

27389

3 1941

20 SEP

1A

Index Number } 1993/2/16.

FROM MEMORANDUM

of a conversation

No.

Date 19th Sept. 1941.

Received in Registry } 20th Sept. 1941.

Re: Egypt and Sudan.

... declaration that Cairo is an open city. Mr. Eden told Egyptian Ambassador that agreement for Cairo to be declared an open city was futile. The Ambassador was inclined to argue the case for a declaration in respect of an open city and eventually argued that it might be well for His Majesty's Government to say to Egyptian Government that if Cairo were seriously bombed they would limit their undertaking to bomb Rome. Mr. Eden said Sir M. Lampson had explained the position as regards retaliation to the Egyptian Prime Minister.

Main Paper.

(Minutes)

Despatch to Cairo  
The views  
of the  
Dominion

References.

(Print)

NEED

(How disposed of)

(Initials) (Initials)

Main Paper.

EGYPT.

September 19, 1941.

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 2.

ARCHIVED

[C 2002/2/43]

Copy No. 8

*Mr. Eden to Sir M. Lempson (Cairo).*

(No. 293.)

Sir,

*Foreign Office, September 19, 1941.*

DURING the course of a conversation with the Egyptian Ambassador this afternoon we spoke of Cairo as an open city. I told the Ambassador that this agitation was futile. Everyone must know by now that the Germans respected no such undertaking. They would bomb Cairo if it suited them and, if it did not, they would leave it alone. Declarations would not affect their policy one way or another. Moreover, I must remind the Ambassador that the King himself had asked urgently that our troops should be reinforced in 1938, and that Cairo was the headquarters of the Egyptian army. The Ambassador was inclined to argue the case for a declaration in respect of an open city, and eventually maintained that, as regards retaliation, it might be well for us to say to the Egyptian Government that, if Cairo were to be seriously bombed, we were prepared to fulfil our undertaking to bomb Rome on condition that the Egyptian Government requested us to do so and assumed responsibility for any further bombing of Cairo that might result. I said that I thought you had already explained our position in respect of retaliation to the Prime Minister. His Excellency persisted, however, that you might think it worth while to consider this course, which he felt sure would be appreciated by the Egyptian Government.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

Registry *J. G. P.*  
No.

J 2993

September 10th, 1941.

A.E.

Sir,

*Draft.*

Sir M. Lampson,  
Cairo.

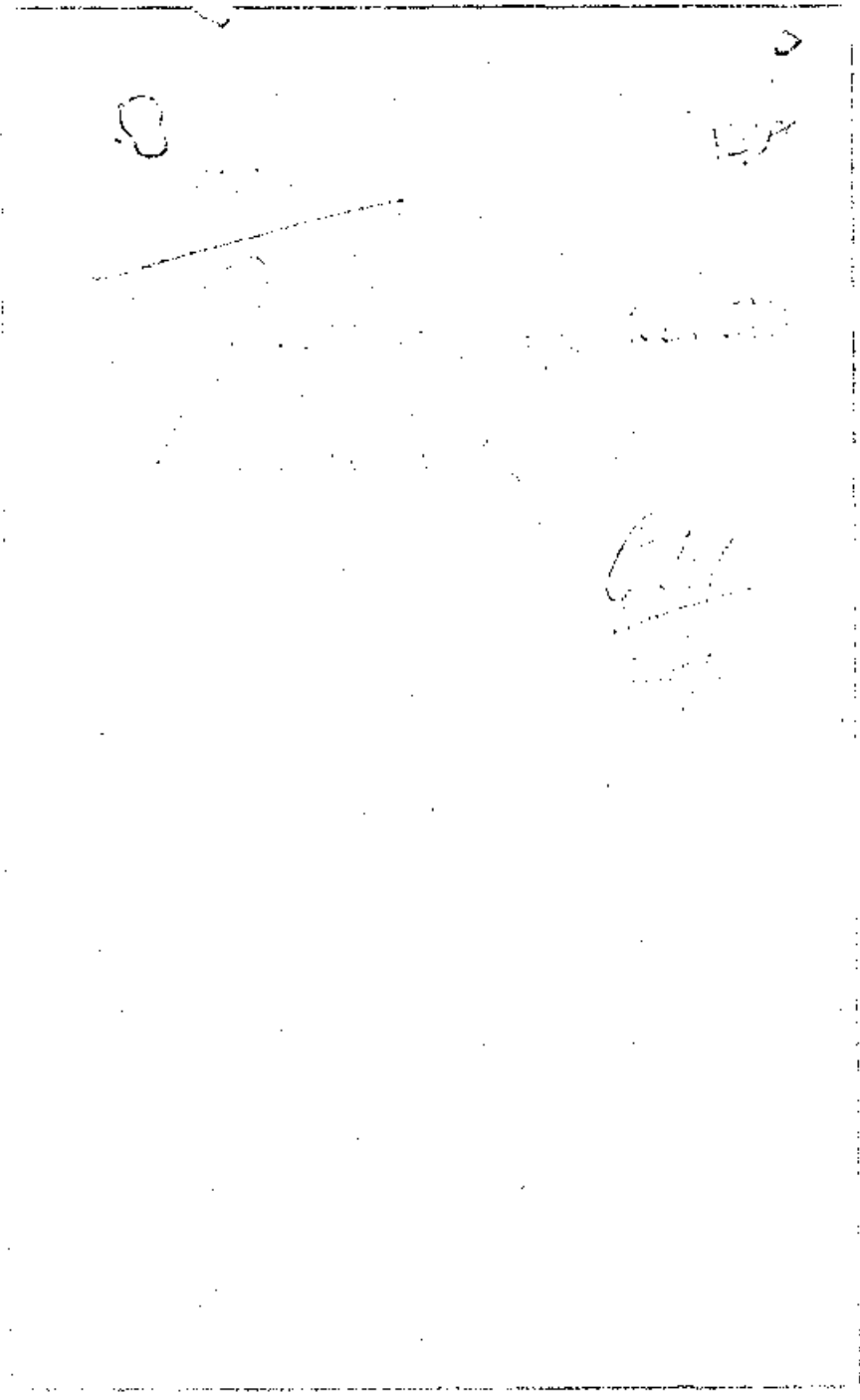
No. *276*

*K.C.*

NOTHING TO BE VIEWED IN THIS MATTER.

During the course of a conversation with the Egyptian Ambassador this afternoon we spoke of Cairo as an open city. I told the Ambassador that this agitation was futile. Everyone must know by now that the Germans respected no such undertaking. They would bomb Cairo if it suited them and, if it did not, they would leave it alone. Declarations would not affect their policy one way or another. Moreover I must remind the Ambassador that the King himself had asked urgently that our troops should be reinforced in 1938 and that Cairo was the headquarters of the Egyptian army. The Ambassador was inclined to argue the case for a declaration in respect of an open city and eventually maintained that, as regards retaliation, it might be well for us to say to the Egyptian Government that, if Cairo were to be seriously bombed, we were prepared to fulfil our undertaking to bomb Rome on mutual condition that the Egyptian Government requested us to do so and assumed responsibility for any further bombing of Cairo that might result. I said that I thought you had already explained our position in respect of retaliation to the Prime Minister. His Excellency persisted, however, that you might think it worth while to consider this course, which he felt sure would be appreciated by the Egyptian Government.

*R. S. P.*



EGYPT.

September 19, 1941.

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 2.

[E 2368/2/41]

Copy No. 67

*Mr. Eden to Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).*

(No. 293.)

*Foreign Office, September 19, 1941.*

Sir,

DURING the course of a conversation with the Egyptian Ambassador this afternoon we spoke of Cairo as an open city. I told the Ambassador that this agitation was futile. Everyone must know by now that the Germans respected no such undertaking. They would bomb Cairo if it suited them and, if it did not, they would leave it alone. Declarations would not affect their policy one way or another. Moreover, I must remind the Ambassador that the King himself had asked urgently that our troops should be reinforced in 1939, and that Cairo was the headquarters of the Egyptian army. The Ambassador was inclined to argue the case for a declaration in respect of an open city, and eventually maintained that, as regards retaliation, it might be well for us to say to the Egyptian Government that, if Cairo were to be seriously bombed, we were prepared to fulfil our undertaking to bomb Rome on condition that the Egyptian Government requested us to do so and assumed responsibility for any further bombing of Cairo that might result. I said that I thought you had already explained our position in respect of retaliation to the Prime Minister. His Excellency persisted, however, that you might think it worth while to consider this course, which he felt sure would be appreciated by the Egyptian Government.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

[21--53]

J 3021

23 SEP 1941

File No. J 3021/2/16

TELEGRAM FROM  
Sir H. Morrison, Cairo.

No. 2959

Date 23rd Sept. 1941.

Received in Registry } 23rd Sept. 1941.

J : Egypt and Sudan

Proposal that Cairo be declared an open city.

Refers to Foreign Office telegram No. 3260 (J 2913/2/16). Prime Minister expects to have to answer interpretation on this point but will do so in secret session. He evidently wished to give impression that question was closed.

Last Paper.

(Minutes.)

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

We have suggested to Sir H. Morrison the advisability of instituting the "Open City" campaign over to the more advantageous one of postponing the approval to London caused by the bombing of Cairo (see our tel to Cairo Sept (attached))

Mr. Small had, almost immediately, the same idea and was concurred in his proposal to send a tel to Cairo in this sense

*[Signature]*

MS. 27/9

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

[unclear]

DEFINITIVE NO. 2.

FROM GIVING NO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Sir H. Lumsden.

No. 2559.

D. 7.55 p.m. 22nd September, 1941.

22nd September, 1941.

R. 9.50 p.m. 22nd September, 1941.

vvvvvv

IN FOREIGN.

Your telegram No. 3260. [unclear]

I this morning reminded Prime Minister accordingly.

2. He expects to have to answer interpellation shortly, but will do this in secret session when he will speak openly. He evidently wished to give me the impression that this question was closed: this may, I fear, be over-optimistic.

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23 SEP 1941