

J. 2128

Egypt
27468

18

J 2128 / 90 / 10
4/18/16
Foreign Office
Minute
Mr. Dasky
dated July 5.
Recd. July 5.

Leakage of Military Information to the
the Indians.

Reports on the investigation into the
case of a leakage of a secret memo
on the defence of Siva.

Last Paper.
J. 1423 / 4/18/16

(Minutes.)

References.

The present position is that though the Egyptian
Enquiry has got under way, it is still open for any
further evidence we may wish to call.

(Print.)

The Embassy here of the opinion that there might be
a chance of getting something out of Aziz el Masri
by cross examination, but GTR Nick East thought that

(How disposed of.)

no further result was likely to be obtained by this
means.

Dft. Cairo no: 213
July 17

But the last report from the Embassy in Cairo
was written before Aziz el Masri ^{was} arrested following
upon his attempt to escape from Egypt & the Egypt Govt
may well be more ready now to put Aziz el Masri
through the mill than they were earlier in the year.

(Action completed.)
AK. 1/1/41

(Index.)
A

Sir M. Lambson, in view of the time taken by GTR,
suggests that the matter should be dropped but that
nothing should be said to the Egypt Govt.

Next Paper.

It is for consideration whether we pass for
22385 4/41 F.O.P.
the examination of the suspects with British participation.

on a board of inquiry or whether we are
prepared to acquiesce in the conspiracy of silence
between Aziz el Masri, Saleh, Hunt & Holy Maker

I think we should at least suggest a
joint inquiry to the P.M. of why to keep the three
suspects in limbo. We know that they all
have spread anti British propaganda. Aziz el Masri
even went so far as to say that he was beaten
out by the British

C. Braine

7/7

Perhaps Sir W. Malleson could look at
this case.

It seems to me that however much
we may suspect Aziz el Masri, who
is suspect anyhow on many grounds,
the local people have so far failed to
produce any real evidence against him
(a against our other important suspects)
& I can't quite see why Aziz should
now give himself away to another
tribunal, if one was formed. There may
be something to be said for going on
pressing the Egyptians about the case,
but I shouldn't myself expect to get
any grounds for a conviction of any
particular person.

By your order.

From the legal standpoint
it seems to me most unlikely that
a further inquiry at this stage, even if it were a joint-
inquiry, would lead to any person being proved to
be guilty. The suspects had only access to their previous
statements of cross-examination at this late date is not
likely to alter the situation. P.M.

As he shall certainly not get
 a conviction, & as Aguel Nassi has
 managed to get himself into
 trouble on other grounds, I should
 be disposed to acquiesce in the
 Cairo view that this affair should
 be allowed tacitly to drop.

✓ J. J. [unclear]

9/7

J. J. [unclear]

Ab. J. 10.1941.

517

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J 2128
Cable
Sov
J

Leakage of military information to the Italians.

Among the papers found with General Pescatori after the capture of Sidi Barrani last December was an Italian translation of a secret memorandum on the defence of Siwa. Investigations were at once set on foot to discover the source of leakage.

The memorandum was drawn up by General Wilson and a copy of it was sent by him to Saleh Harb Pasha, Minister of National Defence on 10th October 1939. It was accompanied by a covering letter, which differed in details of address and signature from the copy retained at British Headquarters. A translation of this letter was found with the captured memorandum, and it is evidently taken from the original letter and not from the copy. This indicates that the leakage must have come from the Egyptian end and not the British.

General Wilson's evidence is that within a week of submitting the memorandum Saleh Harb informed him in an interview that copies had been sent to Ali Maher, the Prime Minister, and to Aziz el Masri, the Chief of Staff. Shortly afterwards in the course of conversation Ali Maher showed knowledge of the contents of the memorandum, although he did not admit that he had received or even seen a copy of it.

An Enquiry by the Egyptian Government, directed by Towayer Pasha, the Procurator-General, was opened on 21st January and is still in being, although active investigations have now ceased. In evidence Saleh Harb denied sending a copy of the memorandum to Ali Maher, and the latter denied all knowledge of it until it was found among the papers of General Pescatori. On reexamination Ali Maher admitted that he might have informed General Wilson that the plan proposed had been approved, but he still denied emphatically that he had received a copy of the memorandum. Information was received from a secret source that Aziz el Masri had told a journalist that three copies were made, one for Minister of National Defence, one for Ali Maher, and one for the Palace. When questioned he denied ever having made such a statement. There are no records in any Egyptian Ministry of the despatch or receipt of a copy of the memorandum addressed to Ali Maher.

It has been established that copies of the memorandum were made both at the Ministry of National Defence and at the Staff Office but there is no conclusive evidence to show from which office the leakage occurred, although it seems somewhat more probable that it was from the Ministry of National Defence. At present there are six copies in the Staff Office, but none of the covering letter and it was stated in evidence that none were made. One copy is in the archives of the Ministry of National Defence. Ghaleb Bey, the Military Secretary of the Minister, was vague when interrogated on some points and pleaded the lapse of time, but is suspiciously positive that only one copy was made at the Ministry.

It is now evident that the Enquiry will lead to no conclusive results. Efforts have been made to pin the guilt on the clerk at the Ministry of National Defence who did the copying, Anwan Hassan el Maggar, but in spite of exhaustive enquiries the Tribunal has been unable to unearth enough evidence against him to make him a scapegoat. It is now for consideration whether the matter

/should

would certainly show the Egypt side
of the Sudan Condominium - just at a time
when we are doing our best to forget it

As regards para 7, I imagine that
the Embassy would not carry on in Cairo
if the enemy were in occupation and that
they would have to clear out whether the
Egypt Govt want or not.

J. H. B. Bates
23/5

In view of the decision that nothing
should be done to imply doubt as
to our staying in Egypt, I think we
should telegraph to Sir M. Lansdown
agreeing that he should not revert to
the matter.

As regards para. 7, I agree with
Mr. Babeman.

H. J. J. J.
23/5.

But as proposed addition, I think,
that he should drop down all talk on
this subject. It might as well for him,
and us, to clear our minds, but vis-à-vis
Egyptians he should surely maintain the
attitude that his function is not actual.

Al.
May 23/41.

Yes
Al. May 23

Certainly, and by
what has to try to
take the Govt with
them. Al.

100

Cypher has been used

[Cypher]

PERSONAL (SECRETARY OF STATE)

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir M. Lampson.
No. 1368
17th May 1941.

D. 5.20 p.m., 18th May 1941.
R. 5.05 a.m., 20th May 1941.

*Amberman
must be changed
to the new
✓ can matter
AR*

MOST SECRET

Following for Secretary of State.

Personal.

In a serious talk with Governor of National Bank, he told me that in case of need he had made all arrangements to withdraw headquarters of bank to Khartoum and continue to function from there. He had arranged with the Prime Minister to destroy that portion of reserve fund consisting of Egyptian bonds and replace them by one single document signed by the Prime Minister which manager would take with him to Khartoum.

2. In general conversation with the Prime Minister, I referred to this timely arrangement by the bank which had started certain trains of thought in my own mind. Had His Excellency considered whether the former procedure might not be followed by Egyptian Government?

3. The Prime Minister said he had, and that the idea rather appealed to him.

4. I asked the obvious question "what about King Farouk?" Prime Minister replied that not long ago he had discussed it with His Majesty who at the time seemed disposed to agree that in case of need both he and his Government should transfer to Khartoum and thence carry on as Government of Egypt.

5. Prime Minister and I agreed that the matter was too explosive to let go [? at this stage] beyond our two selves. But prima facie there is a good deal to be said for it. It would maybe raise the question of condominium etc. but in circumstances of such gravity I do not imagine that we should wish that to intrude.

6. I have thought it wise to recount the above most secretly, but do not propose for the present to revert to the matter. It is my confident belief that no such need will in fact arise - but clearing one's mind in advance can do no harm.

7. Incidentally I have never been clear what course the Embassy and consulates here should adopt in the event of enemy occupation. If Egypt remained neutral should we stay or should we go when general evacuation was ordered by the Commander-in-Chief Middle East ?

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Registry
No. J 1574/966/C

H. S.
Revised
Draft.

Sir H. Lampson,
CAIRO.

Telegram:

NO. *1724*
26.5.41

Cypher

Distribution
Personal (S. of
S.)

630p

FOREIGN OFFICE, C.W.D.,

Despatched

M.

May, 1941.

DEET?

IMMEDIATE.

PERSONAL AND
SECRET.

Your telegram No. 1368 [of May 18th:
Question of exodus from Egypt].

It is of highest importance to
maintain with Egyptians position that
question of evacuation is not actual and
cannot become so. I agree that you
should in no circumstances revert to
this matter and I count on you firmly
to suppress all talk of this and kindred
subjects with Egyptians.

2. In the event mentioned in your
paragraph 7 Embassy and Consulates would
leave when advised to do so by military
authorities. *In short then*
~~it would be your duty~~
also
to do everything in your power to keep
the King and Government with you.

BB May 26

J.1574/966/G.

[CYPHER]

35
PERSONAL (SECRETARY OF STATE)

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO CAIRO.

No. 1724.
26th May, 1941.

D. 7.35 p.m. 26th May, 1941.

99999

IMMEDIATE.

PERSONAL AND SECRET.

Your telegram No. 1368 [of May 18th: Question of exodus from Egypt].

It is of highest importance to maintain with Egyptians position that question of evacuation is not acutal and cannot become so. I agree that you should in no circumstances revert to this matter and I count on you firmly to suppress all talk of this and kindred subjects with Egyptians.

2. In the event mentioned in your paragraph 7 Embassy and Consulates would leave when advised to do so by military authorities. You should then also do everything in your power to keep the King and Government with you.

J1592/966/9/16
 Sir M. Lampson
 Cairo
 Tel: No: 1474
 Received: 22/5
 Dated: 22/5

Egypt and The War.
 Refers to Cairo 1149 (J1229/9)
 Ahmed Seddik reports story being spread
 by Pulli to the effect that H.M.G. had
 asked Prince Mohammed Ali if he would
 agree to accept The Throne, but that Nahas
 Pasha had refused to accept office under
 this change of regime.

Last Paper.
 J1574/966/16

(Minutes.)
 No action seems necessary. The last
 paragraph is interesting

References.
 J1229/966/9/18/16

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

(Action completed.) 9c. 27/5	(Index.) A
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Next Paper.
 J. 1735/6

24/5
 24/5
 22107 141 F.O.P.

[Cypher]

DISTRIBUTION B

FROM: EGYPT.

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

J 1592
23 MAY 1941
J

Sir M. Lampson,
No. 1474
May 22nd 1941

D. 4.41 a.m. May 23rd 1941

R. 11.10 a.m. May 23rd 1941

My telegram No. 1149. *1149*

Ahmed Seddik told me this morning he has it at first hand that Pulli has been spreading story that (1) we recently asked Prince Mohammed Ali if he would agree to accept the throne and that he agreed but (2) that when we asked Nahas Pasha to accept office under this change of régime he refused.

2. I pointed out to Seddik that story was too fantastic to require refutation: nevertheless I hoped he would contradict it flatly. He agreed but emphasized danger of such lying reports emanating from so high a quarter.

3. Question of Pulli is particularly difficult. For (a) he is now technically an Egyptian subject and (b) he is boon companion of King Farouk who is on the whole behaving reasonably well at the moment and whom we do not wish to estrange.

4. I shall discuss further with service chiefs: but on balance it seems wiser not to tackle Pulli for the moment.

5. Prime Minister continues to deal firmly with fifth columnists: I have just heard of a further batch of pro-German Egyptians whose arrest he has ordered.

MAY 23 1941
FOREIGN OFFICE
CAIRO