

T801 / G 55
2011.04

45918
EGYPTIAN

T801 | 3 | G
| | 16

F.O. Minute

D 17th
R 28th Feb.

Conversations with King of Egypt on 17th Feb 1945

Printed record of conversations held in Cairo on 17th Feb between Prime Minister, Secty of State, Lord Killearn and King Farouk. Subjects discussed included change of Govt of Egypt; question of Egyptian entry into the war; conditions in Egypt & sterling balances held in Egypt.

Last Paper.

T800

References.

(Minutes.)
See on T802 | 26 | G acknowledgements from W.O. and by.

By? Copy to Embassy and W.E. Min: Cairo.

(Print.) PRINTED

A.V. Courtney
23/2

(How disposed of.)
Djt) Mr Martin from Mr Dixon Feb 21st
Djt) Mrs Olivier (HofI) from Mr Scrivener Feb 24th
See on T802 | 9
9) W.E. Min Cairo No. 38 (no 38) Cairo No. 137 (no 39) March 5.
entered pp copied over

Yes, copies were also sent to Mr Pissent, Treasury; Col. Withers, W.O.; Mr Cohen, Colonial Office; and Brigadier Jacob W.C.O. in proof form. Since no alterations have been made, we can tell these gentlemen that the proof can be regarded as confirmed. No action is, I think, required otherwise.

Scrivener
1/3
RC. 2/3

(Action completed.)
RE 13/1
(Index.)
W.E.

KRO 11/7/46

Next Paper.

T1531

Copied
No 37 Mrs Oliver (MofJ)
No 36 Mr Cohen (C.O.)
No 9 Lt Col Wilkes (Wo)
No 23 Mr Present (Jay)
on J802/26/9

TOP SECRET.

Copy No. 8

CAIRO CONVERSATIONS, FEBRUARY 1945.

RECORD of Conversation with the King of Egypt at Minister Resident's Villa, Cairo, from 5.30 to 7 p.m. on 17th February, 1945.

Present :

The Prime Minister.		The King of Egypt.
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.		
His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo.		

THE PRIME MINISTER referred to the change of Government which had taken place in Egypt.

KING FAROUK remarked that it had been time; indeed, but for the wishes of His Majesty's Government, he would have liked to see the change earlier. He had given the late Government ample rope and, as he had hoped, they had ended by hanging themselves. They had, in fact, "committed suicide."

THE PRIME MINISTER made a passing reference to the boycotting of the elections by the Wafd; and then referred to the reported intention to arraign Nahas and his colleagues.

KING FAROUK stated that they might have been charged with high treason, but he was against that. He believed, however, that his Government, as a result of their enquiry, had found material for criminal charges. But His Majesty adopted the attitude that all this was not for him but for his Government.

THE PRIME MINISTER next raised the question of Egypt's joining the United Nations (they already were numbered amongst the Associated Nations) so as to become a "founder Member" of the World Peace Organisation to be worked out at San Francisco in April.

THE PRIME MINISTER and the SECRETARY OF STATE explained that, in view of the practical assistance rendered by Egypt during the war, they felt she would have a legitimate grievance if she had not been given the chance of joining.

KING FAROUK made the point that it might cause a bad impression if Egypt entered the war when the enemy were all but beaten. But he finally agreed that much would depend upon whether Turkey accepted the invitation. He thought Egypt and Turkey should act in concert; just as, in fact, King Ibn Saud had made it clear to His Majesty that Saudi Arabia and Egypt should concert over their invitations.

It was left that the Secretary of State would take up the matter with the Egyptian Prime Minister, whom he expected to be seeing to-morrow.

THE PRIME MINISTER then reminded King Farouk of what he had said once before, namely, that the King of Egypt had a wonderful opportunity and, indeed, a definite duty to take the lead in improving the conditions of the Egyptian people. Probably nowhere in the world were there such extremes of wealth and abject poverty. The Prime Minister reverted with emphasis to this subject several times during the conversation.

KING FAROUK at once responded, saying he had long had this object at heart: but it was not always easy and he had to work through his Government.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out the glaring contrast between the taxation in the United Kingdom and the negligible percentages (5-8 per cent. and no death duties) levied upon the rich in Egypt, where never before had there been so much prosperity. But, of course, increased taxation would not be popular with the wealthy Pashas.

THE PRIME MINISTER touched briefly on the existence of the huge sterling balances held by Egypt. Quoting the case of India, he remarked that he was often minded to put in a claim for "services rendered," seeing that both India and Egypt had been saved by British effort, forces and material.

KING FAROUK did not pursue the subject.

KING FAROUK repeatedly expressed regret that the Prime Minister did not spend longer in Egypt, where the whole Egyptian people ardently wished to see and welcome him, and His Majesty in particular had always wished to give him suitable hospitality and honour. A Palace banquet, for instance, would greatly have pleased both His Majesty and the Egyptian people.

THE PRIME MINISTER answered "Perhaps next time."

Top Secret

18 2/2 of a/bene (1-10)
By hand 2/2/45

59

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from 5.30 to 7 p.m. on 17th February, 1945.

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The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
His Majesty's Ambassador at Cairo
The King of Egypt

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(Sgd) KILBURN

17th February, 1945.

51
Duplicate
Unclassified

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THE PRIME MINISTER answered "Perhaps next time".

(Sgd) KILLBARN

17th February, 1945.

61
OUT FILE

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

21st February, 1945.

I enclose prints in proof of the records of the conversations in Cairo with the Emperor of Ethiopia, the King of Egypt, King Ibn Saud and the President of Syria.

Would you let me know whether the Prime Minister approves the records or has amendments to make? Subject to Mr. Churchill's approval we propose to circulate the records in final form to The King and War Cabinet.

(Sd) P. J. DIXON

J.M. Martin Esq. C.V.O.

12
FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.I.

TOP SECRET

24th February, 1945.

I enclose as arranged, in proof form, the records of the Conversations in Cairo with the King of Egypt and the Emperor of Ethiopia. Copies have also been sent to the Treasury, War Office and Colonial Office.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) P. SCRIVENER.

Mrs. Oliver,
Middle East Division,
Ministry of Information.

J

J 843

2 - MAR 1945

7945

45918

His Majesty's Ambassador's audience with King Farouk.

His Majesty's Ambassador first presented the Aga Khan and then went on to discuss the present situation. His Majesty said that if Great Britain could make some "gesture" to Egyptian people to mark Egypt's entry into the war it would have great political effect.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
في يوم الاثنين 28 فبراير 1945

Registry Number } J 843/3/16

TELEGRAM FROM
Lord Killearn,
(Cairo)

No. 486.
Dated 28th Feb. 1945.

Received in Registry } 2nd March, 1945.

J: Egypt and Sudan

Last Paper.

J 836.

References.

(Print) 9/3

Expt vsl

(How disposed of.)

(Minutes.)

The opportunity of asking for a "gesture" was too good to be missed. We are in any case not in a position to give satisfactory assurances about supply matters. Indeed we are having the greatest possible difficulty in securing the bare minimum, particularly as regards fertilisers. I think we may have this unanswerable

Warriner
J.B.

AC. 2/3

(Action completed.)

9
13

(Index.)

Sum.
to
1/6

Next Paper.

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

[CRYPTER]

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION
FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

J 843

2 - MAR 1945

Lord Killearn
No. 486

D. 12.40 p.m. GMT. 1st March, 1945

R. 2.45 p.m. BST. 1st March, 1945

28th February, 1945

777

I was received by King Farouk in audience this afternoon when I presented the Aga Khan.

2. When His Highness had left I stayed on for a further half hour's conversation. His Majesty first of all thanked me warmly for my personal letter on the death of Ahmed Maher. His Majesty had been badly shaken by the loss of this most loyal and devoted public servant whom it would be very difficult to replace and for whom he had formed a genuine affection.

3. I informed His Majesty of Nokrashi Pasha's observations this morning (see my telegram No. 479). I could not help feeling that Nokrashi Pasha had made a false move and not started our relations particularly happily. His Majesty knew Nokrashi far better than I and could judge whether his angularities and hackles were likely to wear off while he had responsible office. His Majesty said he did indeed know Nokrashi Pasha's failings only too well. But he had been the inevitable and indeed the best choice available. Nokrashi was honest and sincere which were great qualities.

4. I made suitable allusions to Egyptian entry into the war. His Majesty was evidently pleased and then said that if Great Britain could now make some "gesture" to the Egyptian people to mark the event, it would have a great political effect. I sought to draw from him what precisely he had in mind; but without success.

5. On leaving His Majesty I saw Hasanein and gathered from him that His Majesty presumably was thinking of supply assurances. I pointed out that I doubted if any suggestion of this kind would be well received at home. After all Egypt's own spinning mills were notoriously making huge profits and I failed to see why they should not concentrate instead upon supplying the crying needs of their own people even if (as seemed very proper) it meant less huge dividends for their shareholders. I told His Excellency I had discussed this very question a few days ago with Mr. Frank Platt, our cotton controller now visiting Egypt. The Pasha admitted that there must be something radically wrong and that it ought to be looked into. He endorsed however King Farouk's basic idea and urged that we should make as much propaganda value as possible out of any material assistance we might be supplying to Egypt from time to time, for instance fertilisers. I said that we would certainly keep our eyes open and see what might be available as suitable publicity matter.

/But.....

MAR 1 1945

But once more [grp. undec. ? I ought to] remind His Excellency that we had been spending something like £100,000,000 a year in Egypt throughout the war: and our general feeling certainly was that she had had a very soft and cushy war having even been saved from national extinction free from cost to her. Indeed the British Prime Minister when he received King Farouk had hinted that there was something to be said in equity for charging Egypt for services rendered. Nevertheless I would bear in mind what both King Farouk and he had said this afternoon.

O.T.P.

J

J 826

J - MAR 1945

80

479

Registry Number } 826/3/16.

TELEGRAM FROM Lord Killearn, Cairo.

No. 479.

Dated 28th Feb. 1945.

Received in Registry } 1st Mar. 1945.

J: Egypt and Sudan.

Nokrashi Pasha's interview with Lord Killearn.

Refers to Cairo telegram 479 (J 803/3/16). Egyptian Prime Minister called on Lord Killearn and the chief topic of discussion was the need for speeding up execution of Lord Moyne's assassins. Regrets that Nokrashi Pasha should have begun his career as Prime Minister by taking exception to thoroughly legitimate and justified stricture by Mr. Churchill.

Last Paper.

J 819

References.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

8/ Mr. Eastwood (C.O.)
3 March

(Minutes.)

Copy Mr. Eastwood C.O.

An indifferent start, as Lord Killearn says: but the medicine will probably work. I agree with the last paragraph.

Stevenson

1/3

A.C. 2/3

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

5/3

S.M.
10
1/10

Next Paper.

J 830

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

[CYPHER]

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

J 826

Lord Killearn.
No. 479.

D. 10.15. p.m. GMT 28th February 1945.

28th February 1945.

R. 11.50. p.m. BST 28th February 1945.

IMMEDIATE

My telegram No. 472. J 803/3/16.

Egyptian Prime Minister returned my call this morning.

2. After the usual amenities he at once called my attention to the following passage in the Prime Minister's speech in Parliament yesterday as reported by Reuters: "There is little doubt that security measures in Egypt require considerable tightening and above all that the execution of justice upon the men proved guilty of political murder should be swift and exemplary".

3. His Excellency believed that as regards the Moyne assassins the strict process of law had been followed and that the late Ahmed Maher would by now have confirmed sentence of the court had he lived to do so. He maintained that we hardly set an example in Palestine of expedition either in bringing the guilty to book or to execution. Passage in Prime Minister's speech placed His Excellency in a very delicate position and would wound local susceptibilities, reflecting, as it was bound to be regarded as doing, upon the efficiency and conduct of public affairs of the late Prime Minister.

4. I replied in essence that we had better cut the cack and that His Excellency must surely agree that delay in executing Moyne's assassins had been excessive whatever the provisions of the law. The crime had taken place on November 6th and today was February 28th. Seeing that the men had not only been caught in the act but had unequivocally admitted their guilt, why not have strung them up long ago? That, I could assure him was the view taken in Great Britain where feeling on the subject was very strong.

4. [sic] His Excellency answered that it now fell to him as Military Governor to read the dossier which so unfortunately had not been confirmed by his predecessor. He would not be precise as to how long this would take; but did not dispute that my argument was sound sense if not necessarily sound in law.

5. You will note from the above that our estimate of /Nokrashi..

Nokrashi is not far wrong. By training he is a school master; by nature he is difficult and extremely touchy. And certainly not a patch on his predecessor. I regret very much that he should have initiated his career as Egyptian Prime Minister by this mistake in taking exception to what, with all respect, I regard as a thoroughly legitimate and justified stricture by the Prime Minister.

6. It is tempting to come back at him. But on the whole I suggest the course of wisdom is to ignore his representations.

OTF

41318

[The text of this telegram must first be paraphrased if communicated to persons outside British or United States Government service or if retransmitted in a cypher system other than O.T.P.]

[CYRIL]

POLITICAL DISTRIBUTION

FROM CAIRO (AMBASSADOR) TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

3574

?? Lord Hillcarn. D.6.35.p.m. GMT. 8th October, 1944.
No. 1994. R.8.25.p.m. BST. 8th October, 1944.
8th October, 1944.

6 6 6 6 6

Weekly appreciation.

Ghazali controversy is becoming graver. Government were warned by us that we could not restrain the palace indefinitely and that they would be well advised to get into direct contact with the palace with a view to a compromise on the basis of the reinstatement of Ghazali and his subsequent transfer. Nevertheless the Government have done nothing during the past week beyond putting out indirect feelers to the palace. The official organ of the Ministry of the Interior chose this delicate moment to publish an article attacking those who put obstacles in the way of Nahas and the constitutional régime and in view of the particular circumstances of the moment this attack was naturally taken to be directed against the palace. The palace do not wish to disturb the meetings of the preparatory committee for the Arab congress but as soon as its proceedings are over the chances are that they will take strong action on the Ghazali issue.

2. Details of the proceedings of the preparatory committee for the general Arab conference have not yet been divulged but according to reports from palace sources there has been trouble between the Syrian and Lebanese delegations on the subject of territorial adjustments of Lebanese frontiers contemplated by Syrians in certain eventualities. Massanein states that King Farouk proposes to try to smooth over matters between Syrians and Lebanese. Musa El Alami has been accepted by the committee as representative of the Palestinian Arabs as distinct from Palestine or the Palestine Government.