

Name: _____

Date: _____

Unit 3: Assignment 4.3: View Points: Suez Crisis (1956)**Procedure**

1. Read the short article found on the next page.

2. Use a combination of the article and the Internet to answer the following three questions.

a. How did Pearson's concept of United Nations' peace keeping impact the Canadian sense of identity?

b. During the Suez Crisis in 1956, Canada sent soldiers to Egypt to act as peace keepers. The purpose of the United Nations peace keeping force was to halt hostilities so that the politicians could work things out. Thus, when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, Canada was again ready to serve as part of a United Nations peace keeping force. The United States, however, wanted to attack Iraq. In the end, a United States coalition of countries attacked Iraq. The Canadians didn't join the coalition (arguing that any intervention should be led by the United Nations). Read the following article:

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/saying-no-to-iraq-war-was-important-decision-for-canada-chretien-1.1192878>; and then answer the following question: did Canada's high regard for the United Nations and peacekeeping influence Prime Minister Jean Chretien's (1993-2003) decision not to support the military invasion of Iraq?

c. On September 11th, 2001, the United States was attacked by terrorists. The attack compelled the United States to invade Afghanistan a month later. The Americans justified the attack by saying Afghanistan was harboring the people responsible for the attack. Since Canada is part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) we came to aid of the Americans. Between the years 2001 to 2014, Canada helped the NATO alliance fight the enemy in Kandahar province. Stephen Harper (2006-2015) was Canada's prime minister during the NATO mission in Afghanistan. Read the following article: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/harpers-world-the-past-and-future-of-canadas-foreignpolicy/article26542719/>; and then answer the following question: how did the Harper government view Canada's role as peacekeeper? Did the role match the government's sense of Canadian military identity? Explain.

The Suez Crisis

In 1956 international tensions were running quite high. The Hungarians had indicated to their liberators, the Russians, that the war was over and now might be a good time for the Russians to go home. The Russians disagreed. From the 23rd of October until the 10th of November, the Hungarian people revolted against Russian occupation while the Russians used force to crush the rebellion. The Soviet forces sent in tanks, and there were numerous casualties.¹

As a result of Russian actions, tensions between the Americans and the Russians were extremely high. The Americans condemned the Russians for their actions in Hungary.

In Egypt, Colonel Gammal Abdel Nasser, who had seized power in Egypt in 1952, was threatening to nationalize the Suez Canal with the revenue going to Egypt rather than the British and the French company that controlled and operated the canal. The British and French were afraid this move would deny them access to their dwindling colonies.

As well, America was offering to support Egypt in the building of a huge irrigation project known as the Aswan High Dam (eventually to become an ecological disaster). In July of 1956, Nasser had made statements that were pro-Russian and Communist Chinese. America, outraged at Nasser's statements, withdrew funding. Egypt now needed a new revenue stream and nationalized the Suez Canal. The Soviets, seeing an opportunity, said they would assist Nasser with his irrigation project and would also supply Egypt with Russian military equipment.

Great Britain and France were so incensed by the nationalization of the Canal that they invaded to "protect the canal." Israel, angered by constant armed attacks and raids originating in Egypt, joined with the French and British. Russia, backing Egypt, told the British and French to leave or face the consequences. America was upset with Britain and France as they never told the U.S. what they were about to do, but could not stand by and see Russia threaten them. The world was on high alert. Nobody wanted to back down.

Lester Pearson, Canada's then Minister of External Affairs, came up with a face-saving suggestion. Take the whole issue to the United Nations. The U.N. would broker a deal. Canada would send in troops to keep the warring factions apart. Britain, France, and Israel would withdraw, and Egypt would compensate the British and French for the canal.

Originally Nasser did not want Canadian troops in his country because their uniforms looked too British, but he eventually backed down.

¹ Canada opened its doors to over 50,000 Hungarian refugees.