

Reference:-

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BRITISH EMBASSY,

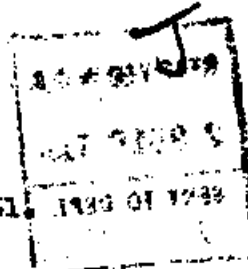
CAIRO.

No. 1041/3/85/51.

19th December, 1951.

UNCLASSIFIED.

JE 1679/27



Dear Department,

In the first paragraph of our telegram No. 1216 of 15th December we alluded to reports, that a question was to be asked in the Egyptian Parliament about the activities of the Information Department.

2. The question, which enquired about "British Embassy publications" was in fact asked in the Chamber of Deputies on 17th December. The reply which, according to one paper, was given by Fuad Serag el Din Pasha and, according to another, was given by the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, was as follows:-

"The British Embassy does not issue any "local paper" it only distributes a bulletin containing the British viewpoint on incidents in the Canal Zone. Attached to this bulletin are statements from the British Command on these incidents. This bulletin is distributed to foreign and Egyptian Pressmen every afternoon.

"There is nothing in this bulletin or the attached statements which can be construed as an attack on the Egyptian Prime Minister. The Minister of the Interior replies to the contents of this bulletin and corrects distorted and false facts.

"From the diplomatic point of view there is nothing to prevent foreign Embassies and Legations from publishing such a bulletin to diffuse reports on conditions in their respective countries, and their viewpoint on political economic and social questions - a practice by Egyptian Embassies and Legations abroad."

We are sending a copy of this letter to the Chancery, Washington.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY. } W.A.

African Department,
Foreign Office,
LONDON, S.W.1.

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Translation from JOURNAL D'EGYPTE -- Tuesday,
18th December, 1951.

The Chamber met at 5 p.m. under the Presidency of His Excellency Abdel Salam Fahmy Gomaa Pasha. Various questions were put to the Government among which we will mention that of the Hon. Soliman Abdel Fattah and the Hon. El Sayed Marzouk about the publications of the British Embassy in Cairo and the General Headquarters of British Forces. In the name of the Government His Excellency Farag Pasha, acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, replied that the British Embassy in Cairo did not publish any local paper but distributed a bulletin giving the British point of view of the Canal Zone incidents: to this bulletin was added the communiqué drawn up by the British General Headquarters in the Canal Zone. This publication, he said, contained no attack on the Prime Minister.

"From the point of view of diplomatic traditions" said Farag Pasha there is no tradition preventing foreign diplomatic missions in Egypt from publishing bulletins dealing with economic, social and civic conditions in their own countries and this practice is followed by Egyptian Embassies and Legations abroad".

At this moment the Hon. Soliman Fattah alleged that these bulletins were printed on the printing press of Akhbar el You. Farag Pasha at once promised to institute an urgent enquiry to clear up this matter.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL TELEGRAM

JE 1679/7

IZ 7362
TOO 222310B
(222110Z)
TOR 230046Z

OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE

FROM : G.H.Q. MIDDLE EAST LAND FORCES
TO : MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, LONDON
INFO : C. IN C. MEDITERRANEAN
B.H.E.G. CAIRO

529/CCL 22nd October 1951

From Commanders in Chief for Chiefs of Staff.

1. Egyptian Gazette, which is the only local newspaper printed in English, now carries daily text of Egyptian Ministers' anti-British speeches not to mention ill advised leading articles. In consequence we are considering banning it from Canal Zone.
2. We are now arranging publication daily newsheet for British forces and suitable broadcasts to refute anti-British articles.
3. In addition to arrangements in para. 2 above we consider it essential that troops should have
 - (a) continued Sunday newspapers which were stopped on 21st October
 - (b) immediate supply of U.K. daily newspapers by air to Fayid. Detailed requirements are being signalled separately. Request this may be arranged urgently.

CIRCULATION TOO 222310B

- D.C.O.R. "B"
- Foreign Office
- War Registry, Admiralty
- Message Control, War Office
- Registry Telegrams, Air Ministry
- Mr. D.P. Reilly, Foreign Office
- Mr. A.D.M. Ross, Foreign Office
- Sir P. Liesching, C.R.O.
- Mr. Armitage Smith, Colonial Office

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Mr. Allen 3/10
Cons. agreed Re

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COPY NO. _____

C. O. S. (51) 609

23RD OCTOBER, 1951.

JE 1679/7(A)
CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

BANNING OF EGYPTIAN NEWSPAPERS FROM THE CANAL ZONE *White*

COPY of a letter dated 23rd October, 1951 from the Foreign Office to the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee.

In their telegram No. 529/UCL of the 22nd October the Commanders-in-Chief Middle East state that they are considering banning the Egyptian Gazette from the Canal Zone. You may care to have our views on this. They are as follows:

It would be difficult to justify such a ban, since

- (a) The Canal Zone is Egyptian territory; and
- (b) Few people besides British troops will read the paper in the Canal Zone. It would seem unlikely that British troops would attach much credence to Egyptian misrepresentations of fact, and it would therefore be difficult to justify such a measure as necessary to maintain our rights in the Canal zone under the 1936 Treaty.
- (c) The proposed ban might create an unfavourable impression in friendly foreign countries.

2. In general, we believe that the Egyptian Gazette, which is, of course, entirely at the mercy of the Egyptian censor, is normally friendly to ourselves; but it must obviously subscribe to the nationalist line to some extent if it is to survive at the present time.

3. If the Chiefs of Staff agree, they might perhaps consider sending a word of warning to the Commanders-in-Chief Middle East.

(Signed) R. ALLEN

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, S.W.1.

23RD OCTOBER, 1951.

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TOP SECRET

Registration

TOP SECRET TELEGRAM

JE 1679/7(D)
OZ 5218
TOD 2:1730Z
TOD 2:41310Z

OPERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

FROM : MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, LONDON
TO : G.H.Q., MIDDLE EAST LAND FORCES
INFO : C.-in-C. MEDITERRANEAN
C.-in-C. EAST INDIES
C.-in-C. MIDDLE EAST AIR FORCES
BRITISH MIAMI, CAIRO

COS(ME) 572 24th October, 1951.

For Commanders-in-Chief from Chiefs of Staff.

NEWSPAPERS

Reference 529/CCL. *Je 1679/7(D)*

We consider that there is little if anything to be gained by banning the Egyptian Gazette from the Canal Zone since we understand that it is not read by the Egyptians and we feel that the British soldier has sufficient commonsense to know what value to put upon anti-British statements of this kind. Furthermore, the proposed ban might create an unfavourable impression in friendly foreign countries where we have at all times advocated the freedom of the press.

2. We shall do everything possible to meet the requirements in paragraph 3 of your 529/CCL which War Office are urgently examining.

CIRCULATION

TOD 2:1730Z

- D.C.O.R. "B"
- Foreign Office
- War Registry, Admiralty
- Message Control, War Office
- Registry Telegrams Air Ministry
- Mr. D.P. Reilly, Foreign Office
- Mr. R. Allen, Foreign Office
- Mr. A.D.H. Ross, Foreign Office
- Sir P. Liesching, C.S.O.
- Mr. Armitage Smith, Colonial Office

TOP SECRET