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THE MENZIES MISSION:

Visiting the Suez Canal is Abel Rahman Basan, Indonesian Foreign Minister, who opposed the Western plan at the London Conference. He passes by the statue of de Lesseps, the Frenchman who built the Canal. Across the Mediterranean at Marseilles, de Lesseps' countrymen are preparing to defend their interests in the Canal, should that be needed. French Regiments sail for Cyprus, to join British troops nearer the centre of trouble.

The first convoy is already arriving at Cyprus to bring the French soldiers to their new station. Britain and France are the two countries most vitally concerned in the problems created by Egypt's seizure of the Canal, and if a military crisis should come, their governments and armies would act together.

But meanwhile, strenuous efforts are being made to reach a peaceful solution. Arriving at Cairo airport is America's Loy Henderson, a member of the five-nation committee bringing the Western proposals to President Nasser. Leading the Committee is Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies. He will not comment on his chances of success; but from the basic principles of the Western plan, he declared, there can be no retreat.