

19
JGT/CS.
No. 1267.
(147/90/46)

F0.371/53341
J
BRITISH EMBASSY,

CAIRO.

DEC 1946
30th November, 1946.

Sir,
J 4203/16/16

With reference to Chancery letter to the Egyptian Department No.147/60/46 of the 8th October, I have the honour to inform you that the trial by the Court of Assizes of those accused in connection with the murder of Amin Osman Pasha is due to begin on 22nd December. They will also be charged with attempts upon the life of Nahas Pasha, with complicity in criminal attempts to murder British army personnel, and with other crimes mentioned below. The information contained in paragraphs 2 to 9 below is based on a series of recent reports from Military Intelligence sources.

2. The main charges, one or more of which will be preferred against the defendants, are as follows:-

1. The assassination of Amin Osman Pasha on the 5th January, 1946.
2. The attack upon Nahas Pasha on the 6th December, 1945.
3. A plot to kill Nahas Pasha on the 27th December, 1945.
4. The attempted murder of Lance Corporal Miller on the 20th November, 1945.
5. The attempted murder of Corporal Young on the 23rd December, 1945.

3. Certain of the defendants will also be accused of

1. Attempting to kill three Egyptians who were wounded by a grenade thrown at those pursuing the suspected criminals after the assassination of Amin Osman Pasha.
2. Attempting to kill fourteen Egyptians who were injured by the grenade thrown at the car of Nahas Pasha on the 6th December, 1945.
3. Attempting to steal by force a constable's revolver with intent to escape from prison on the 26th February, 1946.
4. Plotting to murder British army personnel and certain Egyptian Leaders.

4. The enclosed list gives the names, ages and occupations of the twelve defendants who are still detained, and shows the crimes to which they have already confessed or of which they will be accused.

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

5./

5. No. 1, Hussein Tewfik, and No. 4, Omar Hussein Abou Ali will also be accused of attempting to murder Corporal Young on the 23rd December, 1945. No. 11, Ahmed Wasin Khalid, will also be accused of attempting to murder Mohamed Mandour el Shalikani on the 28th January, 1946, with the intention of stealing his car in order to use this for the murder of British military personnel.

6. Of the remaining defendants, who have at various times been released on bail, No. 13, Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, aged 19, Student, No. 14, Saad el Kamel, aged 21, Lawyer, and No. 15, Meguib Hussein Fakri, aged 21, Student, will be accused of:-

1. Complicity in the murder of Amin Osman Pasha.
2. The attempted murder of Nahas Pasha on the 6th December, 1945.
3. Attempting to kill the pursuers after the murder of Amin Osman Pasha.
4. Attempting to kill bystanders when a grenade was thrown at the car of Nahas Pasha on 6th December, 1945.
5. Plotting to murder British army personnel and certain Egyptian Leaders.

7. No. 13, Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, will also be accused of assisting No. 1, Hussein Tewfik, to set fire to an English school on 14th July, 1941, and of assisting him in the year 1942 to kill British soldiers and steal their arms.

8. The undermentioned will be charged with complicity in a criminal plot to murder British army personnel and certain Egyptian leaders:-

- No. 16. Mohamed Ali Khalifa, aged 21, Student.
- No. 17. Mohamed Fattah El Shafi, aged 23, Student.
- No. 18. Abbas Mahmoud El Morshadi, aged 21, Student.
- No. 19. Ali Aziz Diab, aged 19, Student.
- No. 20. Ahmed Khairi Abbas, aged 19, Student.
- No. 21. Ahmed Mohamed Khalil el Halawani, aged 19, Student.
- No. 22. Kamel Mohammed Ibrahim el Wahi, aged 18, Student.
- No. 23. Abdel Hadi Mohamed Masoud, aged 21, Student.

No. 20, Ahmed Khairi Abbas, will also be accused of attempting to steal a constable's revolver with intent to escape from prison on the 26th February, 1946.

9. No. 24, Maghim Abdel Aziz Abn Saada, aged 18, Student, will be accused of complicity in the plot to kill Nahas Pasha on the 27th December, 1945. No. 25, Anwar Fayed Ghirghis, aged 22, partner in a radio company, will be accused of assisting No. 1, Hussein Tewfik, to set fire to an Englishman's garage on 12th July, 1941. No. 26, Gol Aswad Naim, aged 20, clerk, will be accused of assisting No. 1, Hussein Tewfik, during the year 1942 to kill British soldiers and steal their arms.

10. Apart from the long delay in bringing these criminals to justice there is cause for concern over the attitude adopted by the Egyptian authorities towards Hassan Abdel Aziz Ezzat, who was arrested on a charge of complicity in the murder of Amin Osman Pasha, but released for lack of evidence. He was

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re-arrested on the 8th May, charged by the police with having taken part in the attack on the messenger carrying the documents of the Amin Osman Pasha trial, on the 21st April, and also with having been one of those responsible when a grenade was thrown outside the Young Men's Christian Association in Cairo on the 5th May, killing one person and injuring 23 others. After investigations the Parquet said they were prepared to release him on bail of £50 in respect of the second charge, but he was detained on the first charge until 28th July, when he was released on bail of £20. The attention of the Prime Minister was called to this unsatisfactory development at the time and His Excellency replied that while on legal grounds it was not possible to keep Hassan Ezzat detained beyond a certain time, the charges against him stood. On September 4th the Court acquitted him of the first charge but the Parquet protested and he was summoned to appear before the Court of Appeal on the 26th October, when his acquittal was nevertheless confirmed.

11. The Defence Security Officer suspects that Hassan Ezzat was not only guilty of complicity in the crimes for which he was arrested, but that he was also directly or indirectly connected with a number of other crimes perpetrated by Hussein Tewfik's murder gang. It has, however, been difficult to make further representations to the Egyptian Government over the question of his release since the Defence Security Officer fears that the sources of his information might thereby be compromised, and also that there is little doubt that the Palace has shown an interest in this particular case.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble Servant,

James Hackett

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Reference:- *P0371/S334*

DEA
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WAS/BAB

No. 250
(147/35/46)

British Embassy,
Cairo.

19th February, 1946.

Sir,

With reference to correspondence ending with my telegram No. 218 of 12th February / I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a communication made to the Press by the Parquet to the effect that the confessions of the persons accused of participation in the murder of Amin Osman Pasha have led to the discovery of a secret association having political assassination as its objective.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect
Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant,

James Rowland

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office.

F0371/53341

1. HUSSEIN TEWFIK	21	Student	Confessed	6 Dec. 45	27 Dec. 45	20 Nov. 45	5 Jan. 46	6 Dec. 45	5 Jan. 46	6 Dec. 45	6 Dec. 45	26 Feb. 46.
2. MAHMOUD YEHIA MURAD	21	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Stealing Constable's revolver with intent to escape.
3. MAHMOUD AHMED EL GHOURI	18	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Plotting to Murder British Army Personnel and certain Egyptian Leaders.
4. GEAR HUSSEIN ABOU ALI	24	Teacher	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of bystanders by throwing grenade at car of Nahas Pasha.
5. EL SAID ABDEL AZIZ KHAMIS	19	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempt to kill pursuers after murder of Amin Osman Pasha
6. MAHMOUD ALI MAHMOUD	19	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of I/Cpl. Miller
7. MOHAMED ANWAR EL SADATI	27	Ex-Officer	Accused	Accused	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Plot to murder Nahas Pasha
8. MOHAMED MAHMOUD KERIM	21	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of Nahas Pasha
9. KEDBAT HUSSEIN FAKRI	18	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Accused	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of I/Cpl. Miller
10. MUSTAFA ALI KAMEL HABEISHA	19	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of Nahas Pasha
11. AHMED WASIN KHALID	16	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of I/Cpl. Miller
12. SAID TEWFIK AHMED	16	Student	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Confessed	Attempted murder of I/Cpl. Miller

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Reference: P0371/5334..

13686

147/64/46

1st July 1946.

Your Excellency,

I am obliged to express to Your Excellency my growing concern at the manner in which the judicial proceedings against the persons charged with the murder, or implication in the murder, of the late Amin Osman Pasha, and in attacks on British soldiers, are being conducted. The methods so far employed can surely not fail to give the impression that the crimes with which they are charged are regarded in some quarters as no more than excusable pranks of highly-spirited school-boys, or even as indication of commendable patriotism.

2. The first impression of this nature given to the public was the publication a week or two ago in the Egyptian press of a photograph of the accused sitting together taking tea in a convivial atmosphere. This was followed by the astonishing news that consideration was being given to the suggestion that the accused might be allowed to sit for their examinations at the University. Now the trial has been postponed for over three and a half months. Furthermore, some of the accused have now been released on bail on grounds which, I am informed, are most obscure since there would appear to be in the case of most of them, if not all, sufficient evidence to prove their close connection with the murder gang, and one of them, Aly Diab, actually confessed to being a member. All this must surely militate against the inoculation of that healthy fear of the consequences of crime which Your Excellency agreed with me, after the outrage at the Y.M.C.A. on May 5th, to be the only sure way of deterring murderous criminals.

/3.

His Excellency
Issaïl Sidky Pasha,
President of the Council of Ministers,
Cairo.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

13th July, 1946.

RJB/EMR.
147/2/46G.

W/H

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14/7/46

J3170

Dear Bob,

J3044/60/16

Your letter of the 3rd July J 2687/66/G about the Amin Osman murder case crossed my despatch No. 803 enclosing a copy of a letter which I had sent to Sidky, calling his serious attention to the manner in which the judicial proceedings against the persons implicated in the murder are being conducted.

There is no doubt that powerful influences are at work to protect the culprits, probably inspired, as the reports to which you refer suggest, by King Farouk himself. I shall continue to press the matter and emphasise the baneful harvest which the authorities are preparing for themselves in thus encouraging political crime.

Yours ever
Romaine J. Gifford

R.G. Howe, Esq., C.M.G.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

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Copy/BA.B.

"Le Progres Egyptien" : 16th Feb., 1946.

Les meurtriers d'Amine Osman pacha avaient formé
Une Association Secrete
pour les assassinats politiques.

Le Parquet Général a publié hier soir un communiqué dans lequel il déclare que les aveux faits par les personnes accusées d'avoir assassiné Amine Osman pacha ont amené la découverte de l'existence d'une association ayant pour but l'assassinat politique.

Tous les accusés ont avoué; certains d'entre eux ont, par ailleurs, avoué avoir lancé la bombe sur Nahas pacha.

De ces aveux, le Parquet a appris qu'une association secrete avant pour but l'assassinat politique avait été formée et que cette association cachait ses armes dans le désert.

Quelques-uns des accusés ont indiqué l'endroit et le Parquet/a découvert les armes. L'enquête se poursuit.

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513

[This telegram is of particular secrecy and should be retained by the authorised recipient and not passed on.]

[EN CLAIR]

CABINET DISTRIBUTION.

FROM CAIRO AMBASSADOR TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Lord Killearn.
No. 45 SAVING
30th January, 1946.

R. 11.25. a.m. 5th February, 1946.

kk kk

Another shooting incident took place on the Pyramids Road last night.

2. A notable of Qaloubia who is brother of a deputy was held up in his car by two youths, one of them son of a former Secretary of State in the Ministry of Interior and according to Russell Pasha a cousin of Amin Osman's murderer, the other son of the Chief Editor of the Saadist Organ "Dustour".

3. The Police report that the youths first attempted to seize the car and that when the owner tried to stop them he received two bullets in the body. Russell Pasha believes that the youths wished to seize the car for purposes of subsequent assaults. They were both immediately arrested.

4. You will note that the campaign of violence continues.

FEB 5 1946

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Reference:-

P0371/53341..

DEA
13686

[CODE R]

GENERAL DISTRIBUTIONFROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Killearn, D. 8.40 a.m. January 5th, 1946.
No. 21
 January 5th, 1946. R. 9.30 a.m. January 6th, 1946.

Q Q Q

IMMEDIATE

Cairo city police report that Amin Osman was shot and wounded on the steps of the Old Victorian Club Cairo this evening. Two shots were fired of which one punctured the chest. The assailant whose identity is unknown escaped. Witnesses are being interrogated.

2. According to the Director General of Public Security the surgeon who is operating considers that Amin Osman's condition is at present satisfactory but that complications may set in.

3. The Defence Security Officer has been informed.

JAN

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Reference:-

F0371/S3341..

OEA
13686

[CODE R]

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION
FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Killcarn
No. 22

5th January, 1946.

D.8.30 a.m. 6th January, 1946.

R.9.32 a.m. 6th January, 1946.

T T T T T

IMPORTANT

My telegram No. 21.

I visited hospital at 10.30 tonight. Amin Osman was just being operated upon.

2. Later I saw the doctors. He stood the operation well but situation is very grave. He received three bullet wounds from behind. One through each lung and one through the stomach. The doctors are not worried about the first two but the third is very serious. The most they would say was that he "had a chance" but they would not say "a good chance".

3. Surgeon Admiral Wakeley and Brigadier Elliott Smith assisted at the operation which was performed by Egyptian Surgeon More.

4. Might I suggest some message of sympathy and encouragement to Madam Amin Osman? She is behaving with great fortitude.

RECEIVED
GENERAL SECRETARIAT
10 JAN 1946

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Reference: P0371/S3341..

13686

[CYPHER]

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION
FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

135
7 JAN 1946

Lord Killcarn
No. 26

D.7.58 p.m. 6th January, 1946.

6th January, 1946.

R.8.10 p.m. 6th January, 1946.

T T T T T

My telegram No. 21. J 66/66/16

I have just returned from vain endeavour to walk in the funeral cortege of Amin Osman which is still going on.

2. It was the occasion of a riotous popular demonstration and the police whom I upbraided for not taking better measures to keep the streets clear, assured me that there are at least 100,000 people out: and that stricter measures of police control would have [gp. undec.]ed a serious clash and submerging of the police by the crowd which is passionately wrought up.

3. I was alongside Nahas Pasha and the present Prime Minister and it took us three quarters of an hour from the house to pass the gate of this Embassy - a distance of about 300 yards. Not wishing further to risk becoming involved in a street brawl I with difficulty got out of the crowd with the aid of the police.

4. The crowd were raucously shouting for Nahas and the Wafd. As you know Amin Osman was Nahas's right-hand man, though never a member of Wafd or any other party. And there is no doubt that the temper of the crowd was markedly anti-Government. They were shouting "Down with the Nekrasy Government" before the cortege started.

5. I hear from the police that the murderer has been arrested: but have not yet seen their report.

O.T.P.

PRÉSIDENCE
DU
CONSEIL DES MINISTRES.

Bulkeley, le 17 Août 1946.

No. 1-1/37.

2.C.

Excellence,

La lettre de Votre Excellence No. 147/64/46 du 1er Juillet n'a pas laissé de me causer une certaine surprise. Trouvant à redire sur la manière dont sont conduites les poursuites judiciaires contre les personnes prévenues dans l'affaire du meurtre de feu Amine Osman Pacha et autres attentats, Votre Excellence croit que les méthodes employées jusqu'ici ne manqueront pas de donner l'impression que les crimes reprochés aux accusés sont considérés, dans certains milieux, comme n'étant pas plus que des tours excusables de la part de jeunes et ardents écoliers, ou même comme l'indication d'un patriotisme louable. Votre Excellence me permettra de dire qu'une telle impression, si réellement elle pouvait exister, serait tout à fait injustifiée.

La photographie montrant les accusés en train de prendre des rafraichissements justifierait encore moins une telle impression. Les accusés, ce jour-là, comparaissaient devant le juge de renvoi. Et c'est pendant une suspension d'audience qu'ils ont pu prendre en groupe des rafraichissements. Naturellement, ce fait ne saurait se produire pendant leur détention en prison.

D'autre part, il est vrai que les accusés avaient demandé à sortir de prison pour passer leurs examens. Mais cette demande a été refusée catégoriquement.

Pour ce qui est de la remise en liberté provisoire de certains accusés par le juge de renvoi, je tiens à faire remarquer que cette mesure ne signifie nullement que les preuves obtenues contre eux sont insuffisantes. C'est assurément pour des considérations spéciales laissées à l'appréciation du tribunal, comme c'est le cas dans tous procès, que le juge a pris cette décision.

J'aime à croire que les indications qui précèdent auront permis à Votre Excellence de se convaincre qu'il n'y a pas lieu d'avoir des appréhensions à ce sujet.

Je saisis cette occasion pour renouveler à Votre Excellence l'assurance de ma haute considération.

(SGD.) I. SEDKY.

Son Excellence,
Sir Ronald Ian Campbell, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique,
Rouhdi Pacha.

FD 37/53341

J 14

BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.

8th October, 1946.

J 4203
16 OCT 1946

JGT/JK.
147/80/46.

2.C.

Dear Department,

We regret the delay in replying to your letter J 3044/66/16 of 6th September, but the relevant papers were unaccountably mislaid.

Sidky Pasha's reply to the Ambassador's note of the 1st July was received on the 17th August, and a copy of this is enclosed. As it was obvious that Sidky Pasha had quite failed to appreciate our point of view, consideration was given to the question of bringing home to him our resentment at the continual failure of the Egyptian authorities to bring to justice the authors of the series of outrages against British soldiers.

It was finally proposed that a further protest should be made either orally or in writing, but the Ambassador decided that, in view of the subsequent developments in the political situation, Sidky Pasha should first be given a further chance of showing whether or not he intended in future to deal more firmly with such matters.

The trial of the seventeen still detained in connection with the murder of Amin Osman Pasha opened on the 15th September before the Juge de Renvoi in Cairo. The defending lawyers took the line that the earlier confessions of the accused had been extorted under pressure, and the accused themselves unanimously denied all the charges brought against them. The Juge de Renvoi, however, to whom the findings of the courts were submitted after the conclusion of the trial on the 3rd October, decided that all the seventeen including five in the meantime released on bail of LE.20 each, should be tried by the Court of Assizes in November; the actual date is not yet fixed.

We shall report further on the trial in due course.

Yours ever,

R. Speaight

Egyptian Department,
FOREIGN OFFICE,
S.W.1.

F0371/53341

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
MIDDLE EAST FORCES.

No. DS(E) P.1085

7th January, 1946.

Dear Tomlyn,

The following is copy of a report passed to us by Field Security Wing regarding the funeral of the late AMIN OSMAN Pasha.

" This morning, 6th January 1946, at approx. 10.00 hrs., many students from Fouad el Awal University, the Faculty of Medicine and the Azhar went on strike and went to the houses of the late AMIN OSMAN Pasha and NAHAS Pasha and shouted:

Long Live the memory of AMIN OSMAN Pasha
Long live NAHAS Pasha
Down with the criminals.

The police attempted to prevent these demonstrations from reaching the two houses. Although they managed to turn back some of the students many managed to get through the police cordon.

2. Meanwhile from early morning SERAG EL DINE arranged for the Wafd demonstration at the funeral. He called together the members of (a) the Wafd Branch Committees, (b) the Wafd Young men's Committees and (c) the Wafd Students Committees of the different faculties and schools, and instructed them to form groups with Cheer leaders, these groups were to be instructed to shout different slogans and to follow the procession from the beginning to the end.

(NB. The route of the procession was: Sh. Kasr el Aali - Sh. Wacht el Tombak - Sh. Walda - Sh. Seray el Ismailia - Midan Ismailia - Sh. Soliman Pasha - Sh. Kasr el Nil - Khekhia Mosque. The body of AMIN OSMAN Pasha was then taken by car to be buried at the tomb of IMAM EL SHAFFIE.)

The above mentioned committees gathered Wafdists from Benha, Tanta, Giza, Zagazig, Kafr el Garayda, Garbia province (the native village of SERAG EL DINE) and Menufia to take part in the demonstration and appointed the following group cum-cheer leaders:

HASSAN YASSIN
MOHAMED KAMAL EL BANNA
MOHAMED SHAFI EL BANNA

AHMED HASSABALLAN
SAYED SALEM
ALY SALAMA.

3. Following are the slogans that were heard during the procession:

In English: Long live NAHAS Pasha
Down with NOKRASHI

In Arabic: Long live the memory of AMIN Pasha
To paradise AMIN Pasha and to hell NOKRASHI
Down with William and NOKRASHI

(NB. Some demonstrators called Down with MAKRAM but the majority advised that they shout Down with William.)

The nation condoles you NAHAS Pasha
Report the injustice to SAAD, oh OSMAN
Long live the revolution
On to the Revolution we must have revenge
Blood for Blood. An eye for an eye and blood for blood.

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No NOKRASHI after today
The nation dismisses the NOKRASHI cabinet
Down with NOKRASHI the criminal
Where is the Sudan, NOKRASHI
Where is the evacuation, NOKRASHI
Where are the clothes and where is the food, NOKRASHI
What are you doing NOKRASHI
We want evacuation

(NB few demonstrators were willing to repeat this.)

Long live the memory of AMIN Pasha, the friend of
the employees and the executives
Down with the reign of bombs and plots
Long live NAHAS, the leader of the nation
Down with this bad reign

4. At 15.30 hours the funeral moved off from the tent with Lord KILLEARN, NAHAS and the King's representative (an unimportant youth of 25 years) following the coffin. There was no member of the cabinet seen in the procession at this stage. At 15.40 hrs. NOKRASHI joined the procession amid shouts of

Down with William and NOKRASHI
Complain to SAAD of the injustices of this cabinet, oh OSMA

Several people suggested that it was not right to shout these things when the Prime Minister was present and the crowd stopped insulting NOKRASHI for a time. By this time the procession had passed the British Embassy and Lord KILLEARN took his leave of NAHAS NOKRASHI and the King's representative and returned to the Embassy. The procession proceeded and gradually the insults to NOKRASHI start again. The latter seemed uneasy and appeared to wish to leave the procession but could not do so with the King's representative still present. However just before the procession reached Midan Ismailia the King's Representative took his leave of NAHAS and NOKRASHI left with him.

The insults to NOKRASHI increased and were led by the Wafdist students of El Azhar who had recently been expelled from the University and who were carrying sticks in the procession.

5. It is a fact that the funeral of AMIN OSMAN Pasha was used as a Wafdist demonstration and that the majority of the Wafd are not over sorry at his death, for he had recently become unpopular due to his political aspirations.

It is also a fact that the demonstration had a pro-British trend, especially as SERAG EL DINE had given previous instructions that the Wafd element were not to shout a word against the BRITISH.

6. After the coffin had gone from the Mosque to the tombs, a crowd of approx. 4000 demonstrators went to Abdine Palace and continued to shout

We want NAHAS Pasha as the leader of the nation

Yours sincerely,
(Sgd.) G.J. JENKINS

F.H. Tomlyn Esq., O.B.E.,
British Embassy,
Cairo.



Fo 371/53341

EGYPT AND SUDAN.

January 17, 1946.

ARCHIVES

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

NOT SENT TO DOMINIONS

[J 217/66/16]

Copy No. 8

Lord Killearn to Mr. Bevin.—(Received 17th January.)

(No. 30.)

Sir,

Cairo, 8th January, 1946.

I HAVE reported by telegram the tragic assassination of Amin Osman Pasha, and I shall be reporting separately on the circumstances of this crime and on the progress of the enquiry. In this despatch I desire to emphasise the extent of the loss to both Egypt and Great Britain in the death of Amin Osman Pasha, who was only 47 years of age and normally would have had a long period of public usefulness before him.

2. Amin Osman Pasha acquired an understanding of and sympathy with Great Britain by his education at Victoria College and subsequently at Brasenose College, Oxford. On his return to Egypt from Oxford he entered the Ministry of Finance, and, like most young officials of that time, sympathised with the Wafd and with the national aims which it represented. But this nationalism was tempered by the feeling that Egypt's independence could only be established and maintained through co-operation with Great Britain.

3. He first emerged into prominence when he was reported secretary-general of the Egyptian delegation for the treaty negotiations of 1936. In that rôle he contributed most powerfully to the successful conclusion of the treaty. Indeed, it is doubtful whether without him it would have been possible to overcome the innate suspiciousness and the traditional intransigent tendencies of the Wafd. All through the negotiations he played a moderating rôle, and helped both sides to find compromises in the frequent difficulties which inevitably arose during the negotiations.

4. He was appointed Under-Secretary of Finance by the Wafd Government on the return of the Egyptian delegation to Egypt after the signature in London of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. This was a very considerable promotion in view of the relatively junior position which he had previously held in the Ministry of Finance. It was therefore natural that this promotion should excite jealousy among officials, and the fact that he was at the same time given the title of Pasha, on the recommendation of Nahas Pasha, still further increased the jealousies of officials and politicians older than he. These jealousies were further increased by the grant to him of an Honorary K.B.E. for his valuable co-operation in the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty negotiations.

5. During the tenure of the Wafd Government, from 1936 to the end of 1937, he consistently exercised a moderating influence on Nahas Pasha, who had grown to trust him to a quite remarkable degree, and he had now become the recognised liaison between the Wafd Government and the embassy. In this rôle he was able to smooth out innumerable difficulties which arose between the Wafd Government and ourselves during the first delicate period of the execution of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. When the Wafd Government fell from power he continued to exercise a moderating influence on the Wafd, and especially to restrain Nahas, who resented our failure to prevent his dismissal by King Farouk, from extreme forms of anti-British attitudes. The late Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha, who succeeded Nahas Pasha as Prime Minister on the 31st December, 1937, showed consideration to Amin Osman, and even used him more and more in contacts with this embassy. But when Ali Maher Pasha succeeded Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha as Prime Minister in August 1939 he at once dismissed Amin Osman without any explanation. This arbitrary and unjust action was generally known to have been taken to please King Farouk, who was at that time under the influence of Ali Maher Pasha, was in the midst of his anti-British phase and regarded Amin Osman as a British instrument. Amin Osman was at first much upset because we had not saved him from this arbitrary dismissal from the public service, particularly as he was a poor man and could hardly live on his small pension. However, Sir Edward Cook, then governor of the National Bank of Egypt, at my suggestion, appointed Amin Osman Pasha as director

[77—49]

of the bank, and Amin Osman gradually got over his resentment and continued to co-operate with us in restraining Nahas Pasha and the Wafd, who were continually tempted to go out against us all along the line.

6. With the return of the Wafd to power after the events of the 5th February, 1942, Amin Osman became head of the Audit Department and subsequently Minister of Finance. King Farouk was under the impression that Amin Osman had been the intermediary between the embassy and Nahas Pasha to secure the previous consent of Nahas Pasha to take office after the action which we were forced to take against King Farouk, owing to his encouragement of anti-British elements and discouragement of those Egyptians co-operating with us during a particularly delicate phase of the military operations in the Western Desert. This belief was responsible for a still more violent prejudice on the part of King Farouk against Amin Osman.

7. During the Wafd régime of 1942-44 Amin Osman Pasha again played the invaluable rôle of intermediary between Nahas and the embassy, and by his influence with Nahas Pasha was able to iron out the many difficulties which occurred between the Wafd Government and ourselves, and to assist us powerfully in our war effort during one of the most critical phases of the war, including our retreat to Alamein.

8. When the Wafd fell from power in October 1944 Amin Osman again played the rôle of a moderator of the Wafd in opposition. If, almost to the moment of his death, the Wafd refrained from going all out against us, this was largely due to Amin Osman Pasha's immense influence over Nahas Pasha.

9. This persistent determination of Amin Osman to play the honest broker between Egypt and Great Britain was due not only to a sentimental sympathy towards Great Britain but also to an enlightened patriotism which saw in loyal Anglo-Egyptian co-operation the only salvation of his own country. His death is, therefore, not only a personally tragic event, but little short of a political disaster for the future. The Wafd, though out of power and not so strong as in the past, still remains the largest party, with the most popular backing, in the land. Before Amin Osman's death it had become evident that the Wafd, getting impatient, was beginning an anti-British campaign. His death means the disappearance of the only man who was in a position consistently to influence Nahas Pasha in the sense of moderation as regards Great Britain. The Wafd in opposition are henceforth under no such enlightened restraint. Sooner or later it is likely that the Wafd will again participate in the government of the country, and maybe also in the negotiations for treaty revision. The absence of Amin Osman in those events will be severely felt by us. The Wafdist leaders are of a suspicious nature and do not establish easy relations with foreigners. There is no personality like Amin Osman who can act as an intermediary between the Wafd and ourselves in order to promote mutual comprehension and mutual compromise. Relations with the Wafd either in opposition or in the Government will, therefore, be much more difficult than in the past.

10. It is no exaggeration to say that, with the death of Amin Osman, Egypt has lost a patriotic and younger politician, whose influence was always exercised on rational lines in the interest of his own country and of Anglo-Egyptian understanding, which to him was the corner-stone of enlightened Egyptian nationalism. His disappearance is, therefore, a major misfortune for both countries.

11. It is said by many friendly Egyptians that Amin Osman was assassinated owing to the fact that he was regarded as pro-British. There is some truth in this, but not the whole truth. The crime was directed partly against Amin Osman, as being pro-British, and partly against the Wafd, of whom Amin Osman Pasha was regarded as a powerful supporter, although he was not officially a member of the Wafd party. The recent press campaign against Nahas Pasha regarding the events of the 4th February, 1943 (see my despatch No. 1558), undoubtedly influenced excitable young Egyptian nationalists against Amin Osman who was represented in the course of that campaign as having played a prominent part in promoting with Nahas Pasha our action against King Farouk on that occasion. Moreover, it is suspected that the assassin of Amin Osman, or one of his accomplices, was responsible for the throwing of the bomb on the occasion of Nahas Pasha's passage from his house to the Saadist Club last month (see my telegram No. 2553). The assassin is said to be a Watanist extremist, and the Watanists have always been violently anti-Wafd. It will be remembered that the attempt on Zaghoul's life in 1924 was made by a Watanist student mentally unbalanced, as apparently is the assassin of Amin Osman Pasha.

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12. Amin Osman recently renewed his personal contacts with his English friends during his visit to London in connexion with the Alamein Foundation for convalescent service men. The part he played in promoting subscriptions to the fund was one of many examples of the positive friendship and sympathy he felt for Great Britain, a sympathy which was strengthened by his English marriage. It was perhaps his many English contacts which gave him an appreciation, rare among Middle East politicians, of the value of moderation. It is ironical that his funeral should have been made the occasion of a violent unseemly political demonstration by the party on which he was constantly exercising a moderating influence during his lifetime.

13. We have lost a most loyal friend: and Egypt a great and true patriot.

I have, &c.

KILLEARN.

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F371/53341
WAS/EGC
(147/8/46)
No. 37

BRITISH EMBASSY, CAIRO
JAN 1946
CAIRO.

9th January 1946

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No. 30, I have the honour to report that a few hours after the murder of Amin Osman Pasha, the police arrested at Heliopolis a certain Hussein Tewfik Ahmed, son of Tewfik Ahmed Bey, an ex-Under Secretary of State for Communications. They also arrested Hussein's brother, though according to the Director-General of Public Security, the latter was not a bad character. Hussein, on the contrary, has long been the despair of his father and was known to the police as a dubious personage. He was arrested by the police in connection with the murders at Maadi in 1944 of British soldiers, as his family was then living at Maadi, and he was known to be a bad character. No evidence could be produced of his culpability and he had to be released.

2. From the evidence obtained at the Heliopolis house and on the person of Hussein Tewfik Ahmed, the police think that it is possible that this man is implicated in the various murders of British soldiers at Maadi and in the attempt against the life of Corporal Miller in Gezira, as well as in the recent bomb-throwing incident in Sharia Kasr el-Aini at the moment when Nahas Pasha was driving from his house to the Saadist Club (see my telegram No. 2553 of December 6th). I understand that a few other arrests have been made. The Director-General of Public Security told the Oriental Minister that the authorities are endeavouring to find accomplices of Hussein Tewfik Ahmed and perhaps round up the small bank of terrorists which has been thought to exist since the murder of Ahmed Maher Pasha by Mahmoud ISEAWI.

3. The above is merely in the nature of a preliminary report based on information informally supplied to the Embassy. In view of the possible implication of Hussein Tewfik Ahmed in murders of British soldiers, the Defence Security Officer has been requested to ask the Egyptian authorities to keep him continuously informed of the progress of the enquiry.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,

Your most obedient, humble Servant

✓
The Right Honourable,
Ernest Bevin M.P.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

Killean

F0371/53341

10 JAN 1946

[CYIPHER]

DEPARTMENTAL NO. 1.

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Lord Killern.
No. 55.

D. 2.56 p.m. 9th January 1946.
R. 4.00 p.m. 9th January 1946.

9th January 1946.

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IMPORTANT

Madame Amin Osman accompanied by Farghali Pasha (the greatest friend of her late husband) came to see me last night.

2. Nahas had suggested to her that she ought to press to have some representative of her interests on this enquiry into the crime. They both much doubted the wisdom of making such a demand both on general grounds and because they felt sure not only that Egyptian Prime Minister would refuse this on political grounds, but that it would be prejudicial to any disposition there might be to afford financial assistance to Madame Amin Osman as her husband's widow. They asked my advice.

3. I told them that I thought their view was right. Madame Amin Osman should not allow herself to become involved in any political manoeuvres arising out of her husband's murder.

4. She then explained that she has been left practically without means. Amin Osman had only his pension of £E.84 a month plus his directorships and had left considerable debt. Normally widow only got half her husband's pension: however she had always remained a Christian which might weigh against her. And she had her daughter to think of who had married a poor man.

5. I suggested best course was surely the most obvious, namely, that if no more came from the Prime Minister she should seek an interview with him and put her case fully to him. My experience was that Egyptian Governments were usually generous in such matters. She left saying that she would probably do so: and Farghali Pasha agreed. Mr. Besly was present throughout.

6. This morning I was seeing Nokrashi Pasha on another matter (Admiral Creigh) with Admiral Tennant. After the Admiral had left us I took the occasion to mention to His Excellency unofficially that I knew widow had been left in sore financial straits. I had no wish to intrude but I felt sure that with their customary generosity this Egyptian Government would do the right thing by her. Nokrashi at once said that far from taking any exception to my remark he thought it very natural and proper.

/He

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He had in fact already got the matter in hand: quite apart from all else Secretary General had been Secretary General of Egyptian Treaty Delegation in 1956 and rendered outstanding service. He gave impression that he would act quickly but did not indicate on what lines.

7. Arising out of the murder, I said that I felt bound to call his serious attention to violent anti-British articles that had quite recently been allowed publication. I instanced in particular a quite recent one by Ahmed Hussein, of Young Egypt, each paragraph of which started (I had no exact text by me) with words "hate the English" or their equivalent. Admittedly the press censor had been removed - incidentally to our considerable relief - but material likely to incite disorder or to provoke terroristic acts or anti-foreign hatreds clearly should not be tolerated on general grounds of international comity. It was just the sort of poison to affect the minds of "Detraques" extremists and lead to crimes such as the present murder. Furthermore Sirri Pasha had told me at the funeral that Ministry of the Interior possessed lists of young fanatics liable to be involved in such crimes. They should be severely dealt with if in fact such lists existed.

8. Nokrashi did not contest that he possessed such lists: but the truth was that there was not the material for a judgment in a court of law. But he could assure me that most stringent measures were being taken. He mentioned incidentally that suspected murderer had been living two doorsteps from his own house in Heliopolis.

O.T.P.

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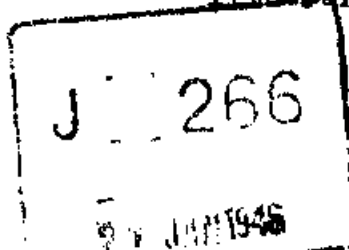
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WAS/GB

BRITISH EMBASSY,
CAIRO.No. 47
(147/3A/46)

11th January, 1946.

J 266



Sir,

With reference to my telegram No. 26 of 6th January, I have the honour to transmit herewith a report from the Defence Security Office regarding the anti-Government demonstrations at the funeral of the late Amin Osman Pasha.

2. Makram Pasha as well as Nokrashi Pasha figured prominently in the hostile cries of the crowd. There were also ominous cries of: "Blood for blood: an eye for an eye". Such incitements are particularly dangerous for Makram Pasha, in view of the fact that he is a Copt and generally unpopular.

3. The Wafdist press has argued that the articles in "Akhbar el-Yom", the Palace organ, and in "Al-Kutla", Makram Pasha's organ, against Amin Osman Pasha were responsible for creating the atmosphere in which the crime was committed. There may well be some truth in the allegations.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Killean

The Right Honourable
Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

✓

TCR/JR

No. 803

(147/65A/46)

F037/5334

5th July, 1946.

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SI

J. 86766/16

I have the honour, with reference to my despatch 250 of 16th February, to report that on the evening of July 1st a certain Abdel Aziz Shafel was shot at and wounded in a Cairo street and one Mahmoud Fahmy el Said was arrested a short distance away with a revolver in his possession. The latter is stated to be a minor employee of the Ministry of Education. According to a report from Defence Security Office the victim of this attack had received a number of letters threatening him with vengeance for the evidence which he had given against Ahmed Tewfik Hussein, the presumed murderer of Amin Osman Pasha. The police had provided him with a bodyguard which, however, was not with him when he was shot. According to Director General Public Security the victim was to blame in this respect as he had gone out without his sleuth.

2. The latest information from Defence Security Office is that the victim was lured into a coffee shop by two individuals, one of whom had been released on bail after being arrested in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association outrage, and the other had been released on bail after being arrested in connection with Amin Osman's murder. It was on leaving the coffee shop that he was shot. Defence Security Officer states that, according to the police, the Parquet are deliberately ignoring the police theory that the victim was lured by the two above-mentioned individuals. It is perhaps significant that the assailant, according to Defence Security Office, was arrested by the former Wafd Government for distributing anti-Wafd pamphlets.

3. Defence Security Officer states the police attribute this crime to the murder gang which they believe to be active again thanks to the release of a number of its members by the Parquet. The police claim to have done their best to keep these miscreants under supervision but admit that owing to shortage of transport, among other things, they cannot do so effectively. Oriental Minister has pointed out to the Director General Public Security that this crime is the direct result of the release of so many miscreants accused of participation in the murder campaign. Ghazaly Bey very confidentially agreed.

4. I enclose a copy of a letter which I have sent to Sidky Pasha protesting at the deplorably half-hearted manner in which the proceedings against those implicated in Amin Osman's murder are being conducted. It is clear that powerful influences are at work to obstruct the course of justice and there is reason to believe that influential relatives of certain of the accused have brought pressure to bear on one or more of the judges.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

The Right Honourable Ernest Bevin, M.P.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

Ronald Campbell

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5. It is difficult to see how the public can avoid the impression from all these circumstances that a determined effort is being made to exculpate self-confessed murderers and I am apprehensive that, with the grave result this is likely to have on respect for public order, the security of British subjects in Egypt, a number of whom have been the object of murderous attacks, may be seriously affected. This apprehension is especially relevant to a period when certain elements are keeping the public in a state of excitement.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my very high consideration.

(Sgd.) RONALD CAMPBELL