

Ref: CAB 21/5566

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

25 FEB 1965  
14/14/1071

Cypher/OTP and By Bag

FO/CRO/WHI.DISTRIBUTION

No. 222

5 February, 1965

D. 21.35 5 February, 1965

PRIORITY

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Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 222 of 5 February.

Repeated for information to:-	Washington			
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	Damascus	No.14	Tripoli	No.5
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	Baghdad	No.17	Benghazi	No.6
	Jedda	No.12	POMEC Aden	No.24

ANGLO-U.A.R. RELATIONS

When U.A.R. Ambassador paid his courtesy call today he alluded to my predecessor's enquiry, at their meeting on 22 December, about more formal and organised talks in Cairo. Ambassador said that he had been instructed to confirm that a visit by a British Minister to Cairo would be most welcome. At a later stage in the conversation he made it clear that the U.A.R. Government were leaving to H.M.G. a decision on the level of the visit.

2. Ambassador went on to say that this visit would be a sign by both governments of a genuine desire to promote good relations. In the case of the United Kingdom and the U.A.R. these were a necessity. Care would have to be taken, when the time came to announce the visit and thereafter, to "protect" the talks from wilful misinterpretations of their significance. The Ambassador explained that he had in mind specifically the Israelis and the Yemeni Royalists. The former were now actively seeking support from Western countries. He went on to enlarge on Israeli expansionist ambitions and the energy they were displaying in the nuclear field. In the Yemen it was in the interests of the United Kingdom and the U.A.R. that there should be a political settlement "within the framework of the Republic".

3. I told the Ambassador that I was glad to hear of the nature of his government's response on the subject of the visit. I would of

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LCONFIDENTIALForeign Office telegram No. 222 to Cairo.

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course want to consult my colleagues. As regards the Ambassador's references to Israel and the Yemen I thought that we should not be too much concerned by the prospect of misrepresentations; these ought not to put us off. So far as the Yemen was concerned we wanted to see a stable regime there which suited the needs of the inhabitants and was free from outside influences. The Yemen was of course something which might be discussed in the course of any talks in Cairo. As regards Israel we wanted good relations with Israel and with the U.A.R. I must say frankly that I thought the U.A.R. Government's attitude to Israel was unduly suspicious; they ascribed desires to Israel to do the Arabs injury which simply did not exist. When the Ambassador insisted that Israel would in the future seek expansion at the expense of the Arabs and were now actively preparing for this I told him that I did not think that these views were well founded and that it was certainly not H.M.G.'s policy to encourage expansionist aims on the part of anyone. The U.A.R. should try to forget the past. Many nations had learned the necessity of this; Europe was an example.

4. The tone of the conversation was most friendly throughout. Ambassador subsequently told Scrivener that he had received no instructions as regards the timing of the visit. He realised that United Kingdom Ministers had a heavy programme before them.

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MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC EXPORTS

Supply of War Material to the United Arab Republic  
Brief for the Minister of Defence (RAF)

Summary

The Foreign Office propose that we should embargo to the United Arab Republic military equipment which could be <sup>smuggled</sup> supplied into <sup>South</sup> Arabia and used against us there, or would be of high military importance to the UAR for use inside the Yemen. We agree with this proposal but suggest that the exact scope of the embargo should be considered with care.

Justification for Embargo

2. Any restrictions which would make it harder for Egypt to equip forces hostile to us in the Yemen and South Arabia would be most welcome to the Defence Departments, and cutting off British supplies, particularly of spares, might be of some value for this purpose, at any rate in the near future. But in the long run the Egyptians (who are already well supplied with Soviet equipment) could get what they want from other sources. The main justification for any embargo must therefore be less military than political, i.e. that it will make it possible to say that we have cut off supplies which might be used against us in South Arabia.

Scope of Embargo

3. A complete embargo would be most satisfactory from the military and also the administrative point of view - a selective embargo always runs into difficulties because arms cannot be sorted into water-tight categories, and anomalies inevitably arise. But so drastic a step is no doubt ruled out on political as well as commercial grounds. We would therefore be content to see the restrictions confined to categories (i) and (ii) of the Foreign Office paper, and we agree with the way in which the items are classified, except that the Air Staff believe that item (g) (coastal artillery radar and

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spares) would be used inland and should be in category (ii).

4. However it is questionable whether any communications equipment should be included in the embargo, valuable though some of it would be to our potential enemies, since it would be hard to explain to industry why some types might be exported but not others and the public at large (if the facts became known) would not readily understand why wireless equipment was embargoed but not tank spares. It is therefore for consideration whether any partial embargo should not be confined to "sharp" items.

Commercial Considerations

5. Items (a), (g), (l) and (m) in the Annex to the paper are merely an offer to the UAR and could be withheld without breach of faith, though not without embarrassment. All the others are the subject of commitments, undertaken either by the Service Departments or, with official approval, by private firms. As a rule such commitments are dishonoured only in special circumstances because of the damage done to relations with the customer and to the commercial reputation of the UK as a supplier.

Embargo

6. The intention will no doubt be to prevent the embargo from becoming generally known in the interests of Anglo-Egyptian relations. The Egyptians themselves will become fully aware of it if prior commitments are not honoured. Items on order from commercial firms could not be stopped without the revelation of export licences, which would probably lead to publicity, and there might be questions in Parliament which Ministers would find it difficult to answer without giving an indication of our policy.

Level of Arms Exports to the UAR

7. As will be seen from the Annex to the paper exports to the UAR are not running at a high level but there have been recent enquiries for the Chieftain tank and for the Stuart

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land-carrier. There will no doubt be difficulties about the supply of Chieftain but sales of the Stalwart are unlikely to be objectionable and could be valuable. In addition two Egyptian destroyers are refitting in a British yard (the Secretary of State is answering a Question about this on 5 June).

**Submissions**

3. We support the Foreign Office proposals and would wish to see them enforced as strictly as possible but it is for consideration whether the embargo should be confined:

- (a) to new orders only, and
- (b) to "sharp" items only.

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22 May 1961

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FROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICE

14/14/10/1

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Lord Harlech

No. 826  
February 27, 1964

D. 9.45 p.m. February 27, 1964  
R. 11.00 p.m. February 27, 1964

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 826 of February 27.  
Repeated for information to: Tel Aviv.

Your telegram No. 3031: Tanks for Israel.

*Fib*

We discussed this today with the Director of Near East Affairs, who was grateful for this information.

2. Mr. Davies said that the Israelis had requested 500 tanks from the Americans of the M60 or M4 A3 type, both of which were roughly comparable with the Chieftain. The Israelis had said that they were seriously concerned at the continued acquisition of T 54s by the U.A.R., and felt that although their general defence situation was roughly balanced with that of the Arabs, they were badly out of balance in the supply of tanks, and had produced a wealth of evidence to show that there was a clear need to modernise the tanks already in their possession. Mr. Davies said that the United States Government recognised the Israeli need, and were studying it sympathetically. He believed that there was a danger to the West if Israel were to get too far out of balance in the quantity or quality of material she held.

3. On arms other than tanks, the Israelis had asked for surface-to-surface missiles, which the United States Government did not (repeat not) think should be provided. They had also asked for naval equipment to counter-balance the U.A.R.'s Komar, although they had not been specific about this. They had inquired about anti-submarine weapons, and had also expressed an interest in buying Ouragon aircraft under off-shore procurement; this was still under study in the administration. Mr. Davies said that the Israelis had not put forward any requests for combat aircraft, no doubt realizing that the United States Government would not be prepared to supply this.

4. In reply to our question, Mr. Davies said that his earlier reference to a "joint approach" (my telegram No. 769) had been intended to indicate no more than a hope that we would keep in very close touch on this question. There was no suggestion in the conversation that the Americans might wish to appeal to us to sell no arms to Israel this year to enable them to resist internal

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Washington telegram No. 826 to Foreign Office.

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pressures (see paragraph 10 of Section 5A of the brief for the Washington talks), and Mr. Davies conversely gave no indication that our agreement to meet the Israeli requests would in fact help to relieve these pressures. We agree however that this last point may be a consideration here, since the administration will undoubtedly be under increasingly heavy pressure, as the election approaches, to meet these and similar Israeli requests, on the grounds of imbalance between Israeli and Egyptian equipment.

5. Mr. Davies made the point that if the Israeli requests for tanks were met, it would be important to phase deliveries in such a way as to minimize the impact on Arab opinion. For this and for internal reasons, Mr. Davies emphasized that knowledge of these Israeli requests was being carefully restricted on the American side.

Foreign Office pass Tel Aviv as my telegram No. 4.

[Repeated as requested]

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