

1941

How Egypt

EGYPTIAN 27428

84/18/16

63

Registry Number } 84/18/16

TELEGRAM FROM Sir M. Lampson (Cairo)

No. 139 S

Dated 23rd Dec., 1940.

Received in Registry } 11th Jan., 1941.

Egyptian.

Egypt : King Farouk.

Records an interview with Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha, who gave his views on the character of the King and the danger to the country of his remaining on the Throne.

Last Paper.

34/34/66

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

Next Paper.

(Minutes.)

There is nothing very new in this conversation - we have had it all before. Sir M. Lampson on numerous occasions. We are, therefore, fully aware of the King's sin, and of the various shortcomings of King Farouk. But, as we have always felt that it would be impossible to get rid of the King without precipitating a serious internal crisis in Egypt, we have preferred so far to be extremely cautious. The point is that once one State or more in Egypt, it is impossible to foresee anything...

C

And, during the larger part of 1940, with our Axis victory after Austria and with Graziani encamped on Egyptian soil, with our own resources limited, we could not lightly embark on a provocative policy which our enemies in Egypt would have turned to excellent account. This attitude was supported by General Maxwell.

No doubt in time we will have to get rid of the King. But, if a when the need arises, let us choose the right issue and above all the right moment. It would, in my submission, have been nothing short of folly, having regard to our other responsibilities, to have produced matters to a head at the time of the very darkest crisis shortly after Italy's entry into the war.

(2)

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Venture to utter a note of warning against allowing ourselves to be too greatly influenced by occasional broadsides of this type. Personal likes & dislikes play a large role in Egyptian politics and it is an unfortunate fact - and an old story - that the King & Mr. Baker on the one hand, and the Ambassador on the other, are personally antipathetic. Apart from this, it has been repeatedly stated in departmental minutes that there is need for fresh blood and a fresh outlook in the Ministry.

Gov. B

Structural is Crisis. With a Minister & a Joint Secretary, etc. like appeared in the Middle East, the ...

upon the advice of the Oriental
 Commission who has been to
 my in Cairo and who has
 the ~~main~~ main operations.

But the Arabs do
 on a change he
 is suggested really
 though wished to
 which he had
 W.S.
 13/1

I submit that there must be
 some explanation for the fact
 that as the records will prove,
 departmental appreciation
 of political developments in
 Egypt during the past several
 years have, given in speaking,
 been more accurate than
 those of the ~~former~~ former, G.M.C.,
 Middle East have seen the
 picture is much the same
 view as ~~another~~.

In minutes an advance copy
 of the Telegram the Secretary of
 State has asked whether there
 was any ~~...~~ why it should
 not be accorded to distinction.
 There is none, except that
 it might ~~...~~ ~~...~~

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

the ~~was~~ not in any to day. And this is the extreme made of ~~events~~ in Egypt. But if Dr. Linn wishes, the entire distribution can, of course, be given.

~~_____~~

yes. Bz. ✓

I think this should have distribution B.

We as I believe side no. discuss about the possible distribution. I believe however that it is a possible distribution as some of the members of the committee are not yet formed. "Linn" is an adviser not agent.

1/11/11

Alfred J. ...

I shall not myself be as severe upon the Ambassador as is Dr. Thompson. Sir M. Sampson knows the people with whom he is dealing very well and

It is difficult for anyone
to have dealings with ^{Faouk} ~~him~~
and not agree with Sir
H. Seymour's comment at X.

His removal would not bring
stability, but he may be even
more troublesome to us now
that he, & Egypt, ^{are} recovering
from their fears.

I note with interest H. Thompson's
remark at X. That time may
not so easily present itself.
In its present I find myself
poised half-way between the
Professor & ~~the~~ H. Thompson,
which is, I think, about where
General Hancock is also.

This is not a question upon
which one can be dogmatic,
it is a delicate balance of
advantages & disadvantages -

BB Jan 14

I think we ought to make up our
minds quite definitely whether our
long term policy is, or is not, to get
rid of Faouk. Once we have decided
that, local considerations of the

course of the war must decide which is the opportune moment. But are we quite sure of our objective. I am, + Ingham + Ingham is, + the Ambassador comes up to the scratch, - + recedes, which I understand. But ought we to be sure of what we are aiming at - ^{where} the propitious moment arrives. It may not be today or tomorrow. But I am personally uncertain whether we have got a definite + long term policy in this respect.

Jan 15

Just should see Sir R Vansittart's minute. There is not only one policy to be considered, but General Wavell's view, for he will have to bear the military burden. I am pretty certain from what he told me that he would not wish to act now, nor to tie himself to do so in the future.

problem is to a large extent
academic.

A.R. Jan 15

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

~~SECRETED DISTRIBUTION.~~

DISTRIBUTION B.

10 Jan 1941

From EGYPT.

Telegram (en clair) from Sir M. Lampson (Cairo).
23rd December, 1940.

D. (By Bag) 26th December, 1940.

R. 6.40 p.m., 10th January, 1941.

No. 139 Saving.

.....

SECRET.

Mohamed Mahmoud Pasha has been gravely ill for some time. For the first time for nearly a year I saw him this evening at his invitation.

2. He looks like a dying man. But his mind and speech remain completely clear.

5. It was at once evident that he had something he specially wanted to say. After briefly referring to internal politics and his attempt to get the Saadists to support Hussein Sirry (an attempt which after apparent success now seemed to have failed) he said he trusted we realised that there was no real hope for Egypt or for our relations with Egypt so long as the present King remained. His Majesty was rotten to the core and we should be making a great mistake if we ever thought otherwise. Hussein Sirry was doing his best to undo the mischief done by Aly Maher, but King Farouk was incorrigible. True, he had learnt now that the Italians were beaten, but he still believed that Germany would defeat us. But apart from all that, King Farouk would always remain a danger to us and to his country. We had missed a great opportunity in not getting rid of him during the last crisis; and if we had been held back by any thought there would have been hostile reaction to his elimination we had been wrong - the country would have heaved a sigh of universal relief - and would do so tomorrow. He hoped that with the war to help us, we should not hesitate a second time. With Mohamed Aly available we should not worry over the succession. Indeed, it would be no bad thing for Egypt if, after the latter's eventual disappearance, the whole dynasty went for they were a thoroughly rotten lot.

4. I said that knowing him as well as I did and in complete secrecy I might say that last summer King Farouk had only been saved by the appointment of Hassan Sabry. The latter had succeeded in getting matters on to a better basis; and now we had Hussein Sirry whose hope I knew it was to continue the same work; but I did not disguise my own misgivings, formed as the result of some years observation, that King Farouk's occupancy of the Throne was not a factor in the promotion of good relations with us. At the same time we had to be realists, and did not want to add to our other present

preoccupations ...

preoccupations by a major crisis in Egypt. Our present policy was to support the new Government and to do all that we reasonably could to help the Prime Minister in his attempt to reform the character of the Sovereign. But I must confess I was not myself over confident of success, a view which I had expressed to you, Sir, when you recently visited Egypt.

5. I have reported this talk at some length, not because any need for immediate action arises but because I had the impression that Mohamed Mahmoud was particularly anxious that his views should be submitted whilst he could still express them clearly; and because he is one of the few Egyptians who, in my opinion, has real judgment coupled with a realistic appreciation of the true interests both of his country and of ours. I have for long felt myself that there will be no true stability in our relations with Egypt with King Farouk on the Throne. I do not however suggest any deviation from our present line of policy; but next time we are provoked I believe we should act at once and act vigorously.

DEPARTMENTAL (SECRET).

Telegram (en clair) from Sir M. Lampson, (Cairo).
25th December, 1940.

D. By bag
R. 6.40 p.m.

26th December, 1940.
10th January, 1941.

11 JAN 1941

No. 159 SAVING.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

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