Sede Boker.

I. ORIGINAL: PROTOCOL OF SÈVRES

Sèvres, 24 Octobre 1956

PROTOCOLE

Les résultats des conversations qui se sont déroulées à SÈVRES du 22 au 24 Octobre 1956 entre le représentants des Gouvernements du Royaume-Uni de l'Etat-d'Israël et de la France sont les suivants:

- 1— Les Forces Israéliennes lancent le 29 *Octobre 1956*^a dans la soirée une opération d'envergure contre les Forces Egyptiennes en vue d'atteindre le lendemain la Zone du Canal.
- 2— Les Gouvernements Britannique et Français constatant ces événements adressent respectivement et simultanément dans la journée du 30 *Octobre 1956*^b au Gouvernement Egyptien et Israélien les deux appels répondant aux lignes directrices suivants:

A/ - Au Gouvernement Egyptien

- a) - arrêter toute action de guerre.
- b) - retirer toutes ses troupes à la distance de 10 milles du Canal.
- c) - accepter l'occupation temporaire des positions clés sur le Canal par les Forces anglo-françaises pour garantir la liberté du transit sur le Canal par les navires de toutes Nations jusqu'à un règlement définitif.

B/ - Au Gouvernement Israélien

- a) - arrêter toute action de guerre.
- b) - retirer toutes ses troupes à la distance de 10 milles à l'Est du Canal.

Par ailleurs le Gouvernement Israélien sera informé de ce que les Gouvernements Français et Britannique ont demandé au Government Egyptien d'accepter l'occupation temporaire les positions clés sur le Canal par les Forces Anglo-Françaises.

Il est entendu que si l'un des deux Gouvernements refusait, ou ne donnait pas son accord, dans un délai de 12 H., les Forces Anglo-Françaises interviendraient avec les moyens nécessaires pour que leurs demandes soient acceptées.

- C/ - Les Représentants des Trois Gouvernements sont d'accord pour que le Gouvernement Israélien ne soit pas tenu d'accepter les

clauses de l'appel qui lui est adressé dans le cas où le Gouvernement Egyptien n'accepterait pas celles de l'appel qui lui est adressé d'autre part.

- 3— Dans le cas où le Gouvernement EGYPTIEN n'aurait pas dans les délais fixes donné son accord aux clauses de l'appel qui lui a été adressé, les Forces Anglo-Françaises déclancheront [*sic*] le 31 Octobre dans les premières heures de la matinée les opérations militaires contre les Forces Egyptiennes.
- 4— Le Gouvernement Israélien enverra des Forces afin d'occuper la côte OUEST du Golfe d'AKABA et le groupe des Iles TIRANE et SANAFIR pour assurer la liberté de navigation dans le golfe d'AKABA.
- 5— Israël s'engage à ne pas attaquer la JORDANIE pendant la période des opérations contre l'EGYPTE.
Mais, au cas où dans la même période la JORDANIE attaquerait Israël, le Gouvernement Britannique s'engage à ne pas venir en aide à la JORDANIE.
- 6— Les dispositions du présent PROTOCOLE doivent demeurer rigoureusement secrètes.
- 7— Elles entreront en vigueur après l'accord des Trois Gouvernements.

C Pineau
(signed)

D. Ben-Gurion
(signed)

Patrick Dean
(signed)

Signatures of Pineau, Ben-Gurion and Dean
as they appear on original of Protocol of Sèvres.
Courtesy of the Ben-Gurion Institute Archives in Sede-Boker.

I. TRANSLATION: PROTOCOL OF SÈVRES

Sèvres, 24 October 1956

PROTOCOL

The results of the conversations which took place at SEVRES from 22 to 24 October 1956 between the representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, the State of Israel and of France are as follows:

- 1— On the evening of *29 October 1956¹* the Israeli forces launch a large-scale operation against the Egyptian forces with a view to reaching the Canal Zone the following day.
- 2— On ascertaining these events the British and French Governments during the day of *30 October 1956²* respectively and simultaneously address to the Egyptian government and Israeli government two appeals corresponding to the following guidelines:

A/ — To the Egyptian Government

- a) - to cease all military action.
- b) - to withdraw all its troops to a distance of 10 miles from the Canal.
- c) - to accept the temporary occupation by Anglo-French forces of key positions along the Canal in order to guarantee freedom of passage through the Canal for ships of all nations until a final settlement.

B/ — To the Israeli Government

- a) - to cease all military action.
- b) - to withdraw all its troops to a distance of 10 miles EAST of the Canal.

In addition the Government of Israel will be informed that the French and British governments have demanded that the Government of Egypt accept the temporary occupation of key positions along the Canal by Anglo-French forces.

It is understood that if one of the two Governments refused, or did not consent, after a delay of 12 hours, the Anglo-French forces would intervene with sufficient means to ensure that their demands be accepted.

- C/ — The representatives of the three Governments agree that the Government of Israel would not be bound to accept the clauses of

the appeal addressed to it in the event that the Government of Egypt did not accept those in the appeal addressed to it for their part.

- 3— In the event that the EGYPTIAN government has not agreed to the clauses of the appeal addressed to it within the allotted time, the Anglo-French forces will begin military operations against the Egyptian forces in the early hours of the morning of 31 October.
- 4— The Israeli government will dispatch forces to occupy the WESTERN coast of the Gulf of AKABA and the group of islands of TIRAN and SANAFIR in order to secure freedom of navigation in the Gulf of AKABA.
- 5— Israel Government undertakes not to attack JORDAN during the period of operations against EGYPT.
But in the event that in the same period JORDAN were to attack Israel, the British government promises not to come to the assistance of JORDAN.
- 6— The arrangements of the present PROTOCOL must remain strictly secret.
- 7— They will become binding after the agreement of the three Governments.

C Pineau
(signed)

Patrick Dean
(signed)

D. Ben-Gurion
(signed)

II. ANNEXE AU PROTOCOLE DE SÈVRES
DU 24 OCTOBRE 1956

25 Octobre 1956

Le Gouvernement Français s'engage à stationner sur la Territoire d'ISRAEL pour assurer la défense aérienne du Territoire Israélien pendant la période du *29 Octobre au 31 Octobre 1956*,³ un Escadron renforcé de MYSTERES IV A, un Escadron de Chasseurs Bombardiers. Par ailleurs, deux navires de la Marine Nationale feront escale pendant le même temps dans les ports Israéliens.

M Bourgès-Maunoury
(signed)

II. TRANSLATION: ANNEX OF THE PROTOCOL OF
SÈVRES OF 24 OCTOBER 1956

25 October 1956

The French Government undertakes to station on the Territory of Israel to ensure the air defence of Israeli Territory during the period *29 October to 31 October 1956*,³ a reinforced squadron of MYSTERES IV A, a squadron of Fighter Bombers. In addition, two ships of the Marine Nationale during the same period will put into Israeli ports.

M Bourgès-Maunoury
(signed)

III. LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER GUY MOLLET
TO PRIME MINISTER DAVID BEN-GURION⁴

Mon cher Prime Ministre,

Je vous confirme l'accord du gouvernement français sur le résultat des conversations de Sèvres et les termes du protocole final auquel elles ont donné lieu.

J'ai d'autre part, reçu de Sir Anthony Eden une lettre par laquelle celui ci me confirme l'aigrément du gouvernement britannique. Pour votre information personnelle, je vous communique une photo copie de la dite lettre.

Croyez, mon cher Prime Ministre, à l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus cordiaux.

(—) Guy Mollet

IV. LETTER WRITTEN BY PRIME MINISTER ANTHONY
EDEN TO PRIME MINISTER GUY MOLLET

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

10 Downing Street
Whitehall

Dear Prime Minister,

Her Majesty's Government have been informed of the course of the conversations held at Sèvres on October 22–24. They confirm that in the situation there envisaged they will take the action described. This is in accordance with the declaration enclosed with my communication of October 21.⁵

Yours, etc.
(—) Anthony Eden

Monsieur Guy Mollet

V. DRAFT LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER BEN-GURION
TO PRIME MINISTER GUY MOLLET⁶

Jerusalem

le 26 Octobre 1956

Mon cher President

J'ai recu votre lettre du 25 octobre 1956, dans laquelle vous confirmez l'accord du gouvernement francais sur le resultat des conversations de Sevres et les termes du protocole du 25 octobre 1956.⁷

Vous m'informez d'autre part d'avenir recu . . . Sir Anthony Eden un lettre par laquelle celui-ci confirme l'agreement du gouvernement britannique.

Je vous confirme, avec grand plaisir, l'accord du gouvernement israelien sur le resultat des conversations de Sevres et les termes du protocole du 25 octobre 1956.

Croyez, mon cher President, a l'assurance de mes sentiments les plus cordiaux.

D.B.G. [initialled]

Monsieur le President [sic] Guy Mollet,
Paris

NOTES

1. There is a large bibliography on the event. Perhaps the first book to outline the collusion was *Les Secrets de l'Expedition d'Egypte* (Paris, 1957), by Merry and Serge Bromberger. An early but still useful volume is Hugh Thomas's *The Suez Affair* (London, 1967), and an excellent recent book is Keith Kyle's *Suez* (London, 1991). Two relatively recent anthologies of articles should also be consulted: Wm. Roger Louis and E. Roger Owen (eds), *Suez 1956; The Crisis and Its Consequences* (Oxford, 1989), and S. Ilan Troen and Moshe Shemesh (eds), *The Suez-Sinai Crisis 1956; Retrospective and Reappraisal* (New York and London, 1990). An invaluable recent book in Hebrew is Mordechai Bar-On, *Etgar ve'Tigrab* [Challenge and Quarrel; The Road to Sinai - 1956] (Sede-Boker, 1991).

2. S. Ilan Troen, "Ben-Gurion's Diary: The Suez-Sinai Campaign," in Troen and Shemesh, *The Suez-Sinai Crisis*, 289–332. For an excellent educated "guess" of the relevant documents see Kyle, *Suez*, 565–7.

3. For an account of the history of the Protocol and its release, I am indebted to M. Bar-On's article on this topic, which will be published in *Iyunim be'Tekumat Israel*.

4. Troen, "Ben-Gurion's Diary," 308.

5. Troen, "Ben-Gurion's Diary," 316.

FOOTNOTES TO THE PROTOCOL, ANNEX, LETTERS, AND TRANSLATIONS

1. The date was left blank and filled in with pen.

2. The date was left blank and filled in with pen.

3. The date was left blank and filled in with pen.

4. As recorded in Ben-Gurion's diary on 26 October 1956 and found in the Ben-Gurion Archives, Sede-Boker.

5. Note that Eden uses the passive in describing the discussions at Sèvres. There is no direct acknowledgement of the British having taken part. It was this evasiveness which Ben-Gurion mistrusted, and it was for this reason he insisted on a British signature on the Protocol. For the probable contents of Eden's communication of 21 October, see S. Ilan Troen, "Ben-Gurion's Diary," 316–17.

6. The actual letter has yet to be located. This is clearly a draft and/or a communication prepared for transmission. It is printed here as it is, without accents and other corrections. The title of Guy Mollet is also left without correction. He was the Prime Minister, not the President.

7. There is lack of clarity in dates in this draft: the Protocol of Sèvres was signed on 24 October, while the Annex was signed on 25 October.