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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

UG 1016/61

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL

DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Arthur

No. 938

D: 6.16 p.m. September 28, 1961

September 28, 1961

R: 6.33 p.m. September 28, 1961

IMMEDIATE

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Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 938 of September 28.

Repeated for information to: Beirut Amman  
Baghdad PONEC (Cyprus)

And Saving to: Damascus

My telegram No. 937: Syrian Coup.

Nasser has just broadcast a second speech. He denied that Amer and Faisal had treated with the rebels and maintained that the Army had remained loyal in Aleppo, Latakia and other places. He insisted that there could be no bargaining or compromise over the union: the nation had fought in 1956 and would fight now.

Foreign Office please pass Baghdad and PONEC (Cyprus) as my telegrams Nos. 74 and 97 respectively.

[Repeated as requested.]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal  
Sir F. Hoyer Millar  
Sir R. Stevens  
Mr. Crawford  
Head of Eastern Department  
Head of N.E.A.D.  
Head of News Department  
Resident Clerk

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

Cypher/OTP

DEPARTMENTAL DISTRIBUTION

V

No. 1415

September 29, 1961

D: 6.35 p.m. September 29, 1961

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Cairo telegram No. 1415 of September 29, 1961

Repeated for information to: Beirut

Damascus

Your telegram No. 938 [of September 28: Syria].

Communications with Damascus are still non-existent and will probably continue to be difficult.

2. Nasser may himself clarify the following points in the very near future. But meanwhile please telegraph your views of the prospects as seen from Cairo, with particular reference to the following questions:

- (i) how far could Nasser revert to the status quo ante without losing his grip in Egypt (early statements by the revolutionary junta spoke of freeing the peoples of Syria and Egypt)?
- (ii) what are the chances of Nasser imposing his will by force?
- (iii) what chance has he of negotiating some agreement with the Syrians?

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
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No. 6959

September 28, 1961

D. 3.34 p.m. September 28, 1961

EMERGENCYCONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Washington telegram No. 6959 of September 28.

Repeated for information to Amman [Emergency]  
Tel Aviv

Ankara	Tehran	PCMEC (Aden)	
Beirut	Bahrain	Cairo	[All
Baghdad	Kuwait	U.K.Mis. New York	Immediate]

SYRIA.

Please concert urgently with the State Department. You should say that

- (a) we have little information so far about the origins of the movement but it seems indigenous. We have no indications of prior involvement by neighbouring or other countries. We would welcome any information the Americans can give us.
- (b) We suggest that the American and British Ambassadors at Amman and Tel Aviv should exchange views with the Jordanian and Israeli Governments and urge restraint and non-involvement.
- (c) Please also inform the Americans of the action proposed in my telegram No. 2003 to Ankara.

2. Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Amman and Tel Aviv have discretion to act immediately on the lines of paragraph 1(b) above without waiting your reply to this telegram, if they consider this essential in the light of the local situation. They, and the other recipients of this telegram, should in any case report immediately any information which they secure about the background of the movement in Syria. We hope to telegraph separately the gist of the information so far available chiefly from news agencies in case posts can supplement it.

/ 3.

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SECRETFROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker Major

V6r 1016/64

No. 786

September 28, 1961

D.3.18 a.m. September 29, 1961

R.3.50 a.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATESECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 786 of September 28.

Repeated for information to:	Washington	Tel Aviv
	Bahrain	Ankara
	Cairo	Baghdad
	P.O.M.E.C. (Aden)	UKMIS New York
and Saving to:	Damascus	Kuwait
		Jerusalem.

My telegram No. 784.

V6r 1016/63

The United States Ambassador and I had decided that no purpose would be served by my seeing the King tonight to urge restraint unless we had further information that Jordanians were contemplating action.

2. The King however summoned us to say that his information was that Aleppo had gone over to the rebels and that they were now in control of the whole country. Sarraj had, he understood, left for Switzerland, and he did not think that there was any serious prospect of Egyptian counter-action. In these circumstances he expected that a new government would be announced tonight, and he urged that they should be given encouragement and support.

3. We said that it was fortunate that this had not been brought about by outside interference, and that there had not even been any suggestion of this. We thought that precipitate public support and recognition would tend to counteract this impression. The King agreed and said that the Syrians appeared to have behaved with great restraint and self-confidence. He was still in the dark about the composition of the movement, but said that he understood that it consisted of Nationalist parties and was anti-Communist.

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/s. I have



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Amman telegram No. 786 to Foreign Office.

-2-

4. I have little doubt that the King will in fact recognise any new régime quickly. It may indeed be difficult for him not to do so, since any aircraft coming to Jordan need to overfly Syria, and the land approach through Syria is still very important.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington 86, Ankara 8, Baghdad 103, Tehran 27, Bahrain 49, P.O.M.E.C. (Aden) 22, Tel Aviv 68, UNIS New York 37, Kuwait 58 and Saving to Damascus 19 and Jerusalem 41.

[Repested as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal

Sir F. Hoyer Millar

Sir R. Stevens

Mr. Crawford

Head of Eastern Department

Head of N.E.A.D.

Head of News Department

Resident Clerk

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SECRETFROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker-Major

No. 789

D. 2.21 a.m. September 29, 1961

September 29, 1961

R. 2.30 a.m. September 29, 1961

EMERGENCYSECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 789 ofSeptember 29.

Repeated for information to:-	Ankara	Baghdad
	Bahrain	Washington
Beirut	Kuwait	Tehran
Cairo	P.O.M.E.C. (Aden)	Tel Aviv
U.K. Mission New York		
And Saving to:-	Damascus	
	Jerusalem	

My telegram No. 786 of September 28.

Having promised to exchange any further information with His Majesty I sent the First Secretary to see his Private Secretary tonight to discuss list contained in your telegram No. 1034.

2. The King was present, and told the First Secretary that he was at that moment trying to telephone the Revolutionary Command in Damascus. He proposed to tell them that he was ready to recognise their Government. He commented that he thought it of paramount importance that the revolt should not now falter, since this would create chaos in the area with everyone intervening.

3. He then withdrew only to return some minutes later to say that he had spoken to the Revolutionary Command. They assured him that their one desire was to maintain good relations with all other Arab States, and said that they were grateful that he should have been the first to contact them. They added that concern was being caused in the frontier area by Jordanian troop concentrations and that he could best help by withdrawing them. He undertook to do so, and assured the First Secretary that he had already issued orders to that effect.

4. The First Secretary took the opportunity to tell the King

/that,

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Amman telegram No. 789 to Foreign Office

-2-

that, though we appreciated reasons for His Majesty's elation at the turn of events, he must realize that any speedy action in respect of recognition and encouragement for a new government would be difficult for us. His Majesty took the point.

Foreign Office please pass Priority to Ankara, Baghdad, Bahrain, Washington, Kuwait, U.K. Mission New York, P.O.M.E.C. (Aden), Tehran and Tel Aviv and Saving to Damascus as my telegrams Nos. 9, 104, 50, 89, 59, 38, 23, 28, 70 and 20 respectively.

[Repeated as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal  
Sir F. Hoyer Millar  
Sir R. Stevens  
Mr. Crawford  
Head of Eastern Department  
Head of N.E.A.D.  
Head of News Department  
Resident Clerk

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29 SEP 1961

FROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

VG1016/70

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
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Mr. Edden  
No. 837  
September 29, 1961

D: 10.30 a.m. September 29, 1961  
R: 10.52 a.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATE

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 837 of September 29.  
Repeated for information to: Cairo Baghdad  
Amman Tel Aviv Tehran Ankara  
Washington U.K. Mission New York Paris  
and Saving to:  
Damascus.

Damascus Radio has announced that Dr. Ma'mun Kuzbari has formed an eleven-man cabinet as follows:-

Dr. Ma'mun Kuzbari, Prime Minister Foreign Affairs and Defence.

Dr. Leon Zamaria, Finance and Supply.

Dr. Farman Al-Jardati, Health.

Dr. Adnan Quwatli, Interior.

Dr. Izzet An-Nuss, Education and National Guidance.

Dr. Awad Barakat, Economy and Industry.

Amin Nazifi, Agriculture and Agricultural Reform.

Ahmad Sultan, AWQAF and Justice.

Abdurrahman Hurriya, Public Works and Transport.

Dr. Naaman Azhari, Planning and Rural Affairs.

M. Fuad Adil, Welfare and Labour.

2. The Cabinet has been given powers to issue decrees during the transitional period prior to the holding of general elections.

Foreign Office please pass Washington and U.K. Mission New York as my telegrams Nos. 15 and 12 respectively.

[Repeated as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal  
Mr. Crawford

Sir F. Hoyer Millar  
Head Eastern Dept.  
Head News Dept.

Sir R. Stevens  
Head N.E.A.D.

JJJJJ



KUZBARI, MA'AMUN

Born about 1905. Moslem. Educated at the Jesuit School in Beirut where he obtained his law degree. Practised law in Damascus. In 148 he represented the Syndicate of Lawyers at the International Lawyers' Conference held in Geneva. As a leading member of the Liberation Party which was formed by General Shishakli he was elected President of the Chamber in June 1953. Under the constitution then in force, he became Acting President of the Republic following General Shishakli's flight in February 1954, but he was forced to resign within two days. Stood as an independent in the 1954 elections and was elected for Damascus. Minister of Education in Said Ghazzi's Government September 1955 to June 1956.

An intelligent and not unfriendly person.

ZAMMARIA, LEON

Born in Aleppo in 1904. Greek Orthodox. Obtained law degree from Syrian University in 1929. Became Dean of the Bar in Aleppo. Member of the Nationalist Party. Minister of Finance in Sabri Assali's Government February to August 1955. Deputy for Aleppo.

Upright and agreeable, but not seriously interested in politics.

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The New "Transitional Cabinet" for Syria.

On September 29 Damascus Radio broadcast "Premier's Decree No. 1" appointing a "transitional Cabinet". The new Cabinet has been described as a mixture of old style Syrian politicians and "technicians". For the most part the personalities involved are "unknowns": A list giving the facts available follows.

2. (a) Dr. Ma'mun Al-Kuzbari, Premier, Foreign Minister and Minister of Defence.

Born about 1905. Moslem. Educated at the Jesuit School in Beirut where he obtained his law degree. Practised law in Damascus. In 1948 he represented the Syndicate of Lawyers at the International Lawyer's Conference held in Geneva. As a leading member of the Liberation Party which was formed by General Shishakli he was elected President of the Chamber in June 1953. Under the constitution then in force, he became Acting President of the Republic following General Shishakli's flight in February 1954, but he was forced to resign within two days. Stood as an independent in the 1954 elections and was elected for Damascus. Minister of Education in Sa'id Ghazzi's Government September 1955 to June 1956.

An intelligent and not unfriendly person. (*Personalities List, 1956*)

He is in fact a Sunni Moslem and in 1959 was a professor in the Faculty of Law, Damascus University. He was then acting as chairman of the Civil Law Sub-committee unifying the UAK legal systems. An "independent" member of the last Syrian Parliament he sat for a Damascus constituency. There was a report in late 1959 that he was being considered for a Ministerial post and had been approached by the then authorities.

- (b) Dr. Leon Zamariya, Minister of Finance and Supply.

Born in Aleppo in 1904. Greek Orthodox. Obtained law degree from Syrian University in 1929. Became Dean of the Bar in Aleppo. Member of Nationalist Party. Minister of Finance in Sabri Assali's Government February to August 1955. Deputy for Aleppo.

Upright and agreeable, but not seriously interested in politics. (*Personalities List 1956*)

He was nationalist Party member for an Aleppo constituency in the last Syrian Parliament.

- (c) Dr. Farhan Al-Jandali, Minister of Public Health

Born 1910 in Homs. Moslem. Took a degree in medicine at Berlin University. Deputy for Homs in 1947 and elected member of the Constituent Assembly in 1949. Member of the Popular Party. Minister of Education and Health in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. (*Personalities List 1950*)

He sat as Populist party member for a Homs constituency in the last Syrian Parliament.

Note. Sidelined are extracts from Personality lists.

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(d) Dr. 'Adnan Al-Juwatli, Minister of Interior

In 1959 he was Secretary General of the Arab Lawyers Union in Syria and was a member of the Terminology Sub-committee for the unification of the G.A.K. legal systems.

(e) Dr. Izzat Al-Nuss, Minister of Education and National Guidance.

A man of this name was a professor in the Faculty of Education Damascus University in 1958.

(f) Dr. Awad Barakat

In early 1959 a man of this name was listed as a banker with the Société des Banques Réunies. Late in 1959 he was described as Assistant to the Director General of the Central Bank of Syria when there was a report that he had been approached by the then authorities as a possible minister. He is a Christian.

(g) Dr. Amin Nazif, Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform

A man of this name was listed in 1959 as manager of the Comptoir Agricole du Levant (Syrie).

(h) Fu'ad Al-Adil, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour.

In 1959 a man of this name was listed as Chief of the Foreign Relations Department of the Syrian Executive Ministry of Social Affairs.

(i) Advocate Ahmad Sultan, Minister of Justice and Waqfs

(j) Eng. Abd Ar-Rahman Huriyah, Minister of Public Works and Communications

(k) Dr. Nu'man Ashari, Minister of Planning and Municipal and Village Affairs

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Nypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker Major VS 1016/73

No. 782  
September 28, 1961

D.10.23 a.m. September 29, 1961  
R.11.00 a.m. September 29, 1961

PRIORITY  
SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 782 of September 28.

Repeated for information to: Cairo Tel Aviv  
Beirut Baghdad  
P.O.N.E.C. (Cyprus)  
Jerusalem Damascus  
and Saving to: Washington.

Syria.

Events in Damascus seem to have taken Jordanians completely by surprise. I mentioned recent developments in Syria when I saw the King on September 24, but found him strangely ill-informed and apparently not very interested. He said that he could only sit and watch events. My United States colleague, who saw him later, found him more concerned, but not really excited.

2. I have been told by the Army that Jordanians are moving troops to frontiers purely as defensive and precautionary measure. Two fighters are on patrol every two hours well within the Jordanian frontiers and the Air Force is in constant readiness from dawn to dusk. Army Chiefs had a meeting this morning attended by King Hussein. The Army are naturally elated but seem quite calm.

3. I think that if coup is completely successful or a complete failure the Jordanians will stay out. If it is indecisive and there is fighting they will be sorely tempted to intervene, and if they are invited in, might find temptation almost irresistible, though their unpreparedness might make it difficult for them to do so in time.

4. I am

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Amman telegram No. 782 to Foreign Office.

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4. I am in close touch with the United States Ambassador, who is asking to see the King later today. We shall decide in light of his interview whether I should also seek an audience.

Foreign Office please pass to Tel Aviv 67, Baghdad 101, P.O.N.E.C. (Cyprus) 87, Jerusalem 76, Damascus 15 and Saving to Washington 42.

[Repeated as requested]

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker Major 30 SEP 1961

No. 801

September 29, 1961

VG 1016/78

D.8.31 p.m. September 29, 1961

R.8.50 p.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 801 of September 29.

Repeated for information to: Washington Tel Aviv  
Cairo Beirut  
Baghdad POMECC (Aden)  
POMECC (Cyprus)

from 27/10/59

Your telegram No. 2584 to Washington of September 28  
(not to all): Syria.

My United States colleague has received instructions to see King Hussein and "in the strongest terms" warn him against intervening in Syria. He is to refer to the support which Jordan received from the United States and make it clear that this policy would have to be reconsidered if King Hussein acted against this advice.

2. My United States colleague believes that if he acts on these instructions the result will be counter-productive, and will spoil the possibility of exerting effective influence on the King in the future. He has telegraphed suggesting that he should instead without using threats, put to the King the dangers which might arise from intervention, the advantages for the Middle East and the peace of the world of letting this remain an internal affair, and then counsel restraint. At the same time, he would ask the King to take no irrevocable steps without consulting his friends.

3. I have told him that I will support him in any restraining action he takes. As he feels considerable sympathy for the King's attitude, these instructions are personally unpalatable for him. Nevertheless, I agree entirely with his assessment

/of their

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Amman telegram No. 801 to Foreign Office.

-2-

of their probable effect, and believe that his alternative suggestion (which closely resembles the United States/United Kingdom/United Nations line taken here a year ago) would be better if indeed any further action is now necessary. His instructions seem to be partly based on the misapprehension that there was Jordanian complicity before the event, and that a Jordanian move into Syria is imminent. In fact, unless Nasser makes a serious military effort to recover Syria, it seems most unlikely that they will move without invitation.

4. If Nasser did make such a move, and they were invited, then I doubt if any counsels of restraint, however strongly pitched, would be effective. (See my report of Samir Rifai's views in my immediately following telegram). With such absolute conviction on the part of Jordan's wisest elder statesman, I doubt if any contrary advice from us would make the Jordanians change their minds. I agree with my colleague's recommendation that if we attempted, it should be by Prime Ministerial and Presidential personal messages.

Foreign Office please pass Immediate to Washington 91, and Routine to Tel Aviv 72, Baghdad 106, POMEC (Aden) 25 and POMEC (Cyprus) 91.

[Repeated as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal

Sir H. Stephenson

Mr. Marrett

Head of Eastern Department

Head of N.E.A.D.

Head of News Department

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker Major

No. 802

D. 10.14 a.m. September 30, 1961

September 29, 1961

R. 10.58 a.m. September 30, 1961

PRIORITYCONFIDENTIALAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 802 of September 29.

Repeated for information to:

Washington	Beirut	
Tel Aviv	Baghdad	
Cairo	POMEC (Aden)	PONEC (Cyprus)

My immediately preceding telegram. — 29/10/61

As Samir Rifa'i was present at the meeting of elder statesmen held by the King to decide on the recognition of Syria, I called on him this morning to ask him for his views. When I suggested that recognition had been dangerously precipitate, Samir said that he had no doubt that it was the right course. He had not, in fact, been consulted since the King had clearly already made up his mind, but all the evidence seemed to indicate that the new Government was in full control of the country. He knew several of its members and regarded them as efficient, modern, and progressive and he thought it an excellent sign of stability and confidence that the military had handed over at once to civilians. He was quite confident that, unless he was mad, Nasser would not try to counter-attack.

2. His only criticism of the King was that yesterday's troop movements were theatrical and unnecessary, and he was glad that the first act of the new Syrian Government had been to ask him to take them away from the frontier. I asked him what he expected to happen if Nasser did counter-attack, and the Jordanians were asked for help. He said that neither he, nor, he thought, any responsible Jordanian politician, would think it right not to respond at once to such a request. He did not seem to see any danger in this since he felt that Nasser would have no / chance whatever

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Amman telegram No. 802 to Foreign Office

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chance whatever of success. He said he had, in fact, ceased to worry about the Syrian situation and thought that the rigging of the elections (see my telegram 794) was a much more serious matter.

Foreign Office please pass Washington 92, Tel Aviv 73, Baghdad 107, POMEK (Aden) 26 and PONEC (Cyprus) 92.

[Repeated as requested]

SECRETFROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker-Major

No. 806  
September 30, 1961D. 4.42 p.m. September 30, 1961  
R. 5.15 p.m. September 30, 1961IMMEDIATE  
SECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 806 of September 30.

Repeated for information to Kuwait	Beirut
Bahrain	Baghdad
Washington	POMECC (Cyprus)
Tel Aviv	POMECC (Aden)
Cairo	

My telegram No. 303 (not to all).

I had a long talk with the Prime Minister this morning. I said that I had been somewhat worried about the risks involved in immediate recognition of new Syrian Government. The Prime Minister said that he had been aware of a concern about these risks. He had, however, before agreeing to recognition been himself in touch with the new Syrian Government and had satisfied himself that they were in control and were reputable, moderate and representative. He knew many of them personally, and could assure me that they would have no inclination to turn to the Russians. Most of them were moderately right wing, and apart from the experienced politicians, the remainder were experts and technicians in various fields. He spoke particularly warmly of the Prime Minister and the new Minister of Finance, who are well known to him personally. He also knew some of the officers concerned, who were entirely non-partisan.

2. He had expected that the Egyptians would at least break off diplomatic relations with Jordan and was glad that they had not yet done so.

3. He added that he had been disturbed by reports of BBC broadcasts and of the attitude of the British Press on the situation.

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Amman telegram No. 806 to Foreign Office.

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These seemed to him to disparage the new regime unnecessarily and to show undue distress at the turn of events. He showed me a report in the Press to the effect that the BBC had indicated that the new Government might well turn to the Soviet Union. He said that he always admired our normal restraint and lack of emotion in such matters. He also fully recognised that any official comment had to be cautious and that we would have to move slowly and carefully over such matters as recognition. Indeed, he welcomed this because it provided no excuse for accusations of our complicity, but he thought that we should at least adopt a neutral and factual attitude. He was worried lest the Syrians should feel that they had to answer some of the BBC statements and that one of their first acts might, therefore, be to appear to quarrel with us. This might turn them in the wrong direction.

4. He added that he had also heard comment to the effect that Her Majesty's Government were worried about the effect of recent events on the force in Kuwait. He could not understand why we should be so worried. There were few Egyptian troops there and the position of the other contingents would be unchanged. Such statements merely caused uneasiness and might well have some disadvantageous effect on the force.

5. We ourselves have no means of [? gp. omitted] whether the Prime Minister's statements are justified, but we did hear yesterday a BBC commentary in English by Erskine Childers which seemed to us to err in the direction he suggested. A commentary on the General Overseas Service at 1109 hours today coupled fulsome praise of Nasser with a statement that "the Jordanian Government's precipitate decision to recognise the Syrian rebels might well lead to internal disorders in view of popular support for Nasser here." I, of course, told the Prime Minister that we had no control over the sentiments expressed by the BBC or Press.

6. I also took the opportunity of saying to the Prime Minister that I hoped that the Jordanians would not use this opportunity to re-start the propaganda war with Cairo. Nasser's speech yesterday had indicated that he was prepared to accept the situation, and an attempt to answer the fairly mild attack on Jordan would only tend  
/to rub

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Amman telegram No. 806 to Foreign Office.

-3-

to rub salt into his wounds and perhaps provoke him. The Prime Minister said that he entirely agreed and proposed to call the director of the broadcasting station in order to instruct him to moderate his comment which has shown some signs of becoming provocative. He agreed with me that Jordan could afford, in these circumstances, to adopt a reasonably generous attitude.

Foreign Office pass to Kuwait No. 61, Bahrain No. 53, Washington No. 94, Tel Aviv No. 76, Baghdad No. 109, POLEC (Aden) No. 28 and POLEC (Cyprus) No. 94.

[Repeated as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal  
Sir H. Stephenson  
Mr. Marrett  
Head of Eastern Department  
Head of N.E.A.D.  
Head of News Department  
Resident Clerk

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Ref: FO 371/158988

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FROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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V5 1016/82

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker Major

No. 808  
September 30, 1961

B. 10.15 p.m. September 30, 1961  
R. 10.52 p.m. September 30, 1961

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 808 of September 30.

Repeated for information to Baghdad PONEC (Cyprus)  
Beirut Tel Aviv  
Cairo PONEC (Aden) Washington  
My telegram No. 806 of September 30: Syria.

When I called on the King this morning, His Majesty said that he wished to plead most earnestly that Her Majesty's Government should recognize the new Syrian Government as soon as possible. Recognition of the status quo was the best means of ensuring stability, and of making Nasser hesitate to restore his position by force. He was sure that the Government was in full control and was well disposed towards the West. They would, however, face considerable difficulties and would require help and encouragement. Whichever of the major Powers recognized them first would stand to reap a considerable advantage, and there was always the possibility if Her Majesty's Government and the United States Government appeared to cold-shoulder them, they might turn elsewhere. He expected Iraq to recognize soon; the Government had been in touch with him, but though pleased had been uncertain of exact situation in Syria. He had reassured them. He regarded recognition by Turkey as most satisfactory and important.

2. His Majesty went on to refer briefly to his disappointment about the BBC broadcasts, but said that he knew that the Prime Minister had spoken to me about this.

3. I told the King that I did not think that he could expect us, or that it would be wise for us, to act with more than normal speed over recognition, but that I would report his views to you. I added that, in view of the mildness of Nasser's speech, it seemed to me unwise to provoke him unnecessarily by jubilant or offensive radio comment. His Majesty said that he did not think that there was much further action Nasser could take. I pointed out that Nasser had been grievously hurt and might easily be provoked to lash out in some other direction.

/ His Majesty

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIALAmman telegram No. 808 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

His Majesty agreed that Nasser's speech had been unexpectedly moderate, and appeared to take the point. Since the director of the broadcasting station was waiting to see him, I am hopeful that suitable instructions may be given.

4. I did not, in speaking to the King, revert to the question of Jordan's recognition being dangerously premature. His Majesty had previously told the Air Adviser that he thought Nasser had no legitimate grounds for complaint since he had acted no more quickly than Nasser had done himself on the break-up of the Arab Union.

5. I asked the King whether he proposed now to withdraw his troops from their present forward positions. He said that he did not intend to do so at the moment; he thought it a wise precautionary measure still to keep them near the Syrian frontier.

6. The King subsequently summoned my United States colleague and spoke to him about the importance of recognition in much the same terms. His chief interest was to stabilise the situation but it must be realised that if the Syrian Government were now attacked by Nasser, Jordan would be with them. Macomber took this opportunity to speak in accordance with earlier instructions urging restraint, emphasizing the very grave consequences that any armed conflict might have, and the serious view his Government would take of this. He fully understood His Majesty's feelings, but he hoped he would inform him in advance of any action he proposed to take. The King undertook to keep in close touch with him.

7. The King has since spoken to all other Ambassadors; apart from the Turks and Iranians, who have recognized, only the Nationalist Chinese appeared to expect immediate recognition.

8. The King also spoke to Macomber about his unhappiness with American public comment. Since the King is clearly disappointed with our lukewarmness towards events which cause him undiluted satisfaction, it would be useful if you could keep me informed and authorize me to tell him of any steps you take towards recognition.

Foreign Office please pass Bagdad 110, PONEC (Cyprus) 95, POMEBC (Aden) 29, Tel Aviv 77 and Washington 95.  
[Repeated as requested]

ADVANCE COPIES TO:

Private Secretary  
Sir H. Stephenson  
Mr. Maresfield  
Head of Eastern Department      Head of N.E.A.D.  
Head of News Department      Resident Clerk

CCC

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FROM ANKARA TO FOREIGN OFFICE

pher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir B. Burrows

*Handwritten:* CASE  
*Handwritten:* V. 10/83

No.1357  
September 29, 1961

D: 1.56 p.m. September 29, 1961  
R: 2.08 p.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No.1357 of September 29

Repeated for information to :

Washington	Amman
Tel Aviv	Baghdad
Cairo	PONEC (Cyprus)

*Handwritten:* ✓ 10/10/66

My telegram No.1355: Syria.

I have now spoken to Deputy Secretary-General. The Turkish Government still have very little information about events in Syria other than broadcasts and agency reports. They have not been able to establish communication with their Consul-General in Damascus. They spoke to their Consul-General in Aleppo this morning who confirmed that the authorities there had now joined the revolutionary movement and said that there had been some shooting during the night.

2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday issued the statement in my immediately following telegram. I asked M. Hayta whether any significance should be attached to the use of the word "Syria" rather than "United Arab Republic" and to the use of the two words "nations" and "countries" in the second paragraph. He said that "Syria" should, for the moment at any rate, be understood in a purely geographical sense and that the other phrase was a common formula and had no special significance.

3. In spite of this explanation I am inclined to suspect that an equivocal nuance was intended.

4. I told Hayta that we would very likely urge restraint in Amman and Tel Aviv and asked him whether the Turkish Government thought it might be useful for them to do the same in Baghdad. He said that the Turkish Government had not yet given any thought to action in neighbouring countries, largely because they had no information about reactions there. As soon as they had some indication of

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/reactions

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Ankara telegram No.1357 to Foreign Office

-2-

reactions in Iraq, which they were expecting to learn at any moment, he would get a decision on our suggestion and hoped to let me know the answer later today. He agreed strongly with the view I expressed that it was most important that the whole matter should continue to be regarded as a purely internal one.

5. On scanty indications so far available I think it unlikely that the Turkish Government had any hand in the revolution, but it is likely that they will welcome re-establishment of an independent Syria unless there are clear indications of Communist influence over it.

Foreign Office please pass Routine to Washington, Amman, Tel Aviv, Baghdad and Cairo and PONEC (Cyprus) as my telegrams Nos. 69,4,3,22,7 and 46.

[Repeated as requested].

ADVANCE COPIES:

Lord Privy Seal

Sir F. Hoyer Millar

Sir R. Stevens

Head of Eastern Department

Head of N.E.A.D.

Head of Central Department

Head of News Department

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CONFIDENTIALFROM BEIRUT TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

VG1116/87  
FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
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Mr. Edden

No. 836

September 29, 1961

D. 10.50 a.m. September 29, 1961

R. 12.54 p.m. September 29, 1961

PRIORITYCONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 836 of  
September 29.

Repeated for information to:

Cairo	Tehran
Amman	Bahrain
Tel Aviv	POMEC (Aden)
Ankara	UKMIS New York
Baghdad	Kuwait

*- VG1016/82*

Your telegram No. 6959 to Washington: Syria.

Press reports from Damascus immediately preceding the coup spoke of tension and attempts by adherents of the Ba'ath and Communist parties to stir up campaign against the Union. Leaflets of unknown origin demanding return to Syrian autonomy were said to be circulating in Damascus on September 27. There was reckoned to be no question, however, of the Syrians supporting Sarraj.

2. Impression here is that final side-tracking of Sarraj may have triggered off the Army move (presumably based on earlier planning) against Egyptian domination simply because it was Sarraj, and he alone who had a grip on the Syrians. Dropping of Sarraj at the precise moment that centralisation process reached its peak, in the hope that Amer could replace him, was on this basis a serious miscalculation on Nasser's part. At the same time noticeable lack of programme or personalities in yesterday's proceedings, and appearance that revolutionaries were feeling their way seem consistent with earlier estimates that Syria, though discontented with the Union, lacked leadership round which this could easily focus.

3. There have been no suggestions here on any outside involvement.

/4.

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Beirut telegram No. 836 to Foreign Office

- 2 -

4. A manifesto signed by "Revolutionary Regional Command of the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party" (a dissident Ba'athist faction) circulating in Beirut yesterday expressed disapproval of the insurrectionary movement in Damascus and proclaimed Ba'ath support for President Nasser. There has been no reaction yet by the Ba'ath "National Headquarters" in Beirut.

5. We have not yet met anyone who was in Damascus yesterday but L'Orient this morning claims to have eye-witness reports that between 9.30 and noon there were orderly demonstrations in the Damascus streets and cries of "Down with Nasser, down with the tyrant"; there was a fairly general substitution of the Syrian for the U.A.R. flag and photographs of President Nasser were taken down; and people in the streets congratulated and embraced one another.

Foreign Office please pass Tel Aviv No. 23, Ankara No. 69, Baghdad No. 156, Tehran No. 54, Bahrain No. 120, POMEC (Aden) No. 11, UKMIS New York No. 11 and Kuwait No. 64.

[Repeated as requested, also repeated to Washington on departmental instructions.]

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Foreign Office telegram No. 6959 to Washington

- 2 -

3. The line which News Department are taking will be telegraphed separately. We have deliberately not stated publicly our belief that the inspirations of the revolt seems to be internal to Syria, for fear that Nasser might misinterpret this as an indication of a guilty conscience. You could however draw attention to the fact that Nasser does not seem to have suggested that revolt has external encouragement.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO AMMAN

By Air/OTP & By Bag

FOREIGN OFFICE AND  
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

No. 1034

September 28, 1961

D: 5.46 p.m. September 28, 1961

IMMEDIATE  
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Amman telegram No. 1034 of September 28

And to :	Ankara [Immediate]	No. 2004
	Baghdad [Immediate]	No. 1758
	Beirut [Immediate]	No. 1114
Repeated for information to :	Cairo [Priority]	
	Tel Aviv [Priority]	
And Saving to :	Washington	No. 4794
	UKMis New York	No. 2289

My telegram No. 6959 to Washington [of September 28:  
Syrian officers.]

According to Mena correspondent in Damascus, the leaders of the revolution are said to be Brigadier Abdul Ghani (?Duhman), Commander at Qatana, and Colonel Haydar Kuzbari, Commander of the Camel Corps. Telegrams of support for them are claimed by Damascus Radio to have been sent by Brigadier Rifat Khairi, Commander of the Southern Area, Colonel Asad Tabbakh, Commander at Al Qabul, Brigadier Farhan Rafani, Commander at (?) Al Nakb, and Lieutenant-Colonel Ahmed Safi Wani Commander at Qutayfah.

2. Please report any information about these officers or any indication of their being in touch with the Government to which you are accredited.

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CONFIDENTIALFROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO ANKARA

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL  
DISTRIBUTIONNo. 2003  
September 28, 1961

D. 3.20 p.m. September 28, 1961

EMERGENCY  
CONFIDENTIALAddressed to Ankara telegram No. 2003 of September 28.

Repeated for information to Amman [Emergency]

Tel Aviv "

Beirut [Immediate]	Cairo [Immediate]
Baghdad "	New York "
Tehran "	Washington "
Bahrain "	Kuwait "
POMEC (Aden) "	

My telegram No. 6959 to Washington [of September 28: Syria].

Please concert urgently with the Turkish Government and ask them

- (a) for their views about the revolutionary movement;
- (b) whether they would think it advisable for the Turkish Government to exchange views with the Iraqis and, if necessary, urge restraint on them in parallel with the action we are proposing to take in Amman and Tel Aviv.

2. Subject to the views of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Baghdad, it seems to us that there is little restraining action which we or the Americans can take in Baghdad. We would however welcome an estimate of the Iraqi attitude and Her Majesty's Ambassador has discretion to exchange views with the Iraqis.

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SECRETFROM AMMAN TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE (SECRET) AND  
WHITEHALL (SECRET) DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Henniker-Majer  
No. 784  
September 28, 1961

D: 1.15 a.m. September 29, 1961  
R: 1.28 a.m. September 29, 1961

IMMEDIATE  
SECRETAddressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 784 of September 28.

Repeated for information to: Washington      Cairo  
Beirut      PONEC (Cyprus)  
Damascus      Baghdad  
and Saving to: Jerusalem

My telegram No. 782, paragraph 4 and your telegram No. 6959  
to Washington.

United States Ambassador saw the King this afternoon, when the King was under the impression that movement had failed. He told His Majesty that he and I had discussed the situation and that he was speaking on behalf of both of us, since we did not have any information beyond that contained in Beirut telegram No. 834 and did not wish to disturb him separately.

2. He found the King almost without any information about nature of movement and personnel involved. He thought that His Majesty, though disappointed with latest information from Damascus, was in a relaxed and sensible mood. The King said that he had cancelled precautionary move of troops towards the frontier, since this now seemed likely to serve no purpose. In response to Macomber's enquiry he said that if he did move troops it would be purely for defensive and policing purposes, and agreed that Ambassador could assure his Government to this effect.

3. After hearing later Damascus broadcast saying that rebels had assumed control, the King telephoned again to Macomber saying that he had again ordered precautionary move of his troops. He asked to be given any further information which might be received, and said that he found the situation very nerve-racking.. Macomber's general impression was that the King was not anticipating any precipitate action.

4. I am reporting separately such information about troop movements as we have been able to get. Air Adviser tells me that Air Force has been stood down tonight and that he has no indication that any further action is contemplated.

/Foreign Office

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