

Ref.:

FO 371/96871

86124

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/HE.

1012/9/52.

UNCLASSIFIED.

BRITISH EMBASSY,

CAIRO.

24th January, 1952.

JE 1018/43

Dear Department,

- JE 1018/7

Please refer to our letter No. 1012/6/52 of the 18th January about the Ikhwan al Muslimin.

On the 18th January "Akher Lahza" an opposition bi-weekly published an interview with Hassan al Baqouri a prominent member of the Ikhwan who was, before Hodeibi's selection, often mentioned as a candidate for Supreme Guide. Some of his comments were obscurely phrased but they can be summarised as follows.

He was asked to reconcile the Ikhwan's official policy of abstention from "Liberation Squads" with the fact that many members had joined them. He replied that in such cases some were swayed by duty, others by sentiment. The Ikhwan had attached conditions to their participation in the Squads for reasons of national duty. Members who nevertheless joined squads and died as martyrs had done so for reasons of deep sentiment. Islam could approve both.

No suggestion had been put to the Ikhwan for their participation in a Government. He believed that they approved the idea of a coalition Government provided that it was not at the expense of national interests. The Supreme Guide had already declared that the regime sought by the Ikhwan was one according with God's Commandments and the teachings of religion. "The present regime does not fulfil the demands of the country." He later repeated this statement.

The Ikhwan's proposals for the purge of the regime were summed up in their constitution in the beautiful phrase "Improve yourself and then call others". Beautiful phrases would have no effect if they remained phrases, but if accepted as a practical creed by young men they could work miracles. They had already done so in producing the present young generation of the Ikhwan.

The Ikhwan regretted the attack on the Coptic church in Suez. If the victim was guilty he should have been attacked as an Egyptian and not as a member of any sect.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY. *J.M.*

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

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BRITISH EMBASSY,

CONFIDENTIAL

CAIRO.

CS.1524/2/52

29th January, 1952.

J E 1088/49

Dear Department,

We have seen your telegram No. 228 of 26th January about Messrs. Thomas Cook Ltd. We are sending a reply to the questions you ask, although (as you may know by now) Mr. Hislop, the Manager here, sent a cable on 26th January to Mr. Maxwell, his General Manager in London, and subsequently had two long telephone conversations with him.

The Cairo Tourist offices of Messrs. Thomas Cook were set on fire at about 3 p.m. on 26th January and were completely destroyed. Runacres had a long conversation this morning with Mr. Hislop, who gave him the following additional information. The only items of value left in the offices appear to be the safes, of which there were eight and of which the four most important can actually be seen; the premises cannot yet be entered since they are still smouldering, but are under the guard of two policemen and - an additional protection suggested by the Parquet - two of Messrs. Cook's staff.

The safes contained, when the premises were closed on Saturday, some £8,000 in cash and it is hoped that this will prove to be intact when they are opened. The offices and their contents were insured to a value of £8,500. (We say this merely to give an accurate valuation; we do not of course mean to suggest that insurance companies will pay this, or indeed any claim).

The tourist offices are at the moment operating from premises in Boulac which belong to the Engineering Department of Messrs. Thomas Cook. These are located in an area which is surrounded by slums and small engineering works, and is quite unsuitable for a permanent place of business. Mr. Hislop is at present busily engaged in trying to obtain some suitable premises in the centre of the town, so that he can re-establish his business as soon as possible; he suggested to Runacres that perhaps the Semiramis Hotel might prove the best temporary place but he has made no decision as yet.

The staff are all fortunately safe, though Mr. Churchill, the Acting Manager of the Cairo branch, had a fortunate escape. He only managed to get safely out of the next door hotel in which he lives and which was also fired, by inserting himself into a party of German tourists.

Yours ever,

COMMERCIAL SECRETARIAT

EM

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

BAR/BJ

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Foreign Office Distribution

GENERAL (PUBLIC STATEMENTS)

29th January, 1952

Section 1

ARCHIVES

TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN EGYPT

Extract from House of Commons Debates, 29th January, 1952

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Anthony Eden): With your permission, Mr. Speaker, and that of the House, I should like to give some account of recent events in Egypt.

From the earliest days of the tension in the Canal Zone His Majesty's Forces in that area have at all times done their utmost to avoid conflict with the Egyptian authorities. The increase of terrorist activities, however, supported in many cases by detachments of the auxiliary Egyptian police, compelled His Majesty's Government to act if the security of the Canal Zone of the British base and of our forces themselves was to be preserved.

I wish to give the House some account of the nature and activities of these auxiliary police. This force was not introduced into the Canal Zone until after the late Egyptian Government had denounced the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 in October last. It was supposed to be charged with the task of assisting the regular police to preserve law and order. In fact, its energies were mainly directed to intimidating Egyptian labour employed by His Majesty's Forces, and later to conniving at and taking part in terrorist activities against our forces, many of which resulted in the deaths of British soldiers.

Urgent representations were made to the Egyptian authorities on several occasions both by His Majesty's Ambassador in Cairo and by the British military authorities in the Canal Zone about the activities of these auxiliary police. His Majesty's Embassy addressed four written notes about this to the Egyptian Government; on 24th November, on 5th December, on 15th December and on 19th January. On at least four occasions also His Majesty's Ambassador made oral representations to Egyptian Ministers, and General Erskine several times brought these activities to the attention of the local Egyptian authorities. We urged that these companies, which had never previously been armed with rifles but only with staves, should be disarmed or withdrawn.

The late Egyptian Government paid no heed to these representations. It is on the contrary only too clear that so far from wishing to prevent armed clashes with the British Forces, they were actively concerned to provoke them. This produced a critical situation at Ismailia in view of the military measures which had to be taken there to round up the terrorists. The British Commander, therefore, had no alternative but to disarm the auxiliary police. The latter had explicit instructions from the then Egyptian Government to resist, and consequently General Erskine had no option but to use force. In this, and indeed throughout, he had full authority and support from His Majesty's Government.

In the course of the action which followed one officer and three other ranks of His Majesty's Forces lost their lives and 13 others were wounded. Unconfirmed figures of Egyptian casualties are 42 killed and 58 wounded. This tragic event, which we all deplore, has brought sorrow to many homes, both in Britain and Egypt. It has, however, done nothing to diminish the ability and determination of His Majesty's Government to maintain their rights under the Treaty of 1936 until such time as a new agreement to replace that Treaty can be reached.

On Saturday last a serious outbreak of rioting took place in Cairo. I deeply regret to have to inform the House that in the course of these riots at least eight British lives were lost, including that of the Canadian Trade Commissioner in Cairo. I am sure the House will wish me to express its profound sympathy with their relatives no less than with those of the British soldiers who lost their lives. At the same time, the House will wish me to express a sense of horror at the atrocities which the former Egyptian Government were unable to prevent and which were the direct consequence of their policy of inciting the population to acts of violence.

I regret also to have to report that very considerable damage was done during these

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5 FEB 1952

riots to British and other foreign property in Cairo. Order was restored only after the Egyptian Army had been called upon to intervene. His Majesty's Ambassador addressed a Note to the Egyptian Government on 27th January, informing them on behalf of His Majesty's Government in Canada and in the United Kingdom that the Egyptian Government will be held fully responsible for all loss of life and property and that the rights of His Majesty's Governments in that connexion are fully reserved.

Meanwhile I take note that the new Egyptian Prime Minister has declared that his Government's first task will be the restoration of law and order and the protection of life and property, foreign as well as Egyptian.

I wish now to make a few observations of a more general character about the present state of Anglo-Egyptian relations.

One of the worst features of recent events in the Canal Zone is that upscrupulous men have sought to turn what is in some cases no doubt genuine national sentiment into terrorist activities.

I have always believed that it should be possible to find a solution of the differences between this country and Egypt which satisfies the legitimate national aspirations of the Egyptian people, and at the same time does not jeopardise the security of the free world. In a Note to the Egyptian Government on 6th November, 1951, we stated that His Majesty's Government were willing, as their predecessors had been, to enter into negotiations at any time for a revision of the Treaty of 1936, under the procedure set forth in Articles 8 and 16 of that Treaty. In my speech to the House on 19th November I repeated that offer. It still stands.

It is the aim of His Majesty's Government to reach agreement on arrangements for the adequate defence of the Canal Zone which would meet legitimate Egyptian aspirations. We fully accept that this is by no means exclusively an Anglo-Egyptian interest, but one in which we have an international responsibility.

In these last weeks there have been many violent episodes with their accompanying loss of human life. The memory of them, bitter though it must be in both countries, should not prevent us from looking and working towards a better future. It remains our hope that passions will cool and that it will then be possible to reach a settlement in which each side will respect the sincerity of the other's point of view.

Mr. Herbert Morrison: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his statement. I know that it would be the wish of all my hon. Friends on the Opposition benches that we should associate ourselves with the expression of sympathy with the relatives of those who have been killed or injured in these incidents. I have only one question—or at the most two—to put to the right hon. Gentleman.

We can take it, I presume, that the action at Ismailia with regard to the police was specifically authorised by His Majesty's Government. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman also whether the police concerned had warning from the British authorities, so that they had an opportunity voluntarily to take the action that was desired before active hostilities began.

Mr. Eden: Yes, Sir, that action was definitely authorised by His Majesty's Government, and not only one warning but repeated warnings were given to the Egyptian authorities, and on the spot. I would be quite willing, if the House desired—or more properly perhaps through the Secretary of State for War—to give a detailed account of what happened and how it was handled. I have been into the full account myself very carefully, and I am satisfied that everything that could humanly have been done was done to try to avoid the clash that eventually occurred.

Mr. Harold Davies: Are His Majesty's Government making every effort to reopen discussions on the 1936 Treaty under Articles 8 and 16? Secondly, are His Majesty's Government aware that the diplomacy of the Prime Minister in the United States, by inviting Americans into the Canal Zone, was the diplomacy of a cave man? [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh."] Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that his policy exacerbated the Moslem world? Lastly, may I ask the Foreign Secretary if he has reviewed the possibilities of moving the base from there to the Israeli State and of getting discussions with the Israeli State on that point?

Mr. Eden: In reply to the first part of the hon. Gentleman's question, I have very carefully chosen the words of my statement, after giving a good deal of thought about how to present it at this time, and I think I would rather stand on those words, so far as the position of His Majesty's Government is concerned. As regards the second part of the question, I have yet to learn that sharing a burden is other than a Christian virtue.

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Mr. John Hynd: I am sure that most hon. Members will sympathise with the position in which General Erskine finds himself, and will agree to a great extent with what has been said by the Foreign Secretary. I am not so satisfied that all hon. Members and people outside will be completely reconciled about the action that was taken against police headquarters on the statement that has been made.

Is it not the case that we are, I believe rightly, holding our position in the Canal Zone in accordance with our rights under the Treaty until those rights have been altered by agreement? If that is so, are we authorised under any right that we may hold in the Suez area to initiate action against any official body, even though some members of that body may have been suspected, or proved, to have taken part in acts of terrorism against British troops? I am sure that no one could object to any action that may have been taken by our forces against anyone proven to have been taking action against them, but can the right hon. Gentleman give us any information as to the basis upon which we claim the right to initiate an action of this kind?

Mr. Eden: I think that there is no dispute in any part of the House that we base ourselves on the Treaty of 1936, nor any dispute as to the obligation which that Treaty lays upon us. It has been clear for some time that these auxiliary police were, instead of being police, deliberately inciting and encouraging, and taking part in, terrorism against our forces which are carrying out their legitimate duties. I am willing to answer any Question on the paper about this, but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that a great deal of trouble was taken to try to avoid this kind of situation. If our troops are to have the protection which is their right under the Treaty we cannot limit commanders to taking action against terrorist organisations which are not carrying on a proper war but perhaps something rather worse, which is this type of war.

Sir Herbert Williams: Is this a debate or a Question?

Mr. Speaker: I can allow only one more supplementary question on this matter. I must point out that we are to have a foreign affairs debate next week. Some of the sentiments that have been expressed have been more suitable for debate than for Question Time.

Mr. Aneurin Bevan: Is the Foreign Secretary aware that these collisions between British forces and the civilian population of Egypt jeopardise the value of the base as a military base for us in any event? Were the Government aware of, and did they authorise, the character of the weapons used in the attack on the police headquarters? In view of the fact that we are to have a foreign affairs debate, will there be a White Paper giving details of the incident so that we can discuss it more intelligently?

Mr. Eden: As regards individual action, naturally the Government take full responsibility for any action taken at that time. As regards weapons used, I would be willing to deal with that point. I would only say this now: that also, I know was carefully considered from every point of view, including, in particular, that of loss of life. I would only ask any hon. Member to consider whether, if the operations had been dragged out longer or if smaller weapons had throughout been used, the loss of life would not have been very much heavier? Personally, I have not the slightest doubt that it would have been.

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: Order. We cannot continue this discussion any further.

Mr. Bevan: What about the White Paper?

Mr. Eden: I will see whether I can furnish more information to the House this week.

Mr. Speaker: We are to have a foreign affairs debate next week.

JE 1018/34

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

En Clair.

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION.

Sir R. Stevenson.
No: 248.
30th January, 1952.

D: 1.10 a.m. 30th January, 1952.
R: 2.00 a.m. 30th January, 1952.

IMMEDIATE.
MANDATE.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No: 248 of
30th January

Repeated for information to Mideast for Carroll.

For News Department.

My immediately preceding telegram.

The attack on the Turf Club was well organised. The rioters broke down the front door, which was barred with battering rams specially brought for the purpose. They were led by several young men of the Effinde class, and were equipped with hessian, paraffin and other fire-raising material. They proceeded to break up the furniture and fittings, and built and set alight four large bonfires on the ground floor. 70

2. Of the members in the Club at the time several made their way to safety out of the back door. Others withdrew to the upper floors of the building. As the fire started to take hold two men and one woman were injured jumping for their lives from a first floor window. One member let himself down by knotted sheets from the second-floor window, and was set on and stabbed to death by the mob. Mr. Boyer was seen with blood streaming down his face trying to escape from an upper floor window and falling back in the attempt.

3. Ten people are presumed dead in the attack, and nine bodies have been recovered. Whether or not the primary object of the attack was arson there is every indication that with the possible exception of the woman presumed to be Mrs. Crawford all the victims received severe if not fatal injuries before being affected by the fire. Mr. Craig had a large gash in his head. Mr. Boyer had a serious head wound. One body which was only scorched but which was not positively identified has compound fractures of both wrists and was disembowelled. Four bodies were completely incinerated to an extent, quite incompatible with the state of the Club, and must actually have

been thrown.....

Cairo telegram No: 248 to Foreign Office. 24

- 2 -

been thrown on a bonfire, one of them had a leg chopped off above the knee and a hand and forearm missing, and another had the top of his head stove in. Two of them were disembowelled but we are advised that this might possibly have been caused by the heat. Many fingers were missing.

4. One body was seen lying for some hours behind the Club when it was ultimately covered up and uncovered by passers-by. It was eventually dragged across the street by a party of rioters stripped of its clothes partially dismembered and thrown on a hastily constructed bonfire.

5. Two of the injured were locked up for two hours in a shed by the gardener in an adjacent garden while the mob periodically tried to get at them.

6. The Canadian Assistant Trade Commissioner who was approaching the Club was hidden by well disposed Egyptians in a partially completed building next door, which two of the attackers searched for over two hours for him.

7. The attack on the Rivoli Cinema was also well organised the entrances and exits being fired first to increase the difficulties of escape. The Manager who was known to be inside was hunted by the attackers from room to room for over three hours and avoided discovery by taking refuge in those parts where the fire was burning most fiercely until he was smuggled into a next door building and then away to safety by some of his Greek employees.

8. Among the establishments of all nationalities that have been completely destroyed or very seriously damaged with complete loss of stock are Barclays Bank, (Cairo main branch) British Council Offices, British Institute, Turf Club, Rivoli Cinema, Shepherds Hotel, Metro Cinema, Radio Cinema, Victoria Hotel, Groppis, (both establishments) seven large department stores, six large motor-car showrooms and garages, two gun shops, Lebanese Consulate, Swedish Consulate practically every cinema, cabaret, restaurant, bar and wine merchant in the centre of the town. As a result of this destruction some 10-15,000 people have suddenly had their employment taken away from them with no prospect of regaining it in the near future.

9. Preliminary estimates of the damage by expert observers have ranged between 20 and 50 million pounds. *JRB*

~~Fayid please pass immediate to Mideast as my telegram No: 20.~~

ADVANCE COPIES:

JJJ Sir W. Strang.
Mr. Bowker.

Private Secretary.
Hd. African Dept..

Sir P. Dixon.
Hd. News Dept..

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO

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Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE SECRET
AND WHITEHALL SECRET
DISTRIBUTION

No. 247

30th January, 1952

D: 2.00 a.m. 31st January, 1952

SECRET

Now that the immediate crisis of the last few days is over, I want you to know that I have been particularly impressed by the way in which you have borne the heavy responsibility which has fallen on you. Your foresight in warning me of the possibility of serious disorders in Cairo as a result of the recent military measures in Ismailia and your cool judgment in considering the vital question of RODEO were of invaluable assistance to me and my colleagues. So, too, was the way in which you managed in most difficult circumstances to keep me continually and promptly informed of developments.

2. I appreciate also the heavy strain that must have been imposed on the members of your staff, and wish to convey to them my thanks for their steadfast work.

G G G G

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 256

30th January, 1952

D. 11.59 p.m. 30th January, 1952

R. 12.09 a.m. 31st January, 1952

PRIORITY
SECRET

JE 1018/35

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 256 of 30th January.

Repeated for information to:

Washington

Memin (Fayid)

Egypter

I visited the Prime Minister this morning and discussed the following points. I have recorded our conversation in a personal letter addressed to him.

2. I described the feeling in Britain and among British subjects in Egypt aroused by the events of 26th January. I urged the punishment of those responsible whether for acts of commission or negligence. I emphasised the responsibility of the former Ministers of the Interior and Social Affairs.

3. The Prime Minister expressed his Government's deep regret of the excesses which took place and said full enquiries would be made to establish where the guilt lay and to deal with the matter of compensation.

4. I asked that the Parquet enquiry into the massacre at the Turf Club should be held in camera or that the witnesses names at least should be kept secret. He undertook to give orders accordingly.

5. In answer to my request that there should be a strict control of arms throughout the country the Prime Minister said that only formations under government control would be allowed arms and these would not remain in private houses.

6. I urged a really efficient military plan for the immediate securing of bridges to Gezira Island (the main residential quarter when trouble arose).

17.



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SECRET

Cairo telegram No. 256 to Foreign Office

-2-

7. I asked and he agreed that the departure of dismissed British officials wishing to leave Egypt should be facilitated in every way. He said that he would like to encourage officials to wait a little before deciding to leave but could not do so publicly.

8. We agreed that the Governor of the Canal Zone should be allowed to come to Cairo and that instructions should be given for the free movement of my staff. He announced his intention of visiting the Zone but I suggested that we should discuss again before he did so.

9. I requested that the extremist press should be controlled and the Prime Minister said that while General legislation was not possible steps would be taken to prevent incitement to violence.

10. We decided that the first step was to lower the temperature and Ali Meher assured me that this Government did not intend to pursue the anti-British measures such as the Anti-Collaboration Law. I urged the necessity for the suppression of terrorism in the Canal Zone and said the only step needed was to allow the local authorities to cooperate with the British military authorities in maintaining order. He agreed and said this was one of the things he wanted to discuss with the Governor of the Canal Zone.

11. I proposed another meeting in the near future.

Foreign Office pass Washington as my telegram No. 73.

Payid pass Egypt as my telegram No. 104.

[Repeated to Washington].

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J

AFRICAN DEPARTMENT

JE 1018/36

EGYPT AND SUDAN

FROM
Chancery
Cairo
to African Dept.
No. 10111/59/52
Dated Jan. 30
Received in Registry— Jan. 31
Secret

Account of rioting and looting in Cairo on 26th and 27th January. Encloses list of British casualties.

References

MINUTES

A most important report, which makes it clear why the Egyptian Government are so shame faced about the riots, and (unfortunately) so much more accommodating towards us. I suggest this be printed "F.O. + Whitehall".

2. I should be inclined to think that this will have taught Egyptian politicians in general, and also King Farouk, such a salutary lesson that we may well find the business of reaching a settlement with them far less difficult than we have hitherto

Rennell
3/1,

PRINTED (Pages) 4/2

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Supposed
News letter
P.O. 6.8.52 11/2
P.O. (Mr Mackenzie)
Consular Dept. 11/2

41070

Mr. Fay confirmed much of this to me today. Although he had left Cairo before the riots, he had a certain amount of advance info pointing to the probable course of the trouble. I agree this shd. be printed. R.L. 1/2.

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The Soviet radio has at last given its view on these riots (see monitoring, Tuesday, 5th Feb) - They blame things ~~baron~~ for organizing the riots with the help of Ahmed Hussein and Hassan al-Hodabi (Muslim Brotherhood). It is interesting that there is no claim that this is a genuine peoples' uprising against the capitalist oppressors.

I wonder if there is ^{any} connexion between these events and the earlier report that Ahmed Hussein had been "bought" by Serag el Din at the time of the "sitout" march through Cairo in November '51. Ahmed Hussein's freedom on this occasion ^(5th Feb) might have been the other half of a bargain made at that time -

Shaw
5/2

Quite probable, (oh! think, in fact, it wd have been Ahmed Hussein who would have "bought" Serag.

R
22

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SECRET

Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution
Q
ARCHIVES

1018/36

JE 1018/36

EGYPT
31st January, 1952
Section 1

**THE RIOTING AND ORGANISED FIRE RAISING
IN CAIRO ON 26th JANUARY**

Chancery (Cairo) to African Department. (Received 31st January)

(Secret)

Cairo,

Dear Department, *30th January, 1952.*

We are, of course, making the fullest possible investigation into all aspects of the rioting on 26th January but it will be some time before we can sift the hundreds of individual reports, which we have set up a committee to investigate. Meanwhile we are sending this letter to amplify our telegrams. It has had to be written very hastily and with incomplete information, which, under the present conditions of martial law and a high state of tension, is hard to obtain—and when obtained—to confirm.

2. The first sign and to a considerable extent the cause of the trouble may well have been a demonstration of auxiliary policemen (Buluk al Nizam) in front of Abdin Palace at about half past ten on the morning of 26th January. Other auxiliary police went to one of the universities to incite the students, in which they were successful. The auxiliaries tore off and threw away their uniforms and a demonstration, marching towards the centre, soon developed into a riot. A café nearby was set on fire. (It is reported but not confirmed that the café was burned after an altercation with two Egyptian officers who were seen inside and accused of cowardice for not being in the front rank in Ismailia).

3. Very shortly afterwards an entirely different form of violence developed. Gangs apparently numbering between twenty and fifty appeared in various parts of the centre of Cairo and began to set fire to buildings. It is clear from all eye witness accounts that these gangs were excellently organised and were carrying out preparations made well in advance. In most cases they brought with them all the equipment necessary for fire-raising and in one case, for a building (Cairo Motors) where steel shutters had been installed about a month before to protect the Rolls Royces and Bentleys of very considerable value, this equipment even included an oxyacetylene cutter. The Turf Club, which is a purely British institution, was one of the

first buildings to be set on fire and was followed shortly afterwards by the other buildings listed in paragraph 10 below, together with most of the cinemas in Cairo, a number of well-known cafés and restaurants and some of the biggest department stores. The activities of these organised fire-raising gangs continued for several hours. They were, of course, accompanied by general rioting and looting by the Cairo mob which invariably collects on such occasions, but all eye-witnesses make it clear that two entirely different bodies were at work; the uncontrolled mob which was looting and these organised gangs which were deliberately and efficiently destroying without any thought of loot.

4. As far as we know, no British lives were lost except in the Turf Club. Accounts of what happened there are still incomplete but we have at least the following information. The first and one of the most significant facts is that during the morning a police guard outside the Turf Club, which, in view of constant anonymous threats, is normally kept at a strength of about forty, suddenly reduced itself to four policemen. While general mob rioting was taking place at one end of the street in which the club is situated, a gang of some forty or fifty men arrived suddenly from the other end of the street, made straight for the club, broke down the very heavy doors with battering rams which they had conveniently brought with them and set fire to the building with bundles soaked with kerosene which they had also brought with them. As you know, the bodies of nine British subjects have been recovered and no hope now remains for one other British subject who was last seen in the building. To confirm our telegrams we enclose a list of the casualties.

5. It seems certain that the gang which fired the Turf Club intended the murder of British subjects. Mr. C. F. A. Jones of the British Council was deliberately murdered after he had descended from the top floor of the building on knotted sheets. He was

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MR COSTA

knifed by the mob and we are told that his body was then soaked in petrol and burned. A Greek employee of the club, however, was allowed to pass through the crowd after he had proved that he was Greek, which both shows the unprecedented degree of discipline maintained by the fire-raising gang and implies that he would not have been allowed to pass if he had been British. On the other hand, an elderly British member of the club was also given the equivalent of safe conduct although he was certainly known to be British. While this, of course, in no way affects the legal guilt of those concerned, it seems possible that the intention of the leaders at any rate was to destroy property rather than life. There was certainly no attempt at a general massacre of British subjects throughout the city. In at least one case, however, it is clear that, having set a building on fire those concerned were determined that no one in it should escape. The British manager of the Rivoli Cinema was pursued through the maze of rooms in the burning building for 3½ hours by members of the gang responsible, whose intentions towards his life were in no doubt whatever.

6. Except in the immediate vicinity of this embassy, an area which includes the houses of Nahas and Serag El Dine Pashas, the police proved entirely incapable. Many of the police evidently knew what was to come and kept out of the way. Some, both regular and auxiliary, are known to have given the gangs direct assistance.

7. The army was called in at some time before 4 p.m. and arrived in the centre of the town between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. At the time this move did not appear to have immediate effect but we now think it probable that the appearance of the army put an immediate stop to the activities of the organised fire-raising gangs and left only a general, but in fact much less formidable, mob for the army to control. By 9 p.m. or thereabouts the army appeared to have the situation in hand and before mid-night many of the fires had either been put out or burned out; nevertheless, the fire brigades were working throughout the night and the next day. While the fire-raising was at its height, the fire brigades had been systematically prevented from working. There is considerable probability in the general impression that if it had not been a windless day most of Cairo to the east of the Nile would have burned.

8. Shortly before midnight Nahas Pasha broadcast a vicious speech against "British unbelievers and aggressors who despoil the country" and "traitors in our midst who

cause disorders." This was followed by the promulgation of a royal decree declaring martial law and appointing Nahas as Military Governor and Abdel Fattah Hassan as *Censeur Général*.

9. There was naturally a certain amount of looting in burning buildings during the night and sporadic small-arms fire was heard throughout the city. It appears that the army were firing from time to time in order to keep people in their houses. By Sunday morning the situation, although remaining, as indeed it still does, extremely tense, was temporarily at least under the control of the army. Armoured cars and lorries were and have since been patrolling the streets and army detachments are stationed at all strategic points.

10. The damage to British-owned property and British-controlled businesses is very considerable. Barclays Bank's main Cairo branch, the B.O.A.C. offices, the tourist department of Thomas Cook, W. H. Smith & Sons, the Rivoli Cinema and a number of other premises were either completely destroyed or very severely damaged. Even a full list of these, however, would not give a complete picture of the loss sustained by British commerce. Many of the non-British establishments that were destroyed were either agents for, or dealt in, British goods. Even given the most favourable circumstances, it must be some time before British commerce in Cairo can reach its former level. A further important result of the damage to commercial interests is that perhaps 10-15,000 people have been suddenly thrown out of work with no immediate prospect of regaining it. (The Commercial Secretariat has already an impressive list of businesses that have been destroyed and is reporting separately on this aspect.)

11. As we have said above the fire-raising was carefully organised and prepared, and the work of gangs which displayed an efficiency and discipline probably without precedent in the history of Egyptian rioting. We cannot tell yet which of the obvious suspects were responsible for this organisation. Several independent sources maintain that Ahmed Hussein, leader of the Socialist Egypt Party, was the organiser and another source confirms this but adds that Ahmed Hussein was working with the direct assistance of Serag El Dine, the then Minister of the Interior. Other reports maintain that at least individual members of the Moslem Brotherhood took part and inspired the many fires started in cinemas, cafés and bars. Members of the Peace Movement certainly played an active part and some senior police

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86124

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officers maintain that they were the primary organisers. All these interpretations are perfectly possible. In fact it seems certain that some members of all three bodies must have been concerned. On the whole, we think that the planning may have come from that part of the Moslem Brotherhood which objects to its present leader's moderate policy with the direct or indirect assistance of the Socialist Party and the Peace Movement. We do not believe Ahmed Hussein capable of so expert a feat of organisation. If the organisation came from the Peace Movement then for similar reasons we believe it must have come not from one of the overt leaders but from some really expert Communist organiser lying hidden in that Movement. This seems quite probable.

12. The new Government is known to be making a very serious search for those responsible. Ahmed Hussein has not yet been arrested, but active measures are being taken to find him; others caught so far may number 300 to 400, amongst whom are the leading members of the Peace Movement and the most notoriously extreme member of the Nationalist Party. It is as yet far too early to say what is likely to be the result of this wide sweep and the subsequent investigation, but it is satisfactory to know that at least such measures are being taken.

13. It is equally difficult to establish the motive entirely precisely. Anti-British feeling following the Ismailia incident, of course, played a very strong part, but it was almost certainly not the only motive. As we reported in our telegram No. 240, Dr. Hamid Zaki Pasha, the former Minister of National Economy in the Wafd Government, said in the Senate on 28th January that social and economic factors were at least contributory causes. This is surely true. The fire-raising gangs obviously worked with lists of buildings prepared well in advance. Although the first buildings on the list were certainly specifically British, there was just as much premeditation in the attacks on cinemas and department stores which were not British-owned and must have been known not to be British-owned by people as well informed as the organisers of the arson. This could be put down to xenophobia in general as distinct from anti-British feeling, but we think it probable that

the cinemas, the Pashas' clubs, the bars and cabarets frequented by the idle rich were attacked more as part of the morality drive begun by the Moslem Brotherhood and the big stores from a general feeling that their prices make them establishments only for such people. We think it certain that among the mixture of motives there was a strong element of plain revolutionary feeling. This is a point which can be legitimately and strongly stressed in our publicity. The classification of this letter as Secret applies only to paragraphs 11 and 12.

14. We apologise for all the "mays" and "mights," but it is impossible at this stage to be more specific.

Yours ever,
CHANCERY.

Enclosure

Five Persons killed and their bodies identified

Mr. J. I. Craig (ex-Egyptian Ministry of Finance).

Mr. H. A. Kennedy (ex-Public Instructor).

Mr. McLeod Boyer (Canadian Trade Commissioner).

Surgeon Commander W. S. Miller, R.N. (attached to N.A.M.R.U.).

Mr. C. F. A. Jones (British Council).

Five Persons missing, presumed killed

(Only four bodies, all of which are unidentifiable, have been recovered. One of these bodies is a woman's.)

Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Crawford (University Lecturer).

Mr. N. Williamson (Cairo manager of Mitchell Cotts Limited).

Mr. E. Waldmayer (British Tabulating Machine Company).

Mr. G. J. J. Thibaut (British Tabulating Machine Company).

Four Persons injured and in hospitals

Mr. N. Thomas (secretary of Turf Club).

Mr. I. Kilpatrick.

Mrs. C. M. Reid.

Judge Barne (formerly judge in the Mixed Courts).

<p>J</p> <p>AFRICAN DEPARTMENT</p> <p>EGYPT AND SUDAN</p>	<p>J E 1018/37</p>
--	---------------------------

1952

FROM
 Sir R. Stevenson
 Cairo
 No. 266 Secret
 Dated Jan. 31
 Received in Registry— Feb. 1

Discusses King Farouk's attitude to events in Ismailia and Cairo. He distrusts the police but trusts his Army.

REFERENCES
 JE 1018/32
 9

MINUTES
 I still don't think that we can take him King at face value.
 J.B. 1/2

(Print)

He doesn't like us, and he never will, however much soft soap he launches on Sir R. Stevenson. No doubt he did at first blame us for the fight he had on Jan. 26th, or subsequently when he recovered from the fight and found the true nature of the riots he blamed us less. But it would be a mistake to think that he is other than a broken reed who may pierce one hand if we lean on him too heavily.
 P.A. 1/2.

(How disposed of)

(Action completed)
 WB
 4/2/52

(Index)
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Gay J

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

En Clair
Sir R. Stevenson
No. 264
31st January, 1952

D: 10.10 a.m. 31st January, 1952
R: 11.06 a.m. 31st January, 1952

ASIDE

J E 1018/42

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 264 of January
31st.

Repeated for information to Beirut	Benghazi
Damascus	Amman
Bagdad	Jedda
Tripoli	Tehran

Article by Mohammed Tabei in Ahker Laher of 30th January, calls the 26th January Black Saturday and a dark page in Egypt's annals, and challenges the Egyptian Government to speak the truth about it. The riots showed a street government of malice and anarchy existing alongside the legal government. The riots were not due, as Nahas pretends, to infiltration: actually the majority of rioters were criminal traitors, who have shown the world that Egypt is unable to maintain order in her own capital, and that the Egyptian police cannot always keep order and protect foreign interests. One might have forced oneself to understand had the damage been limited to British property, but it extended to friendly states such as Switzerland, France and the United States and above all to Egyptian lives and property. The article concludes by demanding investigations of the failure to control the riots and delay in summoning the army.

2. Full text by bag.

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL
DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 266 D. 1.45 p.m. 31st January, 1952
31st January, 1952. R. 2.42 p.m. 31st January, 1952

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

JE 1018/37

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 266 of 31st January.

Repeated for information to Washington,
Memin (Fayid),
and Saving to:- Paris,
Ankara.

My telegram No. 259. King Farouk.

JE 1018/32
JE 1018/9

I discussed with my United States colleague last night the rapid change in the King's attitude from that which he had assumed on 26th January (see my telegram No. 174). We came to the conclusion that the King was probably quite sincere on both occasions. On Saturday afternoon so far as he knew disturbances in Cairo were the result of popular indignation at the events in Ismailia the day before. While my United States colleague was talking to him rifle fire in the vicinity was heavy as the mob was attacking the police station near the palace. The Queen and her newly born son were in the palace and (as the King told me himself yesterday) she was thoroughly frightened. The King's entourage, according to my United States colleague, were equally frightened and showed it. The King had given orders to the Egyptian army to intervene but was not sure how far Wafdist influence would prevent them from being effective. He had no faith in the police. His bitterness in regard to those whom he then thought were responsible for his predicament is therefore comprehensible.

2. Since then he has discovered that the disturbances on January 26th had been obviously planned for some time beforehand by the Communists and other extremists. The British action at Ismailia on Friday had merely been the excuse for putting these plans into operation. He was disgusted with the behaviour of /the police



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SECRET

Cairo telegram No. 266 to Foreign Office

-2-

the police on January 26th and particularly of the auxiliary detachments and therefore his sympathy for the latter had declined. (This was quite clear to me when I discussed the Ismailia fighting with him yesterday). His qualified faith in the army has since been justified and he was very proud of them. He was also very pleased with himself for having got rid of the Wafd at a moment when their prestige had fallen to zero and after they had been forced to establish martial law.

3. In general he was frightened and in a bad temper on January 26th and on January 30th he had recovered his equanimity and self confidence. He is a mercurial creature and his feelings and enthusiasms are often short lived. Nevertheless on this occasion he has had a sharp lesson and it may well be that he will in future take his responsibilities more seriously.

4. I do not over estimate the value of the assurance contained in paragraph 2 of my telegram under reference, but it may prove useful in helping us to recast our ideas in regard to possible military action in the Delta in case of need.

Foreign Office pass Washington and Saving to Paris and Ankara as my telegrams 75 and Saving 18 and 5 respectively.

[Repeated to Washington and Saving to Paris and Ankara].

ADVANCE COPIES:-

Private Secretary,
Sir W. Strang,
Sir P. Dixon,
Mr. Bowker,
Head African Department,
Head News Department.

kkk

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL
DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson
No. 270

D. 10.17 p.m. 31st January, 1952

31st January, 1952

R. 11.22 p.m. 31st January, 1952

PRIORITY
CONFIDENTIAL

JE 1018/39

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 270 of 31st January
Repeated for information to Washington, Memin (Fayid).

Your telegram No. 233 and my telegrams Nos. 247 and 255.

All mention of the disorder in Cairo was cut by the Egyptian censor from the reports of your statement of 29th January appearing here. In consequence, though most Egyptians are thoroughly ashamed of what happened they have no knowledge of any official stricture on it all by His Majesty's Government, though my information services are doing their best.

2. For the reasons given in my previous telegrams, I am anxious to sub it in a little harder before we can turn to a more conciliatory tone. It is most important that public opinion both here and abroad, should be thoroughly impressed with the appalling state into which this country has been led by the Wafd Government and should know of the dangerous grip which subversive Communist and near-Communist elements have established on disillusioned city workers and others. If we pursue this line strongly it might well help Ali Maher to combat any plans the Wafd must surely be preparing for their return to power. Our hand will also be strengthened in submitting claims for compensation.

4. [sic] In spite of our failure to get anything past the censorship last time a statement in the House of Commons remains the best peg on which to hang publicity here, and further words by you in the House of Commons in the vein I suggest would be most valuable and should be given the maximum publicity by the B.B.C. No doubt there will be Parliamentary Questions in any case.

5. You will now have full details of what happened in my telegram No. 248 and Chancery letter to African Department of the 30th January.

6. Please see also article summarised by my Aside No. 264.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my telegram No. 76.

[Repeated to Washington].

uuuuu

FEB 1 1952

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITENALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 296

3rd February, 1952.

D. 10.57 a.m. 3rd February, 1952.

R. 11.31 a.m. 3rd February, 1952.

SECRET

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 296 of 3rd February.

Repeated for information to Washington,

Memin Fayid

And Saving to Paris and

Ankara.

JE 1018/47

1018/45

My telegram No. 291 (New Egyptian Government).

Elias Andraes Pasha called on me last night at my request. My object in seeing him was to ensure that the King (with whom he seems to remain on closer terms than anyone else) should bring pressure to bear on Aly Maher in the matter of his dangerous flirtation with the Wafd. I emphasised particularly the hopelessness of trying to negotiate with a body such as the proposed National Front Political Committee, if Salah El Din had anything to do with it. I also stressed the necessity of pinning responsibility for the events of January 26th on Serag El Din.

2. As regards the National Front Political Committee I said that, if it was absolutely essential to establish it now, the Wafdist representatives must be chosen from among the moderate members of the party, such as Zaky Al Oraby Pasha, but even so they would be under the influence of Salah El Din. Moreover it was highly desirable to keep negotiations as secret as possible. This would be difficult enough in any circumstances but quite out of the question if a National Front Political Committee had even an advisory rôle in them. I would therefore much prefer to see the formation of the committee postponed until enough progress had been made to give good hope of final agreement.

3. Elias Andraes though a past-master in the art of intrigue (and a monumental liar) lacks political vision and

/often fails

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SECRET

Cairo telegram No. 296 to Foreign Office

2.

often fails to grasp the importance of seemingly obvious aspects of a situation. On this occasion however he appeared to be impressed and was attracted by the idea of postponing the formation of the committee. This may not be too difficult as the opposition parties are showing signs of reluctance to cooperate with the Wafd on it.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my telegram No. 81 and Saving to Paris and Ankara as my telegrams Nos. 21 and 6, respectively.

[Repeated to Washington and Saving to Paris and Ankara.]

VVVVV

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 291

2nd February 1952

D: 3.45 p.m. 2nd February 1952

R: 6.05 p.m. 2nd February 1952

PRIORITY

SECRET

JE 1018/45

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 291 of 2nd February
Repeated for information to Washington

Memia Fayid

My telegram No. 270: ^{JE 1018/39} New Egyptian Government.

I have been increasingly disturbed these last few days by evidence of flirtation with the Wafd by Ali Maher Pasha. The formation of a national front political committee in which the Wafd would be represented is one of the disquieting features particularly as it is reported in the press that Salah el Dine and Ibrahim Farag will be the Wafd's representatives.

2. I called on Hafez Afifi Pasha this morning and spoke to him seriously on the subject. He said that the King (and he himself) were as much disturbed by this tendency on the part of Ali Maher as I was and had charged him to warn the Prime Minister of the danger involved. It was quite obvious that the Wafd were merely trying to rehabilitate themselves and furthermore that any association of them with the negotiations themselves would be fatal particularly if Salah el Dine had anything to do with it. He had spoken on these lines to Ali Maher yesterday and the latter had said that the proposed political committee was merely a facade and that he was keeping the Wafd in play for the moment in order to get over the present difficult period before the forces of order had been reorganised and sufficiently strengthened. The Prime Minister had professed to be aware of the danger but confident of his ability to deal with it. Hafez Afifi Pasha told me that the Prime Minister would shortly be returning my courtesy visit and encouraged me to reinforce what had already

/been said

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SECRET

Cairo telegram No. 291 to Foreign Office

-2-

been said to him about the Wafd. I was well placed for doing so as I had had the doubtful pleasure of trying to negotiate with Salah el Dine myself.

3. Another point which I raised with the Chief of the Royal Cabinet was the absolute necessity of pinning the responsibility for the events of January 26th publicly on Fuad Serag el Dine Pasha and Abdul Fattah Hassan Pasha. If this were not done confidence would never be restored and the Wafd would be able to evade their just deserts. Afifi Pasha said that he fully agreed and had discussed this matter also with Ali Maher Pasha. The latter had assured him that the Parquet enquiries were being pressed on with the utmost speed in order to establish clearly the responsibilities. Afifi Pasha told me that he was satisfied that that was in fact being done.

4. In connexion with the resumption of negotiations (my telegram No. 272) I reminded Afifi Pasha of your statement in the House of Commons on January 29th announcing our readiness to negotiate and said that I would take advantage of Ali Maher's forthcoming visit to me (see paragraph 2 above) to find out what his ideas were about the best way of starting the talks.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my telegram No.80.

[Repeated to Washington]

QQQ



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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 295

2nd February 1952

D: 7.12 p.m. 2nd February 1952

R: 7.48 p.m. 2nd February 1952

CONFIDENTIAL

JE 1018/46

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 295 of 2nd
February

Repeated for information to Memin Fayid
and Saving to Washington

My telegram No. 256: Interview with Prime Minister.

Prime Minister has now replied to my letter giving assurance that question of compensation for victims of 26th January is under examination in the light of the investigation by the Parquet.

2. He confirms that he has given instructions that witnesses appearing before the Parquet inquiry into the burning of the Turf Club should be heard in camera.

3. He has also given instructions for the free movement of members of the Embassy to and from the Canal Zone on condition that the Governors of Port Said and Suez and magistrates and members of the Parquet should have same freedom. I am arranging this with H.Q. B.T.E.

4. He concludes that he is ready to examine sympathetically all points of friction with a view to their removal and the creation of a less tense atmosphere.

Foreign Office please pass to Washington as my Saving telegram No.12.

[Repeated Saving to Washington]

QQQ



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(JE 1018/39)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

PERSONAL and**OUTFILE**

6th February, 1952.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear W. Smith.

You will have received by telegraph an extract from yesterday's foreign affairs debate covering the Secretary of State's remarks about Egypt. I am afraid that we were unable to arrange for the inclusion in the Secretary of State's speech of the kind of passage which you evidently had in mind in your telegram No. 270 of the 31st January, emphasizing the indignation felt in this country about the Cairo riots and the Wafd Government's responsibility for their having ever happened. We brought the Ambassador's views to the Secretary of State's attention, but on consideration he did not feel that he should include more on this topic than he actually did.

2. Meanwhile we have taken the line you suggest with the British Broadcasting Corporation and similar agencies, and I think one can say that the United Kingdom Press have given pretty good coverage during the past ten days to the events of the 26th January, and the gruesome details which have since emerged.

R. Markworth Young

for (R. Allen)

J.H. Wardle-Smith, Esq.,
Cairo.

Ref: FO 371/96871

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(JE 1018/46)

CONFIDENTIAL

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

9th February, 1952.

OUTFILE

Dear Chancery,

We are glad to learn from your telegram No. 295 of 2nd February that the question of compensation for the victims of the 26th January riots is under examination by the Egyptian Government in the light of the investigations by the Parquet.

2. Your telegram No. 318 of 5th February shows that you have already collected some of the evidence which will be required to establish international responsibility of the Egyptian Government. You are, no doubt familiar with the detailed guidance in Chapter IX of the Foreign Service Instructions. We think that it would be a wise precaution to collect all the available evidence bearing upon the question of international responsibility, now, while witnesses and evidence can be found. (Paragraphs 27-29 of Chapter IX refer). This general evidence will be of fundamental importance to all the individual Claims arising from events on 26th January. The detailed evidence required in particular cases is also shown in Chapter IX Part II and you will no doubt have started to receive the separate claims and to tell British applicants how to prepare the evidence. We fear that this will involve you in a great deal of work but we are anxious to avoid the difficulties which have arisen in the past through failure to collect evidence at the time.

3. We should be grateful for your comments and recommendations as to the best way of obtaining full satisfaction of the British claims. Whatever happens, we must clearly try to avoid getting these claims bogged-down with all the rest of our claims and counter-claims against the Egyptian Government. Our hand will have been strengthened in the present case by the fact that there will presumably be claims presented by other foreign governments whose nationals suffered in the Cairo riots. We think there may be some tactical advantage in trying to arrange that all foreign claims including those of British nationals should be presented together - or at least in close co-ordination. If you agree, perhaps you would discuss this possibility with other foreign missions concerned. They may also be able to assist with evidence of international responsibility, or as regards damage to particular buildings or property, and there may be advantage in acting together in these matters.

Yours ever,

AFRICAN DEPARTMENT.

The Chancery,
British Embassy,
Cairo.

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OUTFILE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

13th February, 1952.

(JE 1018/46)
CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Chancery,

We wrote to you (JE 1018/46) on 9th February about compensation for the victims of the Cairo riots. Sir John Mellor has put down the two following parliamentary questions for February 25th.

- (a) To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can now give an estimate of the damage to British property during the riots in Cairo.
- (b) To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether compensation has now been offered by the Egyptian Government for the loss of British lives and property during the riots in Cairo; and upon what basis of assessment.

2. We shall be able to give provisional answers to these questions in the light of your telegrams Nos. 243 of 29th January and 295 of 2nd February respectively. We should, however, be grateful to have by 21st February any further information which may be available. In particular we should be glad to know whether you have had any reason to revise your provisional estimate of the damage done to British property.

Yours ever,
AFRICAN DEPARTMENT.

The Chancery,
British Embassy,
Cairo.

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OUTFILE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

(JE 1018/49)

9th February, 1952.

Dear Mr. Adams,

In accordance with your request of the 29th January we telegraphed to Cairo to ask them to ascertain from the local manager of Thomas Cook's Limited, Cairo the extent of damage to tourist premises and the possibility of re-establishing business. We have now heard from the Embassy in Cairo ~~that~~ that they will shortly be replying formally to this enquiry, but in the meantime the following extract from their letter may be of interest to you, if only by way of confirmation.

"The Cairo tourist offices of Thomas Cook Limited were set on fire at about 3 p.m. on the 25th January and were completely destroyed. The only items of value left in the offices appear to be the safes of which there were eight and of which the four most important can actually be seen. Up to the time of writing the premises could not be entered as they were still smouldering, but are under guard of two policemen and two of Messrs. Cook's staff. The safes are understood to have contained when the premises were closed on Saturday some £8,000 cash and it is hoped that this will prove to be

intact/

Stanley Adams, Esq.,
Thomas Cook and Son Limited.

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intact when they are opened. The tourist offices are at the moment operating from premises belonging to the Engineering Department of Messrs. Thomas Cook in ~~London~~. The area which is surrounded by slums and small engineering works is quite unsuitable for a permanent place of business. Mr. Hislop is at present busily engaged in trying to obtain suitable premises in the centre of the town so that he can re-establish the business as soon as possible. He suggested to us that perhaps the Semiramis Hotel might prove to be the best temporary location, but he has made no decision as yet.

The staff are all fortunately safe though Mr. Churchill the acting manager of the Cairo branch had a fortunate escape. He only managed to escape safely out of the hotel in which he lived and which was also fired, by inserting himself in a party of German tourists."

I will let you know as soon as we hear again from Cairo.

Yours sincerely

(D.V. Bendall)

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FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

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

Cypher/OTF

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

Sir R. Stevenson

No. 306

4th February, 1952.

B. 6.32 p.m. 4th February, 1952.

R. 7.29 p.m. 4th February, 1952.

PRIORITY

SECRET

JE1018/50

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 306 of 4th February.

Repeated for information to Washington,

Memin Fayid,

And Saving to Paris and
Ankara.

JE1018/47

My telegram No. 296: New Egyptian Government.

Andraes Pasha informed me verbally this evening that the proposed national front political committee will not (repeat not) be formed. This is good news.

2. As regards the pinning of responsibility for the events of January 26th on to Fuad Serag el Din and Abdul Fattah Hassan (which I had also raised with him) Andraes Pasha said that he had not had much success so far although the King was in agreement. He was going to continue his pressure. I pointed out that unless the guilty were brought to book, foreign commercial interests in Egypt would have no further confidence in the stability of the country and would inevitably withdraw. Neither I, nor I should think any head of a foreign mission in Cairo would be justified in such circumstances in encouraging our respective commercial interests to remain here. Egyptian economy would suffer irreparable damage and it was therefore more to the advantage of Egypt than of anyone else that the government should act rigorously against the guilty. He fully agreed and repeated his undertaking to work on the Prime Minister.

Foreign Office pass to Washington and Saving to Paris and Ankara as my telegrams Nos. 84 and Saving 23 and 8, respectively.

[Repeated to Washington and Saving to Paris and Ankara.]

VVVVV



Ref.: FO 371/96871

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QB32 : EGYPT : NATIONAL FRONT WILL GO ON : MAHER DENIES RUMOURS

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(CAIRO RADIO 15.05) PREMIER ALY MAHER PASHA DENIED REPORTS PUBLISHED THIS AFTERNOON THAT HE HAS POSTPONED THE FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL FRONT. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION PUT TO HIM BY THE CAIRO RADIO REPORTER HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT POSTPONED THE FORMATION OF THE FRONT AND THAT HE HAD NOT YET COMPLETED HIS CONTACTS IN CONNECTION WITH IT.

JE 10/8/50

END BBC MON. 17.1'7 5/2 PNE KY

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Mr. Palmer of the U.S. Embassy came to see me today to pass on the contents of a telegram which the U.S. Embassy had received from the U.S. Ambassador in Cairo. The main points in Mr. Caffery's telegram were -

- (a) It would be undesirable for H.M.G. to suggest publicly that they expected a friendly gesture from the new Egyptian Government. In Mr. Caffery's view this would be the "kiss of death" for that Government.
- (b) The new Government's first main task would be the restoration of order. The fact that they had received support in Parliament had greatly strengthened their position. The Government as it stood was in Mr. Caffery's view not a bad one.
- (c) The King had acted intelligently in giving power to a Government of this kind. If he had called in an Opposition Government, the Wafd would have been in a difficulty about according it support at the outset. As it was the Opposition parties were so delighted at the dismissal of the Wafd that they had had no qualms about supporting the new Government, and the Wafd had fallen into line.
- (d) Nahas Pasha and Serag ed Din felt that the King had played a trick on them, in inducing them to declare martial law late on Saturday night when he must have had it in mind to dismiss them. Even as late as 9 o'clock on Sunday evening Nahas and Serag ed Din did not know how they stood, although throughout Sunday they had been feeling that it was increasingly likely that the King would dismiss them. Shortly after 9 p.m. they telephoned to Mr. Caffery with the news of the Government's dismissal.
- (e) The King telephoned to Mr. Caffery after the Government's dismissal to the effect that his views regarding his title as King of the Sudan and his antagonism towards the British were unchanged. The British had wanted the Wafd Government out; well, they were out but it should not be thought that any Egyptian Government could be other than anti-British.
- (f) Ali Maher had indicated to Mr. Caffery that the new Government would play down the incidents in the Canal Zone.

Roger Allen

30th January, 1952.

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African Dept
Mr Parsons

PAPER 1 - WITH CLUB SERIES, ISMAILIA

CAIRO JAN 30 REUTER - MOHAMED EL TABEL, WIDELY-READ LEADER WRITER IN THE INDEPENDENT ARABIC NEWSPAPER AKHER LAHZA, TODAY URGED THE RESPONSIBLE EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES TO REVEAL ALL THE FACTS ABOUT THE ORGY OF MOB RULE IN CAIRO LAST SATURDAY.

"CALL THINGS BY THEIR PROPER NAMES," HE WROTE.

THE PAPER'S EDITORIAL ASKED FOR CLEAR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS: 1, WHY THE SECURITY CHIEFS FAILED TO CONTROL THE SITUATION;

2, WHY THEY ALLOWED CROWDS OF WHAT THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT DESCRIBED AS "TRAITORS AND CRIMINALS" TO RULE THE CAIRO STREETS WITH STEEL AND FIRE;

3, WHETHER ORDERS GIVEN TO THE POLICE WERE COMPLIED WITH;

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WHY WHEN THE POLICE PROVED UNABLE TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION THE ARMY WAS NOT CALLED IN TIME.

MORE 1641

This may
be relevant
if we have
to prove
"negligence"
in support
of future
claims for
compensation

Advised
20/1

JE1018/53