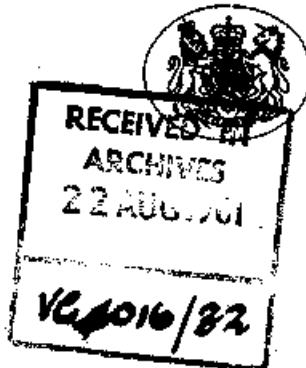


RESTRICTEDBritish Embassy,
Cairo.

(1014/61)

August 19, 1961.

Dear Department,

In our telegram No. 838 of August 17 we reported the reorganisation of the U.A.R. Government and gave the names and functions of the seven Vice-Presidents of the Republic.

2. The thirty-six Ministers are:-

- ✓ Ali Sabri Minister for Presidential Affairs.
- ✓ Dr. Muruddin Tarraf Minister of Health
- ✓ Dr. Showkat el Ganawati Minister of Health
- ✓ Ahmed Husni Minister of State
- ✓ Dr. Abdul Wahab Homad Minister of State for Planning
- Ahmed Farag Minister of State for Planning
- ✓ Dr. Mahmud Fawzi Minister of Foreign Affairs
- ✓ Ahmed Abdu el Sharabassi Minister of Public Works
- ✓ Dr. Abdul Moneim el Kaissouni Minister of Economy and Treasury
- ✓ Hassan Abbas Zaki Minister of Economy and Treasury
- ✓ Akram Diri Minister of Economy and Treasury
- ✓ Fakher el Kayali Minister of State
- ✓ Dr. Kamal Ramzi Stino Minister of Supply
- ✓ Jamal Sufi Minister of Supply
- ✓ Dr. Aziz Sidqi Minister of Industry
- ✓ Sayid Marei Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
- ✓ Ahmed El-Haj Yunus Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
- ✓ Dr. Mustafa Khalil Minister of Communications

/Amjad

North and East African Department,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

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- 2 -

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ <u>Amjad el-Tarabulsi</u> | Minister of Higher Education |
| ✓ <u>Sayid Yusuf</u> | Minister of Education |
| ✓ <u>Kemaluddin Rifaat</u> | Minister of Labour and State |
| ✓ <u>To'ma el-Awdatallah</u> | Minister of Housing and Public Utilities |
| ✓ <u>Nihad el Qasim</u> | Minister of Justice |
| ✓ <u>Dr. Sarwat Okasha</u> | Minister of Culture and National Guidance |
| ✓ <u>Abbas Radwan</u> | Minister of the Interior |
| ✓ <u>Ahmed el-Heneidi</u> | Minister of Agrarian Reform |
| ✓ <u>Dr. Ahmed el-Mahruci</u> | Minister of State for Agrarian Reform |
| ✓ <u>Jado Izzuddin</u> | Minister of Local Government |
| ✓ <u>Abdul Mehsin Abul-Nur</u> | Minister of Local Government |
| ✓ <u>Musa Arafa</u> | Minister of the High Dam |
| ✓ <u>Abdullah To'ema</u> | Minister of Wakfs |
| ✓ <u>Yusuf Muzahim</u> | Minister of Wakfs |
| ✓ <u>Dr. Abdul Qadir Hatem</u> | Minister of State |
| ✓ <u>Sabet el-Aris</u> | Minister of Social Affairs |
| ✓ <u>Salahuddin Hidayat</u> | Minister of Scientific Research |
| ✓ <u>Farid Zeinuddin</u> | Minister of State |
| 3. The three Deputy Ministers are:- | |
| <u>Hussein Zulficar Sabri</u> | Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs |
| <u>Mohamed Ali Hafez</u> | Deputy Minister of Education |
| <u>Abdel-Wahab el-Bishri</u> | Deputy Minister of War |
| 4. The new Ministers are:- | |
| <u>Salahuddin Hidayat</u> | Scientific Research
(formerly Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission) |
| <u>Abdul Mehsin Abul Nur</u> | Local Government
(formerly Governor of Beni Suef) |
| <u>Sayid Yusuf</u> | Education
(formerly Under-Secretary of Education) |
| <u>Ferid Zeinuddin</u> | Minister of State
(formerly Deputy Foreign Minister and Ambassador to Italy). |

RESTRICTED

/Ahmed

10

RESTRICTED

- 3 -

Ahmed FaragMinister of State for Planning
(formerly Under-Secretary for
Planning).

5. The following Ministers have been dropped:-

(a) Central GovernmentGeneral Mohammed
IbrahimMinister of State for
Military AffairsMohammed el-Alem

Communications

(b) Southern Region Executive CouncilMohammed Abu Noseir

Municipal and Rural Affairs

Mohammed Nagib Hashem

Education

Mohammed Mahmud
Nassar

Public Health

Hassan Ahmed Baghdadi

Agrarian Reform

Hassan Salahuddin

Treasury

Mohammed Taufiq
Abdul Fattah

Social Affairs and Labour.

(c) Northern Region Executive CouncilWajih as Samman

Industry

Six of these nine dropped Ministers have since been given jobs as chairmen of public corporations, about which we shall be writing separately.

6. The titles of some of the portfolios are new. "Higher Education" is defined as universities and higher institutions: the "Minister of Education" will be responsible for education below university level. It is not surprising that the High Dam should now be dealt with by a special department; it has been Musa Arafa's main task for some time. The other completely new Ministries are "Housing and Public Utilities" and "Scientific Research".

7. "El Ahram" of August 18 defines more closely the spheres of responsibility of the seven Vice-Presidents and lists the Ministries and Organisations which will be supervised by each of them, as follows:-

Abdul Latif Baghdadi (Planning)

Ministers of State for Planning.

Abdul Hakim Amer (War)

Commanders-in-Chief of all Armed Forces.

/Nuruddin

RESTRICTED

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- 4 -

Nuruddin Kahhala (Production)

Ministries of Economy, Industry, Agriculture and Agrarian reform, Public Works, High Dam and Communications.

Kamaluddin Hussein (Local Government)

Ministries of Local Government, Health, Supply, Labour, Housing and Public Utilities, Culture and National Guidance, Social Affairs, Education, Higher Education and Waqfs.

Zakariya Muhyiddin (Public Corporations (Production))

The Economic Development Organisation, The MISR and NASR Organisations, the General Organisations for Maritime and Land Transport and the Fisheries Organisations. (The Maritime Transport Organisation was in fact abolished in July!)

Hussein el Shafai (Public Corporations (Services))

Insurance, Consumers' Co-operative and Housing Organisations and the organisation for the trade and distribution of drugs.

Abdul Hamid Sarraj (Internal affairs)

Ministry of Interior and the Parquet.

8. Nobody ventures to predict how the new system will work: there is a good deal of mirth about the thirty-six Ministers. The general view is that all power and responsibility will reside with the seven Vice-Presidents, and that the so-called "Ministers" (with the exception of Ali Sabri) will be little more than their executive assistants.

9. It has been denied that the work of departments which have more than one Minister will be divided on a regional basis. No Minister, it is said, will deal solely with Egypt or solely with Syria. Departments will, where appropriate, be divided by subject matter. Whether this is true or not, it fits in with the declared object of President Nasser, who said in Alexandria on August 17:-

"Today we are strengthening and developing our unity by establishing a single Government for the U.A.R. We are putting the Union into effect and starting a new stage of unity."

Perhaps the most interesting question is whether or not Sarraj will transfer his headquarters from Damascus to Cairo. If he does not, the declared object of the reorganisation will be frustrated; but if he comes to reside in Cairo, it is not clear how and by whom Syria will be run.

/10.

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- 5 -

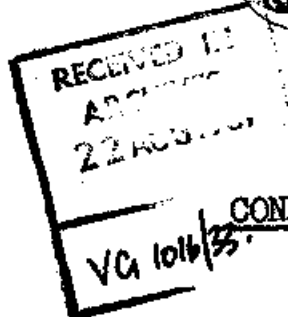
10. We are sending copies of this letter to Amman, Beirut, Baghdad, Damascus, PONEC (Cyprus) and POMEC (Aden).

Yours ever,

CHANCERY

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be a stylized 'E' or similar character.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

August 19, 1961.

(1014/61)

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Department,

Mohammed Fikri Abaza (No. 76 in the personalities list which we sent to you recently) was dismissed from his posts as Chairman of the Board of "Dar el Hilal" and chief editor of "Musawwar" by a Presidential Decree issued on August 17.

2. According to a "reliable source" quoted in the Cairo press of August 18, the reason for the dismissal was a signed article in "Musawwar" on August 17 in which Abaza advocated the recognition by the Powers of the neutrality of the Middle East and the establishment of a federal union of Arab countries, including all Palestine. The Israelis would become subjects of the federation, which would guarantee full rights to minorities. The "reliable source" commented that Abaza's article was full of implications which could not be passed over in silence. It contained, for example, an appeal to the great Powers to impose a federation on the Arab states and to integrate Israel into it. It also cast doubts on the Arab attitude towards Israel, an Arab nationalist attitude on which the whole Arab community had unanimously agreed and from which no individual Arab was free to deviate.

3. On the same day as he dismissed Fikri Abaza, President Nasser was speaking in Alexandria of his pride that the U. A. R. press now belonged to the people and was no longer dominated by feudalism, capitalism, imperialism, or political parties. The "Musawwar" article could not have appeared in the days when the Cairo press was not only guided - as it still is - but also censored before publication; and Fikri Abaza may therefore be called the first martyr to the limited freedom which Egyptian journalists now enjoy. It is however possible that the objection to his article was partly a pretext to replace him in "Dar el Hilal" by the Amin brothers, who were put on its board only two or three weeks ago.

4. We are sending copies of this letter to Beirut and Damascus and we are enclosing an extra copy for Information Policy Department.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY

p.s.

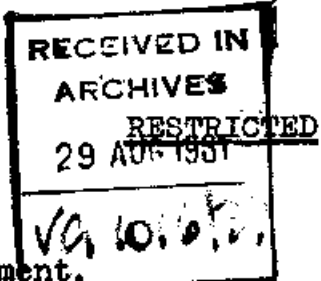
North & East African Department,
Foreign Office,
LONDON, S. W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL



BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

1014/61.



August 25, 1961.

Dear Department,

We enclose short biographical notes on the five new U.A.R. Ministers listed in paragraph 4 of our letter (1014/61) of August 19.

2. We are sending a copy of this letter and its enclosure to Damascus.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY.

North & East African Department,
Foreign Office,
LONDON S.W.1.

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1014



BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

SALAHUDDIN HIDAYAT

Minister of Scientific Research.

Born in Egypt about 1920. After studying at the Cairo Faculty of Science, he was commissioned in the Artillery and was later appointed Director of the Chemical Research Section of the Armed Forces.

Soon after the Revolution he was appointed director of the Wadi Natrun reclamation project. In April 1960 he became Chairman of the Atomic Energy Organisation and soon afterwards he was appointed also to be Director of the Office of Scientific Affairs in the Presidency.

In August 1961 he was appointed the first Minister of Scientific Research.

ABDUL MEHSIN ABUL-NUR

Minister of Local Government

Born in Menufiya about 1918, he graduated from the Military Academy in 1938. Soon after the Revolution he was appointed Military Attaché in the Sudan and afterwards in Syria. He later served in the Damascus office of the Joint Egyptian/Syrian Command.

Shortly after the formation of the U.A.R. he became Deputy Commander of the First (Syrian) Army. In 1960 he was appointed Governor of Beni Suef.

Appointed Minister of Local Administration in August 1961.

SAYID YUSUF

Minister of Education

Born in Tanta in 1898, he graduated from the Higher Teachers Training College in 1917 and was appointed teacher of mathematics and physics in the Secondary School at Assiut. He later served in many posts in the Ministry of Education, rising eventually to be Under-Secretary in the Ministry.

In 1960 he became a member of the National Assembly for Tanta and Chairman of the Education Committee of the Assembly. He was also at that time Chairman of the National Union in the province of Gharbiya and Vice-Chairman of the Teachers Union.

In August 1961 he was appointed Minister of Education.

AHMED ALI FARAG/.....



-2-

AHMED ALI FARAG

Minister of State for Planning

Born in Egypt about 1910, he graduated from the Cairo Faculty of Engineering in 1936. After holding various posts in the Ministry of Public Works, he was appointed to the National Production Council in 1953 as an expert in irrigation and drainage. He was later given the additional post of Assistant Secretary-General of the High Dam Committee and afterwards served as Chef de Cabinet to Abdul Latif el Baghdadi, Vice President in charge of planning.

In 1959 he went to Syria as Secretary-General of the Three-Man Committee (Baghdadi, Zakariya Muhyiddin and Akram Hourani), and on his return he was appointed Secretary-General of the Central Economic Committee, Assistant Under-Secretary and finally (in August 1960), Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Planning. He is also a member of the U.A.R. Science Council.

In August 1961 he was appointed Minister of State for Planning.

FARID ZEINUDDIN

Minister of State.

See No.8 in the Syrian section of the U.A.R. Personalities recently sent to the Foreign Office.

CONFIDENTIALINWARD SAVING TELEGRAM
FROM DAMASCUS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

By Bag

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITSHALL DISTRIBUTION
30 AUG 1961

Mr. Clarke

No. 3 Saving
August 25, 1961

R. August 29, 1961

VQ. 1010/39

CONFIDENTIALAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 3 Saving of
August 25.Repeated for information Saving to Cairo Baghdad
Beirut Tel Aviv
Amman

New Government structure in the United Arab Republic.

Pattern of administration which will emerge in Syrian Region following constitution of new Cabinet in Cairo is hardly clearer yet than it was a week ago. It has been announced that all Ministers will leave for Cairo to attend first meeting of new Cabinet on afternoon of August 26. Some, including Vice President Kahhala, have already gone, while others, presumably wishing to attend inauguration of Damascus Fair arranged for afternoon of August 25, will leave on morning of August 26. Senior Syrian official remaining then in the Syrian Region, will be Major General Jamil Faisal, commander of the First Army.

2. Future of staffs of Ministries in Damascus is still obscure. Some officials expect that there will be re-appointments to departments in Cairo, while it has been suggested in the press that redundant officials will be transferred to posts in local administration. It has also been stated that Secretaries-General, the senior permanent officials in the Ministries after the Ministers themselves, are to be given additional authority to act in the absence of their Ministers. Indication would therefore seem to be that Ministries in Damascus will be reduced in capacity and influence but are not to be eliminated altogether.

/3. Announcement

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Damascus telegram No. 3 Saving to Foreign Office.

-2-

3. Announcement is expected within next few days of new appointments to posts of provincial Governor (Mhafiz), of which there are at present eleven, including Damascus. Kemaluddin Hussein arrived from Cairo on August 22, ostensibly to inaugurate University Youth Week, but more probably, in his capacity as Vice President in charge of local administration, to settle the nomination of the new Governors who may turn out to be key officials in the Syrian Region under the new dispensation, with responsibilities and influence increased at the expense of ministerial departments in Damascus.

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V

North and East African Department

Vc. 1016/42.

1967

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

FROM Chancery Cairo.
To NCAD.

No. 1014/61
Dated August 29
Received August 31

SUBJECT:

UAR. Government Changes

President Nasser held his first cabinet meeting on August 26: main purpose for his reorganisation of the Govt. Cairo press report that the National Assembly will meet in Damascus.

References

MINUTES

See p 4.

I am still not aware of any official announcement that the Govt will move to Damascus for four months every year. But I imagine the newspaper reports are correct. Or perhaps Nasser is using these newspaper reports to test popular reaction.

2. Cairo will no doubt recommend what administrative changes may be necessary in our own arrangements in the UAR when it becomes clearer what exactly the UAR Govt intend.

3. Para 3. Although one report said the existing Regional councils were to be preserved there is no

(Printing Instructions)

(Outward Action)

(Action completed)

(Main Indexed)

MTD
14-9-61

25.1.62

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no mention of them here.

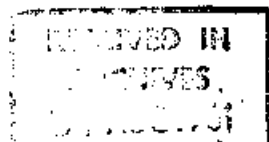
4. The move to Damascus each year is presumably intended to placate the Syrians for more centralisation. But the presence of a predominantly Egyptian Govt in Damascus may in fact irritate them.

PAH Blaker.
4/9.

Mr Edey. 2/9
ERDP 4
Eto Dept. 1/9
C+S Dept. Mr. Morgan
15/9

NS
4/9

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VG. 1016/42

BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

(1014/61)

August 29, 1961.

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Dear Department,

VG 1016/36

In our letter (1014/61) of August 26 we told you that President Nasser was reported to have decided that the U.A.R. Government should move to Damascus every year from February to May.

2. In the evening of August 26, President Nasser held his first Cabinet meeting since the reorganisation of the Government. All seven Vice-Presidents attended; and of the thirty-six Ministers the only absentees were Aziz Sidqi (Industry), who is at present on a visit to the U.K., and Jamil Sufi (Supply).

3. According to the press, which made the most of the occasion, Nasser told his Ministers that the main purposes of the reorganisation were to strengthen the Union and to facilitate the application of socialist ideas. "Regionalism" had come to an end: in future there would be no Egyptian Ministers, no Syrian Ministers, but only U.A.R. Ministers working for a single nation and a common future. The Government would reside in Damascus from February to May every year.

4. Socialism, President Nasser is reported to have claimed, was not simply a catchword: it was a whole way of life and entailed wide responsibilities. In the Civil Service there must be no negligence, no shirking of decisions; but socialism did not mean the tyranny of a bureaucracy. In order to apply it and to strengthen the Union, certain practical steps must be taken. There would be a Cabinet meeting once a fortnight; the division of responsibility between Ministers must be carefully defined; the efficiency of local government

/must....

North & East African Department,
Foreign Office,
LONDON, S.W.1.

RESTRICTED



RESTRICTED

must be improved and the new system applied to the Northern Region as soon as possible. Between planning and execution there must be no dislocation. The general principle was that there should be centralisation in planning and decentralisation in execution. The press had an important part to play and its freedom was fundamental to the development of society; there was no censorship, but the press must not go outside the framework of the national policy.

5. Cairo newspapers of August 28 report that the National Assembly will meet in Damascus during the period of the government's residence there. A similar proposal was made last year and subsequently abandoned on the ground that Damascus had no hall large enough to accommodate the Assembly. Damascus certainly has too few hotels to accommodate the number of visitors that must be expected if the government and its legislative façade are to move on the scale at present predicted by the Cairo press. But the expectation among officials is that only the Ministers and their Private Secretaries will leave Cairo.

6. We are sending copies of this letter to the Chanceries at Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad and Aden, and to P.O.N.E.C. (Cyprus) and P.O.M.E.C. (Aden).

Yours ever

CHANCERY
122

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1961

V

North and East African Department

VG.1016/45.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

FROM Mr Arthur
CAIRO.

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 944.

Dated September 21

Received September 21.

SUBJECT:

Rumours that SARRAJ tried to resign a few days ago: he told his supporters in Damascus that Egyptian domination over Syria has gone too far.

References

MINUTES

These rumours came as quite a surprise, although there are other indications that there may well be something in them. The Daily Telegraph of September 21 published a report from Beirut which stated that Sarraj was being squeezed out (a spare copy of this article is attached). Beirut telegram No.810 of September 21 went as far as to report the Iranian Military Attaché there as having said that Sarraj had actually been placed under house arrest; Beirut telegram No.813 of the same date stated, however, that Sarraj was understood to be back in Cairo.

(Printing Instructions)

2. As recently as last month Sarraj was appointed one of the seven Vice-Presidents in the re-organisation of the U.A.R. Government and was put in charge of internal affairs.

(Outward Action)

3. In paragraph 4 of his First Impressions despatch, written on July 31, Mr. Clarke said that Sarraj's authority in the Northern Region of the U.A.R. was absolute.

(D. A. Hamley)
September 22, 1961

Eastern Department

F.O.R.D. *10/10* he must await M' Clarke's comment.

I.R.D. *all* *1760* And it may be relevant that in his letter of April 4 (VG 1018/7) he reported that "once Nasser and his Egyptian colleagues are out of the way, Sarraj seems determined to project himself before the public as the national leader."

(Action completed)

(Main Indexed)

MAJ

24 10.61

25

62

J136 58267-3

Revised
2/9
Now

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Now please see two further telegrams,
Damascus no 75 (Flag A) and Beirut no 918 (Flag A).
The former seems to summarize the position, and
suggests that Warner has decided to bring Sarraf
to heel.

Yes

Adrian
27/9

John Birch
Sept. 25

ll
25/9.

- a) Damascus - 75 - 22/9
- b) S.B.C. Monitoring Report 13B. 20/9.

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CONFIDENTIAL

FROM DAMASCUS TO FOREIGN OFFICE

22 SEP 1961

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND

Her Majesty's Consul General

WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

VG 1016/450

No. 75

D: 9.30 a.m. September 22, 1961

September 22, 1961

R: 9.07 a.m. September 22, 1961

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 29 of September 22
Repeated for information to Foreign Office

Your telegram No. 37.

914 TUFO.

VG 1016-45 - No. 29

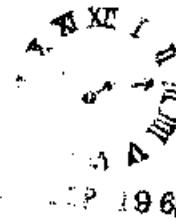
I cannot confirm rumour which you mention, but there is no doubt that Sarraj is dissatisfied with recent developments, that he has had serious disagreements with Amer, and that he left for Cairo with Amer on September 19 against his will.

2. I have prepared report which will leave by bag September 23.

Foreign Office pass priority Cairo as my telegram No. 29.

[Repeated as requested]

GGGGG



CONFIDENTIAL

What "developments"? The OAH gov. re-organisation? Perhaps the report by bag will explain.

V. King
1961

Nh.
25/9

Ref: FO 371/158787

88073.

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V

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ARCHIVED
21 SEP 1961
Vg. 1016/45

CONFIDENTIAL
FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Arthur

No. 914 D. 9.45 a.m. September 21, 1961
September 21, 1961 R. 10.00 a.m. September 21, 1961

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Damascus telegram No. 37
of September 21.
Repeated for information to Foreign Office.

There are strong and apparently well-founded rumours in Cairo that Sarraj tried to resign a few days ago and that he told his supporters in Damascus on September 17 that Egyptian domination over Syria had gone too far.

2. Grateful for urgent comments.

Foreign Office please pass Damascus.

[Repeated as requested]

CCC

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REGISTRY
No.

REPEITION OF TELEGRAMS

CYPHER ^{CB}
VC

(1) TELEGRAM SECTION
FOREIGN OFFICE

(Date) *22/9*

(Despatched) *22/9*

Please repeat to the posts shown below telegram No. *914*

from/to *Bair to To* dated *21/9*

- BE 1807* No. 1091 (Date) *22/9*
- BAGUJA* No. 1713
- ANMA* No. 1010
- No.
- No.
- No.

RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVES
25 SEP 1961
VA 106/105

En cigr.

Code

Cypher *J*

(Signed) *NEA*

(Dept.) *NEA*

(Date) *22/9/61*

(2) DIVISION CONCERNED (FOR ARCHIVES).

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RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVED
22 FEB 1961
V6-1010/4(B)
(NEXT)

12. P. Smith

04 JAR: BARRAO RESIGNATION RUMOURS DENIED

CARAB NEWS AGENCY BEIRUT: TODAY'S 'AL-HAYAT' DATE-ORIGINALLY DENIED RUMOURS SPREAD IN BEIRUT ABOUT THE RESIGNATION OF VICE PRESIDENT ABD AL-HAMID AL-BARRAO. IT SAID: THE CAR CONFIRM THAT AL-BARRAO HAS NOT SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION AND THAT SOURCES CLOSE TO HIM HAVE ASSERTED THAT HE ABSOLUTELY NO INTENTION OF SUBMITTING HIS RESIGNATION. +

[Handwritten mark]

END 000 NOV 2010 1513 04T KNYD

*James are reporting
- Dr. 2/2/9*

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Minutes

DAILY TELEGRAPH

RECEIVED IN
ARONK...
21 SEP 1961
VC 10/6/61

Cutting dated 21 SEP 1961

UAR HEADS FREEZE OUT SYRIAN STRONG MAN

COL. SARRAJ GETS PROMOTION TO A JOB WITH NO WORK

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

BEIRUT, Wednesday.

SYRIA'S one-time political strong-man, Col. Abd. Hamid Sarraj, appears to be being eased out of authority in the top levels of the United Arab Republic. He is now a Vice-President without any work, following a series of manoeuvres by Col. Nasser and his aides.

According to Beirut reports Col. Sarraj, who has been put in charge of internal affairs in the recent Cabinet shuffle, spent several days in his Cairo office without getting anything to do.

He contacted the Interior Minister, Mr. Abbas Radwan, asking him to refer problems to him, but though Mr. Radwan promised to do so, nothing arrived.

Col. Sarraj made several more attempts to contact him, but was always told that "the Minister is out of his office."

Col. Sarraj finally decided to complain personally to President Nasser, who gave him an audience five days later, although at one time Col. Sarraj could have walked in when he chose.

Col. Nasser said he knew nothing about the report, and promised to investigate. Col. Sarraj would

Union, the only authorised political organisation in the UAR, and complained.

Col. Nasser sent State Minister Mr. Kader Hatem to Damascus to try to reconcile Col. Sarraj and Mr. Hatem succeeded in arranging a meeting between Col. Sarraj and Vice-President Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer.

All three left together to-day for Cairo. No confirmation could be obtained of Col. Sarraj's dispute with Cairo because of strict censorship.

NO RESIGNATIONS

Power Scheme

Reports that Col. Sarraj has resigned have been denied. But many observers think his promotion to vice-President and his transfer to Cairo are part of a scheme to strip him of power.

It could be an attempt to win over his numerous enemies in Syria. This interpretation is substantiated by a series of orders issued recently, all eating into Col. Sarraj's authority.

One, issued by Marshal Amer, ordered that existing police methods in Syria should cease, and that no arrests could be made without a warrant issued by the courts.

PENSION SNUB

Executives Merged

This was considered a snub to Col. Sarraj, firstly because the methods in question were his, and secondly because the matter was within his authority.

Marshal Amer also ordered pensions for several of Col. Sarraj's enemies who were dropped from the first UAR Government. Among them is the former vice-President, Mr. Sabri Assali.

Col. Nasser yesterday decreed the amalgamation of the National Union executives in Egypt and Syria, depriving Col. Sarraj, the secretary-general of the National Union, of access to the

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

CONFIDENTIALNo. 21 /
(10.11/61)

British Consulate-General,

DAMASCUS.

September 22, 1961. 26 SEP 1961

RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVES
26 SEP 1961

VG 1016-31

VG 1016/50

My Lord,

With reference to my telegram No. 3 Saving of the 25th of August regarding the effect on the Syrian Region of the recent changes in the structure of the Government of the United Arab Republic, I have the honour to inform you that the expected appointments of the eleven provincial Governors (Mohafiz) have not yet been announced, but have been promised for the coming week. Meanwhile such developments in the formation of the new pattern of the administration as have been announced in the press have mostly related to the National Union, and have incidentally formed the background for what, in spite of the lack of reliable sources of information, has evidently been in the past week or so a tense and dramatic struggle on the part of Colonel Abdulhamid Sarraj to retain a position of power and influence in the Syrian Region.

2. It would appear that a prominent feature of the new system of local administration to be imposed on the Syrian Region will be a series of councils at three levels in each of the provinces, namely a Governor's Council, Town Councils, and Village Councils, and these councils will be to a large extent composed of persons serving on the Executive Committees in each Governorate of the National Union. It seems likely also that the Governors themselves and senior officials in the governorates will be required to be members of the National Union. Membership of the Executive Committees would be controlled by the Secretary-General of the National Union, who would therefore have great personal influence over the / administration

The Right Honourable
The Earl of Home,
etc., etc., etc.,
Foreign Office,
London S.W.1.

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administration of Government throughout the Region. In the capacity of Secretary General of the National Union in the Syrian Region Colonel Sarraj had already been giving much time to building up the committees during the past summer. The announcement of the changes in the structure of Government must have caused some dismay and perplexity about the application of the system in the National Union of the Syrian Region and on the 21st of August it was announced that Colonel Sarraj had met officers of the National Union, and again on the 25th of August he made a long statement much of which was reproduced in the Damascus press, explaining the purposes of President Nasser's constructive revolution, and urging the Executive Committee to accept the necessity of real unity of the two regions directed by a co-ordinated administration. He said that he was ready to sacrifice his blood for unity, and that his conscience had never been clearer than it then was. On the 5th of September Colonel Sarraj was again reported as having met the chief officers of the Executive Committees of the National Union and as having discussed with them the plans for the Governorate committees and the responsibilities of the National Union under the new system of local administration, of whose structure it would be the basis.

3. Colonel Sarraj left for Cairo on the 8th of September, and for the following few days the Ministers were all in Cairo to greet the President upon his return from Belgrade. During this period the Executive Committees of the National Union in the Syrian Region began holding a series of meeting to nominate candidates from among / their

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their members for selection for the Governorate Councils, and it was announced that their final report would be submitted to Colonel Sarraj in his capacity as Secretary General for his perusal prior to the issue by him of the list of appointments to these Councils.

4. On the 13th of September, Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer arrived in Damascus, and on the 15th of September two decrees were issued determining conditions for the appointment of members of the National Union Executive Committees to the Governorate and Town Councils respectively. Article 2 of both decrees stipulated that the candidates selected by the Committees would be nominated by the National Union's Organisational Superintendent, and the decrees were signed by Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer in the capacity of Organisational Superintendent of the National Union. This designation was not a familiar one in the Syrian Region, and indeed this seemed to be the first that had been heard of the Field Marshal's connexion with National Union activities, and it was obvious that the intention was to deprive Colonel Sarraj of his influence in the Union. Colonel Sarraj returned immediately from Cairo to Damascus: it is said that he returned alone, and without seeking the permission of the President to do so. He found on arrival, it is understood, that his personal staff - presumably his assistants at the offices of the Executive Council of the Syrian Region - had been instructed to pack up and to leave for Cairo. In the next day or so Colonel Sarraj continued to occupy his office in the National Union where he received colleagues and informed them that he had been discourteously treated in Cairo-in particular, apparently the Minister of the Interior had withheld documents from him. Meanwhile, further decrees directly affecting his / status

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status and responsibilities in the Syrian Region were issued above the signature of Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer who, in spite of the recent changes of the Government structure, seems to have retained the authority to act as viceroy or vice-president in charge of Syrian Region affairs. One of these decrees appointed Monsieur Georges Khoury as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Economic Foundation of the Syrian Region. Monsieur Georges Khoury had previously been serving as Director General of the Economic Foundation, and the post of Chairman of the Board of Directors had been held by Colonel Sarraj. Another decree forbade the arrest of any person without a warrant issued by the judicial authority. The purpose of this decree was, of course, to afford protection to ordinary citizens from Colonel Sarraj's security organisation, and it was issued, it is rumoured, as a result of an appeal by telephone direct to Field Marshal Amer by a Syrian merchant threatened with arrest by security police during the night. Another decree replaced Major Marwan Sibai, Colonel Sarraj's Director of Investigation in the Directorate of Public Security, by a Lt. Colonel Rashid Qattini. Indeed, an employee of an official department in Damascus who had been summoned to attend at the Investigation Department on the morning of the 19th of September is known to have been informed on arrival that his case could not be dealt with because most of the staff of the Investigation Department were under arrest.

5. There was thus a certain amount of uneasiness in Damascus on the 19th of September and the 20th of September. Colonel Sarraj was reported to have had a long interview with Field Marshal Amer, and there was a rumour that he had / resigned.

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resigned. It began to be noticed that army communications vehicles seemed to be patrolling the streets in larger numbers than usual, and that there were military guards at important public buildings. Yet there was no suggestion of any kind of public disorder: the 20th of September was in fact the last day of the Damascus International Fair and it was celebrated by a reception at which many senior officials were present. By that time, however, Colonel Sarraj had returned to Cairo with Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer, and there is no doubt that he travelled unwillingly. It is said here that he visited the summer resort of Bludan on the 19th of September to collect some personal belongings and that on his return to his house in Damascus, he found himself placed under constraint and escorted to the airport. At the airport, according to reliable accounts, there was a violent altercation, but ultimately Colonel Sarraj was persuaded to enter the aircraft, and there was no physical violence.

6. In paragraph 4 of my despatch No. 18 of the 31st of July I recounted the offices held by Colonel Sarraj and suggested that the influence which these gave him amounted, subject to the good-will of President Nasser, to almost total control of the administration of the Syrian Region. Of those offices, none are now left to him: stripped of all his influence in the Syrian Region, he has now, if he avoids arrest and imprisonment, only the function of Vice President for the Interior which looks as if it will be an empty title designed to keep him in Cairo under the eye of President Nasser. During

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the brief hours on the 19th of September when it became generally known, in spite of official reticence, how strained relations had become between Colonel Sarraj and Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer, it was inevitable that there should be speculation about the possibility that Colonel Sarraj might attempt some kind of violent resistance to the Egyptian domination which Field Marshal Amer represented, but such a possibility had to be discounted, because there seemed to be no source, assuming that the First Army is under Egyptian control and given his personal unpopularity with the civilian population, from which Colonel Sarraj could derive any material support. Yet now that he has left there is a feeling that he genuinely represented Syrian aspirations and that in spite of his exhortations to the National Union about the blessings of unity, he nevertheless was a determined protagonist of a separate Syrian identity. More important than that, I think, is the fact that the mere fact of his quarrel with the Egyptian overlord, suppressed though the details have been by a muzzled press, has given expression to feelings of antipathy to Egyptian control which have been growing stronger month by month among the Syrian people, but which have up to now lacked a mouthpiece. Where Colonel Sarraj has resisted as an individual, others may now find it easier to resist as a group, and at least Syrians who feel resentment against the Egyptian regime need no longer speak in whispers.

7. There has been talk of a strike, presumably to express support of Colonel Sarraj's stand against total Egyptian control, but a large-scale strike is almost as difficult to envisage as a coup d'état by Colonel Sarraj, because there seems no one to organise it or to lead it.

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The whole Syrian Region in fact seems at the moment to be leaderless. The recent measures in Cairo have put an end to the Executive Council in the Northern Region and the Ministers are in Cairo or on tour, but nothing yet has been established in their place. With both Field Marshal Amer and Colonel Sarraj in Cairo, there is no direct representative of Government authority in the region. If a strike did occur and the possibility of some such gesture of displeasure at the treatment of Colonel Sarraj cannot be excluded, it would presumably fall to the Army to deal with it. However on the 20th of September, Colonel Jado Izzudin, formerly Northern Region Minister of Public Works and now Minister of Local Government, arrived in Damascus and started to organise his new department. Colonel Jado Izzudin, a contemporary of Colonel Sarraj, has been mentioned in previous correspondence as a possible rival of Colonel Sarraj and as a Minister enjoying the confidence and support of Field Marshal Abdulhakim Amer. As the emphasis in the new governmental system in the Northern Region is to be on the local government organisation, it is perhaps likely that Colonel Jado Izzudin as Minister of Local Government will play a more authoritative and spectacular role in the Syrian Region than he did during the hegemony of Colonel Sarraj.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Cairo, Beirut and Amman.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

(G. H. Clarke)

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THE TIMES RECEIVED IN
 23 SEP 1961 ARCHIVE
 Cutting dated 27 SEP 1961
 U.A.R. CRISIS OF
 RELUCTANT
 SYRIA V 1016/51

**MINISTERS' RIVALRY
 FOR POWER**

From Our Middle East
 Correspondent

BEIRUT, Sept. 22

Syria's reluctance to lose her "personality"—as one Beirut newspaper has described it—as partner with Egypt in the United Arab Republic, has caused a crisis which President Nasser has now tried to settle by sending a new emissary to supervise affairs in Damascus. Mahmoud Riad, an Egyptian who was Ambassador to Syria until the union in 1958 and is political adviser to President Nasser, has arrived there apparently to assume the powers which the two deputy Presidents, Abdel Hakim Amer and Abdel Hamid Serraj, both wished to have.

The newspapers in Beirut are sounding boards for every echo that steals past the censorship in the U.A.R. and have described how Abdel Hakim Amer, an Egyptian, and Abdel Hamid Serraj, a Syrian, have been at loggerheads. Serraj felt himself being sidetracked in the capacity of deputy President for Internal Affairs given him in President Nasser's reorganization of the Government last month, and left Cairo, which was in future to be his headquarters, to drum up support in Damascus.

CHANGES IN SYSTEM

This move did not suit Abdel Hakim Amer, who while being War Minister and Commander-in-Chief, has also had over-all responsibility for Syria and has lately been in Damascus. He has introduced changes in the past week in the system maintained previously by Serraj in Syria, the most important being that arrests could not be made without a lawful warrant. But these reforms were seemingly not well taken in Cairo and after a Minister of State, Abdel Kader Hatem, had also appeared in Damascus from Cairo, all three Ministers returned to Cairo.

These events though not publicized in the U.A.R. must have caused some uneasiness in Syria. Reports have been published here today of security precautions there, including heavy guards placed on public buildings and Army detachments in the streets.

UNWIELDLY CABINET

The comment on "reluctant" Syria is by a newspaper opposed to the U.A.R. but seems to be nevertheless valid. The conflict between Amer and Serraj is regarded here as a symptom of the difficulty of finding a form of Government for the two regions of the U.A.R. sufficiently supple and yet sufficiently centralized.

The single Cabinet created last month in place of three Cabinets is so unwieldy that there may be as much overlapping as before; the only difference being that the overlapping will be concentrated in Cairo. The latest example of this situation is an announcement in Cairo that the National Union, the U.A.R.'s only recognized political organization, will henceforth meet only once a year in Cairo instead of once in both Cairo and Damascus. The two executive committees of the National Union, one each for Egypt and Syria, will be replaced by one committee.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN



BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

1014/61

September 22, 1961.

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VS 1016/14 VC-1014/52

Dear Department,

Our letter of April 18 (1014/61) reported the postponement of the Regional and General Congresses of the National Union of the U.A.R.

2. On September 19 the President issued a Decree providing for the dissolution of the former regional executive committees and the institution in their place of a single Supreme Executive Committee of the National Union. This Committee will consist of twenty members (not yet named) under the chairmanship of the President of the National Union. All executive committees in the governorates in both regions of the Republic will be affiliated to it.

3. The Decree is regarded as complementary to the measures announced in August for the re-organisation of the structure of the Government of the U.A.R. into one central cabinet. Soon after its promulgation Kamaluddin Hussein, Controller-General of the National Union, announced that it had been decided to postpone the General Congress of the National Union until next February.

4. The change in the Union's constitution was the subject of a eulogistic editorial in "Gumhuriya" of September 20. It was hailed as a further step towards the unity of the Arab people and the eradication of "regionalism". It was a further victory in the destruction of the artificial borders imposed by the imperialists after the First War.

5. Triumph over imperialism or not, this further measure of centralisation is widely rumoured to have proved too much for Vice-President Abdul Hamid Sarraj, who was formerly Controller-General of the National Union in Syria. He left suddenly for Damascus, it is said without telling anybody, and is reported to have held a meeting of his supporters there in protest against the growing Egyptian domination of the U.A.R. It is difficult to believe that he went as far as Cairo rumour has it; but there is good reason to think that he expressed his opposition to this latest blow at the Syrian personality. He has now returned to Cairo, in the company of Vice-President Abdul Hakim Amer, and has been received by President Nasser. His present position and attitude remains one of the chief subjects of speculation in Cairo.

6. We are sending copies of this letter to Beirut, PONEC(Cyprus) and Damascus.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY.

North & East African Department,
FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

1014/61

September 23, 1961.

CONFIDENTIAL.

VE 1910/27

Dear Department,

In paragraph 5 of our letter (1014/61) of September 22 we reported rumours that Vice-President Abdul Hamid Sarraj had difficulties with President Nasser over the re-organisation of the National Union.

2. As though to give the lie to these rumours, to-day's "Ahram" reports prominently that the first meeting of the "Executive Committee of Ministers" is to be held on September 25 under the chairmanship of Sarraj. We are not quite clear about the composition and functions of this Committee, which seems to have remarkably wide terms of reference. We report the meeting now for the light it throws on the position of Sarraj.

3. We are sending copies of this letter to the Chanceries at Beirut, PONEC (Cyprus) and to the Consulate-General at Damascus.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY.

North & East African Department,
FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

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V

North and East African Department

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

VG. 1016/53

FROM Mr Edden
Beirut.

No. 829

Dated September 28

Received September 28.

SUBJECT:

Cut in Damascus radio: announcements on same band from Supreme Arab Revolutionary Command of Armed forces: no specific political group represented: broadcast in Cairo by President Nasser.

References

-/54

(Printing Instructions)

(Outward Action)

(Action completed)

16.10.61

(Main Indexed)

25.1.62

MINUTES

According to BBC Monitoring reports, the uprising is led by Brig. JUHMAN (sic), "Commander of QATANAH Position". W.O. says he commands the Damascus garrison. The rebels have seized, inter alia, the Damascus radio station, according to their own broadcast accounts have both F/M AMER Lt. JAMAL FAISAL (the latter is C-in-C, Syria) in custody. This news is I think most disturbing. The rebels may have far-reaching repercussions throughout the M.E.; in addition, we regard the survival

/7

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of the Egyptian Syrian union (which this
revolt, despite the claim reported in para.
2 of this telegram, seems to imperil) with
goodwill - the words used in the briefing
sent to H. M. Ambassador in Paris last
March.

± We are unlikely to hear anything
from ^{6-general} Janasous about this, as they have no
JWS & the commercial telegraph links
are out of action. The airport is
also closed (see /57).

J. H. G.
E.H.
(J.A. HAMLE.)

The latest news is that the revolt has fizzled

W.S. 1000 it has.
E. J. G. 6/29/53
Arabian J. G. 10
P. J. G. 9/10
R. J. G. 9/10
FO L. (MEX) 6/10

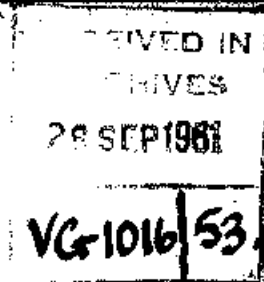
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FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Mr. Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Eddan

No. 829
September 28, 1961D.7.41 a.m. September 28, 1961
R.8.52 a.m. September 28, 1961EMERGENCYAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 829 of September 28.

Repeated for information to:	Cairo	P.O.N.E.G. (Cyprus)	
	Tel Aviv	Baghdad	Amman
	Tehran	Ankara	Washington
	UKMIS New York	Paris	

and Saving to: Damascus.

From early this morning Damascus regular radio programmes have been off the air. In their place on the same wavelength a station calling itself "Damascus radio broadcasting from the field" has been broadcasting music interspersed with announcements from the "Supreme Arab Revolutionary Command of the Armed Forces".

2. In one announcement the Command say they have risen to restore rights and let liberty to the people and to put an end to corruption and tyranny. Calling for a movement for reform they say that they tried every road before deciding to act. They represented no specific political group. Another announcement said that the Command were not anti-U.A.R. They appealed to Syrians not to harm their Egyptian brothers.

3. Telephone communications with Syria are cut and, according to our information, all the frontiers are closed.

4. In a broadcast from Cairo which he began about 0600 G.M.T. President Nasser said that a small force from the First Army at Qatana (a few miles south west of Damascus) had surrounded Damascus, taken control of the town, encircled Army Headquarters in Damascus and seized the radio station. He said that all units of the First Army outside Damascus had been ordered to put an end to the revolt. He appealed to the sense of responsibility of the U.A.R. people and Army, for the protection of the U.A.R. and Arab Unity.

/Foreign Office



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1961

V

North and East African Department

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

V Gr. 1016/59

FROM Sir H. Caccia
Washington
SECRET

No. 2584

Date: September 28

Received: September 29

SUBJECT: Syrian Coup.
Talk with State Dept on Syria:
advises urge restraint on Jordanian
Govt: U.S. intervention with
Israelis would be resented.

References

-153.
-168..

(Printing Instructions)

(Outward Action)

DH. DE AMMAN - 1047
Sept 24.
DPT. COL DAMASCUS 112
Sept 30
DH. CAIRO - 1431
Sept 30.

(Action completed)

Chh
-49

(Main Indexed)

Dr. 62
25

MINUTES

The State Dept's view as reported in para. 6 is broadly in line with our own. Indeed, we wd. perhaps go further & say that the revolt may result in serious trouble in the M.E., even if Syria's neighbours do not intervene: I have in mind particularly the apparent removal of the U.A.R. threat to Israel's border with Syria, & the consequently increased chance of Israel trying a military move in the South, against Kuwait. This view was put

/6

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to a Heads of Section meeting to-day,
which was attended by an American
representative.

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Number of copies of enclosures.....

J. Hey
29/9
(J. A. HAMLEY)

~~E. J. [unclear]~~
9/8/87

NS
29/9

D Daily Telegraph cutting 27/9
see inside

SECRETFROM WASHINGTON TO FOREIGN OFFICERECEIVED IN
FILES
29 SEP 1961

VG 1016/59

Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir H. Caccia

No.2584

D. 8.56.p.m. September 28, 1961

September 28, 1961

R. 9.28.p.m. September 28, 1961

EMERGENCYSECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No.2584 of September 28.Repeated for information to: Amman, Tel Aviv, Cairo,
Ankara, Beirut, Baghdad, Tehran,
Bahrain, P.O.M.E.C.(Aden), Kuwait,
U.K.Mission New York

Your telegram No.6959: Syria. — Nly/R

We have spoken accordingly to the State Department. Like us they have little information about the origins of the movement but they agree that it seems indigenous. They understand that the leaders are Brigadier Abdul ~~Qasab~~ ^{Qasab}, commander of the Quatana Garrison, and Colonel Haider Kuzbari. They do not rule out the possibility that Sarraj himself may have been involved in it in some way, but they consider this most unlikely. It seems to them probable that the leaders of the movement decided that the recent dismissal of Sarraj had weakened the internal security machinery of the Syrian region and that the time was therefore ripe to strike. The State Department are also inclined to believe that the motives and aims of the movement are, in fact, those which they have publicly proclaimed (see paragraph 2 of Beirut telegram No.829). — US 1016/53

2. The State Department have had difficulties in communicating with their Consulates-General in Damascus and Aleppo, although they have received brief reports from both posts indicating that the towns were quiet and that all American subjects were safe. Their present impression, however, is that the Revolutionary Movement has assumed a wide measure of control throughout Syria.

3. The United States Ambassador at Amman is being instructed to consult with Her Majesty's Ambassador and urge restraint on the Jordanian Government. In this connexion the State Department say they have received reliable information that Jordanian

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/ Army



SECRET

Washington telegram No.2584 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

Army units are being moved northwards. The United States Ambassador at Tel Aviv is being authorized to consult with Her Majesty's Ambassador but ~~not~~ (repeat not) to urge restraint on the Israelis at this stage. According to the State Department, the Israelis are somewhat irritated at the United States Government at present over a number of issues and would, therefore, be likely to show particular resentment if the Americans urged restraint on them before there was any sign that they intend to take advantage of the situation in Syria. The United States Ambassador at Tel Aviv is, however, being instructed to keep a particularly close lookout for any evidence of an Israeli intention to intervene, and to urge restraint if such evidence makes this seem advisable. The State Department see no objection to Her Majesty's Ambassador urging restraint on the Israelis.

4. The State Department have not (repeat not) so far taken action on the lines of paragraph 1 of your telegram No.2003 to Ankara, but may decide to do so. — N11/R

5. The Department understand the point in the second sentence of paragraph 3 of your telegram under reference, but in the absence of any sign that Nasser himself believes the insurrection to have received external encouragement they do not regard it as of overriding importance. Their line in answer to Press questions will, therefore, be that the leadership and objectives of the insurrection are obscure but it appears to be of purely internal origin.

6. In the view of the State Department, United States and British interests are unlikely to benefit in any way from this insurrection and, indeed, it opens up the possibility of serious trouble in the region if any of Syria's neighbours should decide to intervene. The Department are telling United States Missions in the area that it is in the American interest that the union between Syria and Egypt should continue, and cautioning them not to appear to take pleasure in this blow to Nasser's prestige.

/ Foreign Office

SECRET

CONFIDENTIALFROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO AMMAN

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTIONNo. 1047

September 29, 1961

D. 4.08 p.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATECONFIDENTIALAddressed to Amman telegram No. 1047 of September 29.

Repeated for information to: Ankara [Immediate]
 Beirut [Immediate]
 Baghdad [Immediate]
 Tehran [Immediate]
 Bahrain [Priority]
 Kuwait [Priority]
 POMEH (Aden) [Priority]
 Cairo [Immediate]
 Tel Aviv [Immediate]
 UK Mission New York [Priority]
 B.I.S. New York [Priority]
 Washington [Immediate]
 Moscow [Priority]
 UKDEL NATO [Priority]

Your telegrams Nos. 786 [of September 28] (paragraph 3) and 787 (not to all) and Washington telegram No. 2584 [of September 28] (paragraph 6) [Syria].

You spoke well.

2. It looks as though we may be in for a period of struggle, military or verbal, between the Syrian revolutionaries and Nasser. Following our normal practice we will not want to recognise the revolutionary government in Syria until it is well established and although we will want to concert with our friends and allies we are inclined to see advantage in being somewhat slow in granting recognition, e.g. by waiting until the large majority of Arab States have taken up a position on recognition. There does not now seem to be an immediate danger of intervention by Syria's neighbours and to that extent there is less risk of the instability spreading.

3. It is

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Foreign Office telegram No. 1017 to Amman.

-2-

3. It is important that we should continue to be seen to be adhering to our policy of non-involvement in Arab affairs. It may take some time for Arab opinion to crystallise on the dispute and meanwhile it is important that we should not appear to be rejoicing at what can be represented as a setback for Arab unity.

4. You and the other recipients of this telegram should therefore continue to confine yourselves to the line given in my telegram No. 398 Guidance though in private conversation with friendly officials you should be guided by paragraphs 2 and 3 above.

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CONFIDENTIALFROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO DAMASCUS

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTIONNo. 112

September 30, 1961

D. 4.50 p.m. September 30, 1961

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIALAddressed to Damascus telegram No. 112 of September 30.

Repeated for information to Cairo [Immediate] Washington

Recognition of new Syrian Government.

2. You will now have seen my telegram No. 1047 [of September 29] to Amman, which has been repeated to you. For the reasons set out in it we are not going to rush matters. But you will see from Circular Despatch No. 059 of June 12, 1950 that Governments are in Her Majesty's Government's view (to put it in very general language) entitled to recognition when they can be held to enjoy, with a reasonable prospect of permanency, the obedience of the mass of the population and the effective control of the greater part of the territory.

3. You will no doubt be considering what recommendations you should make if you are approached by the Syrian revolutionary Government. In doing so you should be guided by the circular referred to above, and by other standing instructions, you should however bear in mind that the fact that this appears to be a secession of a part of the territory of a recognised state and not a change of government in a recognised state and that this is likely to present us with particularly difficult problems. You should consult those of your colleagues most closely connected with the United Kingdom by treaty or common political interests; you should report by telegram whether the criteria of Her Majesty's Government for the recognition of the new régime have been satisfied; and the views of the colleagues you have consulted; and you should transmit the contents of any Note which you may receive giving the names of the principal members of the new government. You should not repeat nor acknowledge any such communication since this might be taken as according recognition. And generally you should not take any action which might be taken as implying recognition without seeking further instructions.

/ 4. There

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Foreign Office telegram No. 112 to Damascus

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4. There is a point which you will wish to bear in mind regarding the difference between recognition 'de facto' or 'de jure'. Generally we could consider recognizing Syria 'de facto' and not 'de jure' if it was not yet clear that the new government had a reasonable prospect of permanency; but even recognition of Syria 'de facto' would imply recognition of Syria's secession from the United Arab Republic.

5. Please telegraph any public indication of the attitude of the revolutionary government on the legal status of the government and its relationship to the U.A.R.

6. The above are our preliminary views without the benefit of considered legal advice. We hope to let you have our considered views on October 2 or 3. Meanwhile please telegraph immediately if you require further guidance.

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Minutes

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MIDDLE EAST IMPRESSIONS—1

Egypt Grows Mellow with Success

From Our Special Correspondent

25 AUG 1961

VC 1016/24

A journalist who comes back from the Middle East and reports that the Arab world is calm is liable to find his words drowned by a loud explosion. But, with the reservation that anything can happen anywhere at any time, and not forgetting Kuwait and Bizerta, it is still possible to argue that in the past year or two the heart-lands of the Arab world have found an equilibrium of a sort. This is not the lasting calm that comes from problems solved so much as a film of ice over troubled waters.

There are various explanations of what has happened. First, the international spotlights have moved away from the Middle East. Iran apart, this does not now look the most likely region for a showdown between communism and rival systems. Second, in spite of local droughts the general level of prosperity has been rising. Third, there is a wider acceptance of things as they are by both rulers and ruled, which means a greater concentration on internal affairs and less verbal feuding. The Arab League is even being given another chance to work. This acceptance on the part of the ruled may be unenthusiastic or even bitter, but "vous l'avez voulu," George Dandin, vous l'avez voulu. Most Arab countries have had the revolutions they dreamed about so long. If things were changed again tomorrow, how on earth could they be certain that the change would be for the better?

ARAB PACE-MAKER

Egypt remains the natural starting-point for examining the Arab world. It is still the pace-maker for policies and their application. President Nasser is still much the most considerable figure in the Arab world. In fact, having been in office for nearly 10 years, he is something of an elder statesman, and as he is only 43, and to all appearances firmly in the saddle, there is no reason why he should not inherit Nestor's mantle from Mr. Nehru.

This combination of a relatively old regime and a relatively young ruler makes Egypt less in a hurry than it used to be. There is no longer the impression that Arab unity is something that has to be rushed. President Nasser talks of it rather as Mr. Khrushchev talks of communism—something that is bound to happen, so why risk trouble by using force. "We don't put great emphasis on the political side," President Nasser told me when I talked with him. "We have no plans, no ideas." Of course, this does not necessarily mean that President Nasser, any more than Mr. Khrushchev, lacks the men and machinery to jog along the inevitable process when the chance for a jog arises.

Nowadays the talk is that the United Arab Republic will unite the Arabs by force of example. Current doctrine, as it was often expounded to me in Cairo, is this: the national struggle is a continuing process; in Egypt its first manifestation was trying to keep the foreigner out (Arabi Pasha), and then, when the foreigner was in, trying to get him out. Simultaneously, however, it meant social development, and that is the main form the national struggle takes today. "Independence," as President Nasser said to me, "is not an end in itself but a means to create a welfare state." The United Arab Republic will be industrialized (income from industry is already bigger than income from agriculture), and educated. Education will mean smaller families, and this, combined with the High Dam, will solve the population problem. In all this the United Arab Republic will act as a model for the rest of the Arab world.

POLITICAL FREE PORT

When I asked a prominent Lebanese what he thought of this thesis he exploded: "What have they got to teach us? Let Nasser concentrate on his own people; nine-tenths of them live like animals!" It is easy to scorn the idea of Egypt, with one of the lowest standards of living in the world and one of the highest birthrates, producing a welfare state quickly enough for other countries to copy. Yet it is not entirely fanciful. Egyptian society is based on civilization, not on the desert or the jungle. There are many competent officials. There is also a basic discipline which springs from the knowledge that without irrigation Egypt dies, and there can be no irrigation without cooperation. Whether this instinct for discipline will survive in the factories as well as in the fields is another matter.

However, even if other Arab governments are sceptical about the Egyptian example, they are not meant to be the only audience. It has often been said

that President Nasser switched his attention to Africa after he had been rebuffed in Iraq, Lebanon and most of the rest of the Arab countries. This is an oversimplification. Nobody can ignore Africa, least of all Egypt which is a part of it. The United Arab Republic can claim leadership there almost as a right. Who is in a better position to teach newly independent states what they want to know—or ought to want to know—from how to be neutral to how to run a clinic? It may not work out like that. Africa is too complex and wayward to be guided easily, and there are too many rival guides in the field. Nevertheless, Cairo today is the most important town in Africa—a sort of political Tangier, a free port for politicians and political ideas (so long as they keep within strictly anti-colonialist lines, of course).

DOTTED WITH AFRICANS

One of the noticeable changes in Cairo is the groups of Africans dotted about in villas and hotels, some Ministers, some exiles, some shrewd, some ridiculous. They may be potentially useful or men of straw, but President Nasser would no more turn them away than Britain turned away the exiled governments in London during the war. In the street there is a good deal of muttering about the expense this leadership of Africa involves. Egyptians will tell you of the millions said to have been sent to certain African leaders—"our money; we could use it here instead of pouring it down that drain".

On the whole, though, these African delegations contribute to the feeling of self-confidence—self-importance, perhaps—that is one of the most marked qualities of contemporary Egypt. In the old days success in Egypt came most readily to the foreigner, or at least to those with a foreign background and education. Now these attributes are at a discount. The Egyptian most likely to succeed today is a middle-class Muslim, preferably an Army officer. Copts, Greeks, Turks, landowners, and businessmen are suspect. Almost all businesses have been nationalized, to a point at which, on President Nasser's own admission, there is nothing left to take over. Landlords have just had their maximum holding sliced again, bringing it down to 100 acres. Such actions may not make industry, commerce, or agriculture more efficient. No matter; they are part of the new order. This is an Egyptian revolutionary Government setting up a new order of things in Egypt for Egyptians.

COMMUNIST SCARE DEAD

And where is it all going to end? The argument about whether Egypt is "going communist" is virtually dead—President Nasser regards it as part of western obtuseness that it ever started. "There's no closed road beginning with capitalism and ending in communism," he said to me. This was apropos of Guinea, and he was insisting that President Sekou Touré was no more communist than he was. "You are making the same mistake about him that you made about us," he said. "We are forming a new society which is not capitalist or communist."

What is it then? At this point comes in the magic formula—socialist, cooperative, democratic—the definition of aims which is vague enough to apply to almost anything. Does it mean a welfare state stretching from Morocco to Muscat? If so, what are the stages to this new dawn? These are questions which do not expect precise answers. Egypt's rulers have lived politically much of the time from hand to mouth. The real revolution began in 1956, not in 1952. That was the watershed, the year which saw the most successful bit of off-the-cuff politics that any small country has played for many a long day. Little wonder if a regime which came out of that experience triumphant feels confident that it can manipulate events to suit its long-term ambitions.

No doubt the regime's shortcomings are plain. There is still corruption. Thought is controlled and dissent stifled. It is a phillistine regime. It arose out of an Army conspiracy, and at the top it is still secretive and exclusive. A clash of wills inside the junta is one thing which could conceivably upset President Nasser. The other is the defection of Syria. Neither seems at all likely. The United Arab Republic works, which is something that cannot be said of all its rivals.

Three divided little countries, Jordan, Lebanon, and Cyprus, are the theme of tomorrow's article.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

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