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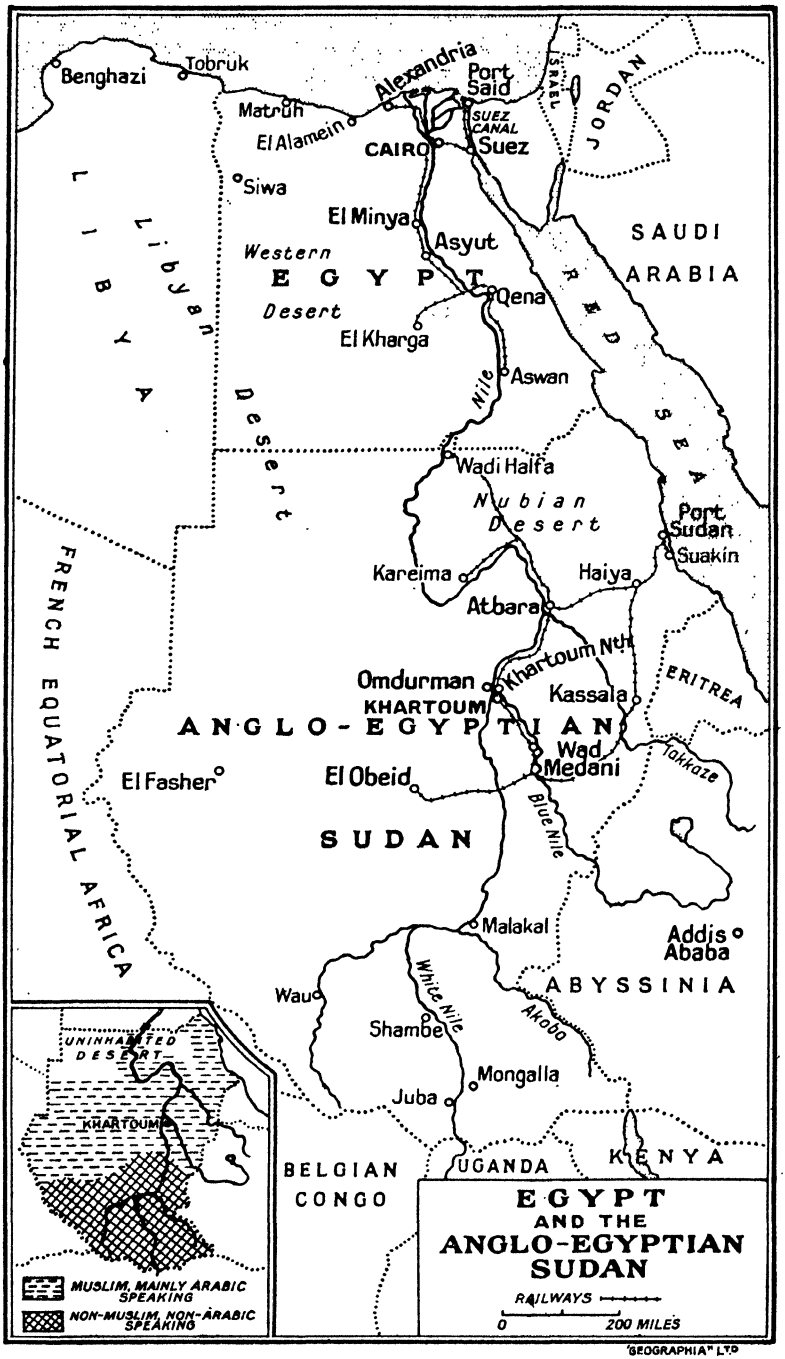
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FOREWORD

THIS is a new and revised edition of Information Paper No. 19, *Great Britain and Egypt, 1914–36*, which was published in 1936. The Information Department owes a great deal to the advice and criticism of Mr George Kirk, Middle East specialist on the staff of the Institute, who has himself drafted the final chapters. The economic and financial chapter was written under the guidance and with the generous help of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, G.C.M.G., on the basis of drafts provided by the late Mr J. I. Craig, C.B.E., F.R.S.E., a former Financial Secretary to the Egyptian Ministry of Finance and Government Commissioner for Customs, who unhappily lost his life in the riots in Cairo in January 1952.

January 1952

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El Alamein
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EGYPT
Desert
Qena
El Kharga
Aswan
Nile
Wadi Halfa
Nubian Desert
Port Sudan
Suakin
Kareima
Haiya
Atbara
Khartoum Nth
Omdurman
KHARTOUM
Kassala
ERITREA
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN
SUDAN
Wad Medani
Takkaze
El Fasher
El Obeid
Blue Nile
Malakal
Addis Ababa
ABYSSINIA
White Nile
Akobo
Wau
Shambe
Mongalla
Juba
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Libyan Desert
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INTRODUCTION

IT is the purpose of this book to present an account of the political and economic evolution of Anglo–Egyptian relations from the outbreak of the First World War to the Egyptian abrogation of the alliance in October 1951. A recent leading article in *The Times* remarked that the post-war negotiations between the British and the Egyptian Governments had failed 'because one is using a long-wave and the other a short-wave set'. This seems to be one way of saying that from the beginning of their association the British have been thinking primarily in terms of imperial defensive strategy embracing the Mediterranean and the western half of the Indian Ocean, in which Lower Egypt was a vital pivot, while the Egyptian Government's and people's range of vision was almost entirely restricted to the narrower confines of the Nile Valley. The temporary understanding of 1936 brought about by the threat which the expansionist policy of Fascist Italy presented to both British and Egyptian interests seemed to show that their different points of view were still not entirely irreconcilable. But they continued to diverge because the British, perhaps inevitably, regarded the situation from the standpoint of conserving a position advantageous to themselves, while the Egyptians were just as inevitably trying to get away from a situation which they found humiliating. Moreover, the changes brought about in the Middle East by the Second World War, the Palestinian War, and the creation of the State of Israel, served not merely to change the balance of power in the Middle East but also to strengthen the growing nationalism which had made itself felt between the wars.

It is perhaps unavoidable that a record based largely on British official documents and the British press and only to a lesser extent directly on Egyptian sources should tend to present the British point of view in greater detail than the Egyptian. A summary is therefore given in Appendix VI of the principal arguments on which the Egyptians base their case (although it is fair to add that an understanding of those arguments has frequently been obscured by the exaggerations and distortions of Egyptian politicians and journalists).

CHAPTER I

WORLD WAR AND NATIONAL REVOLUTION

THE FIRST WORLD WAR, 1914–18

WHEN the First World War broke out Egypt was still under the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, whose representatives had ruled it since 1517, though early in the nineteenth century Muhammad 'Ali [Mehemet Ali] by his force of character had asserted his independence of Turkish control in many important respects. Further, since the suppression in 1882 of the 'Arabi revolt against the Khedive, Great Britain had enjoyed a special position in Egypt which she had utilized to set the administrative and financial machinery of the country in order and to give Egypt virtual autonomy, apart from a tribute of some £700,000 per annum paid to the Sultan.

Great Britain and Egypt were also bound by special ties in regard to the Sudan, which is important both strategically and in connexion with the utilization of the Nile waters. Its status as an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was fixed by a convention of 1899, which, following the Kitchener campaign of 1898, laid down that Great Britain was 'by right of conquest' entitled to share the administration with Egypt.[1]

Britain's 'special position' in Egypt, for which the influence of Lord Cromer was largely responsible, was given official recognition by the Great Powers through an agreement with France concluded in 1904, and through similar declarations made at the same time by Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy. Further, annexed to the Anglo–French agreement was a Khedival decree which, with the consent of the Powers, came into force on 1 January 1905. This declaration was in effect a European recognition that Britain was the protecting Power in Egypt. By it, also, the country achieved financial independence, subject to the payment of the annual tribute to Constantinople.

Under Lord Kitchener, who was appointed Agent and Consul-General in 1911, progress was made in improving the condition of the people both economically and socially, and in 1913, by a new organic law, a Legislative Assembly was constituted, composed for the most part of elected members. But this was a consultative body without authority to initiate legisla-

[1] See Appendix I.

tion, though it had power to veto any increase in direct taxation.

Soon after the war broke out the Assembly was suspended, and never met again. The Egyptian Government had at once thrown in its lot with the Allies,[1] and by the proclamation of martial law on 2 November 1914, it was able to enforce administrative measures without reference to the Assembly, also to take action affecting foreign nationals without first obtaining the assent of the Powers.

The entry of Turkey into the war—on 7 November 1914—was followed by a declaration of Great Britain's intention to take upon herself the responsibility of defending Egypt without asking for that country's help;[2] on 18 December 1914, a Protectorate was declared and the suzerainty of Turkey abolished,[3] and on the following day the Khedive was deposed. His uncle, Prince Husain [Hussein], succeeded him with the title of Sultan and on his death in 1917 his brother, the late King Fu'ad, was proclaimed Sultan.

The war brought much material prosperity to Egypt, chiefly owing to the fact that, after a short period of uncertainty and suspension of business, the price of cotton rose to unprecedented heights. The presence of British troops also stimulated trade,[4] but as against this requisitions of labour and of supplies caused discontent and much resentment among the fellahin, for though the military authorities made payment on a reasonable scale, it was frequently embezzled by petty Egyptian officials and never reached the fellahin.

More serious was the discontent, stirred up by nationalist propaganda, to which encouragement was given by President Wilson's Fourteen Points and by the Anglo–French Declaration of November 1918, announcing that the Allies contemplated the enfranchisement of the peoples oppressed by Turkish rule. Numerous disclaimers by British statesmen of any intention to occupy the country permanently were recalled, and the acceptance by the Allies of the principle of self-determination was represented as having given international sanction to the aspirations of Egyptians to govern themselves. This was the situation at the termination of the war.

THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION OF 1919

At the end of the war it remained uncertain whether these

[1] As early as 5 August the Prime Minister, who acted as Regent in the Khedive's absence, after a meeting of the Cabinet declared Egypt to be at war with the enemies of Great Britain.

[2] *British and Foreign State Papers*, 1915, vol. CIX, p. 435. [3] ibid. p. 437.

[4] At one time the troops in the country were reported to number 1 million.

emergency measures could survive the advent of peace. Although the strength of the wave of Egyptian national feeling could not have been foretold, there was a very general feeling that the situation ought to be regularized, and the search for a permanent agreement was begun in December 1919, when the Milner Mission arrived in Egypt. There was no question at the time of abandoning British control in Egypt, but merely of deciding the form which her control of Egyptian policy should take. Broadly speaking, there were three courses open:

(*a*) The Protectorate might be maintained. Egypt, while under this Protectorate, would not actually be incorporated in the British Empire, but Great Britain, while exercising considerable control over all departments of her Government, would allow her as much autonomy as was considered compatible with the state of her constitutional development.

(*b*) Egypt might be incorporated in the British Empire, with a greater or less measure of self-government.

(*c*) The Protectorate might be abolished and, as a price for this, Egypt might, as an independent nation, enter into an alliance with Great Britain the terms of which would satisfy Great Britain's requirements.

There existed a feeling in Great Britain after the First World War that the Protectorate should be maintained, and that it would satisfy alike British and Egyptian requirements, for it was considered that Egyptian constitutional institutions were not yet sufficiently developed, that they would grow up in the shadow of the Protectorate, and that Egyptian national sentiment would prefer the continuance of the war-time regime to actual incorporation in the British Empire. Egyptian opinion, however, found it difficult to distinguish between the status of a Protectorate and that of a Colony, and the leaders of that opinion considered that Egypt's constitutional institutions could be developed without foreign assistance.

From Great Britain's point of view the incorporation of Egypt in the Empire might have been regarded as the most satisfactory solution of the problem, and it was argued that the aspirations of the Egyptian people could be satisfied by the granting to them of a considerable measure of autonomy, approximating, perhaps, to Dominion Home Rule.

From the Egyptian point of view, however, incorporation in the Empire meant the sinking of the identity of the Egyptian race and civilization in the status of a British Colony, and Egyptian national feeling, after the First World War, ran exceedingly high, stimulated to a considerable extent by the

theory of self-determination proclaimed by President Wilson, and by the Anglo–French Declaration of November 1918. Egypt considered that she should take her place, not merely as an independent nation, but as the leading Muslim State. In Zaghlul Pasha, a lawyer of fellahin origin who had been created a Minister by Lord Cromer, Egyptian nationalism found a successful and energetic champion.

A national movement, with complete independence as its object, was set on foot by Zaghlul and his adherents in 1919, and the abrogation of the British Protectorate and the recognition of Egypt as a sovereign State were openly demanded. The Egyptian Government asked that representatives should be allowed to visit London to discuss the situation (a request which the Foreign Secretary was obliged to refuse, in view of the fact that he was on the point of proceeding to Paris for the Peace Conference). Rioting and disturbances took place, and the nationalist leaders were banished to Malta, only to reappear, reprieved, as a delegation (or 'Wafd') in Paris to air Egypt's grievances to the world. The British Government thereupon appointed a commission to examine the whole question.

THE MILNER REPORT, 1920

The Milner Mission, which arrived in Egypt in December 1919, to inquire into conditions in Egypt and to report upon the steps to be taken to regularize the position, found in favour of the abolition of the Protectorate and the contracting of a bilateral treaty, to be acquiesced in by the Powers, and approved by a 'genuinely representative Egyptian Assembly'.

It was considered by the Milner Mission that all necessary safeguards could be provided in the terms of a treaty of alliance by which Egypt, in return for Great Britain's undertaking to defend her integrity and independence, would agree to be guided by Great Britain in her foreign relations, and would at the same time confer on Great Britain certain definite rights in Egyptian territory.

The rights the Mission contemplated were of a twofold character. Firstly, in order to protect her special interests in Egypt and the safety of her Imperial communications, Great Britain was to have the right to maintain a military force in Egyptian territory; and secondly, for the protection of all legitimate foreign interests she was to have a certain measure of control over Egyptian legislation and administration in so far as they affected foreigners. All reference to the Sudan was specifically excluded.

From Great Britain's point of view, the plan projected by the

Milner Report[1] seemed to be an admirable solution of the problem. Zaghlul Pasha and his supporters, on the other hand, regarded such a treaty as approximating to a veiled Protectorate.

On Lord Milner's return to London from Egypt, and before the drawing up of the Report, Zaghlul Pasha, who was in Paris, was invited to London to confer with the Mission, and Lord Milner did his utmost to enlist the sympathies of the Wafd for the solution which his proposed measures embodied. Zaghlul returned to Egypt to confer with his colleagues and came back to London in October, when he informed Lord Milner that he must insist on four reservations to the proposed settlement before it could be considered acceptable by the Egyptian people, the more important being that British troops should be limited in number and should be confined to the district adjoining the Suez Canal, and that Egypt should have an equal share with Great Britain in the administration of the Sudan.

Lord Milner could not agree to these reservations. The conversations broke down, and the Milner Report was published in December 1920. From the breakdown of these conversations there emerged the following facts:

(1) That the settlement (when arrived at) would have to be accepted, not by Egyptian Ministers in conference either in England or abroad, but by the Egyptian Parliament.

(2) That the Egyptian Ministers would almost inevitably be faced with political complications at home which would render concessions or compromise difficult, and which would disincline them to take decisions or to accept responsibility.

(3) That Zaghlul Pasha, who headed the Egyptian delegation in Paris (the Wafd) was by far the most important figure in Egyptian politics, that he was an undisguised hater of British interference in Egypt, and that Egyptian nationalism was a force to be reckoned with.

(4) That, when occasion arose, there were always certain topics which could be brought up, discussion of which would inevitably bring negotiations to an abortive end. The chief of these subjects was the Sudan.

In the various attempts to come to an agreement with Egypt which took place during the next ten years, these conditions remained constant.

No further steps were taken until November of the following year, when 'Adli Pasha Yaqan [Yeghen] came to England at

[1] *Report of the Special Mission to Egypt.* Cmd. 1131 (1921). Submitted to the Secretary of State, 29 December 1920.

the head of a delegation. The British Government intended that any agreement reached should be based on the findings of the Milner Report, and as 'Adli was a non-party politician, who had always been very critical of Wafd doctrines and methods, there were grounds for hope that this Egyptian delegation would show more readiness to abandon intransigence for conciliation. Unfortunately, however, 'Adli himself had no popular following in his own country, and could not take the responsibility of making concessions which he had good reason to believe would be repudiated by Egyptian public opinion. He reiterated the Wafd claim that Egypt had an 'incontestable right to sovereignty over the Sudan', and the negotiations broke down.

THE CURZON MEMORANDUM, 1921

A memorandum issued by Lord Curzon[1] contained the terms of the draft treaty which had been discussed with 'Adli Pasha. This was based on the Milner proposals; but in liberality it went a step further, for its first clause terminated the Protectorate upon the signature of the proposed treaty.

While, however, the Milner proposals deliberately left the Sudan out of consideration, the Curzon memorandum, though tacitly preserving the *status quo* of the Condominium, foresaw the probability that Egypt would want an Egyptian Commander-in-Chief to command her army. An article of the draft treaty, therefore, laid down that all Egyptian forces in the Sudan should be under the orders of the Governor-General of the Sudan. As 'Adli Pasha had reiterated the claim to the Sudan, stipulations of this sort were clearly impossible of acceptance, and other differences revealed by the discussions—for example, as to the location of British troops on Egyptian soil—were comparatively of little significance.

'Adli Pasha resigned when he got back to Cairo, but no successor to him could be found, and the agitation carried on by Zaghlul Pasha and his associates led to disturbances in several parts of the country. The immediate pretext for this was the presentation to the Sultan of a Note from Lord Allenby,[2] on 3 December 1921, in which regret was expressed at the rejection of the draft treaty, particularly because the British Government considered their proposals as 'liberal in character and far-reaching in effect' and because they could not 'hold out any prospect of reconsideration of the principle on which they were framed'.

[1] Egypt No. 1 (1921). Cmd. 1617.
[2] Lord Allenby was High Commissioner from 1919 until 1925.

THE BRITISH DECLARATION OF 1922

The position was one of deadlock. The expectations of the nationalists had been roused to such a pitch by Zaghlul's attitude that no Minister dared to form a Cabinet with the object of putting the British proposals into effect. Zaghlul himself was ordered to refrain from taking part in politics, and on his refusal, was deported, as it was very evident that his activities were chiefly responsible for the unrest.[1] But Lord Allenby fully realized that repressive measures alone afforded no solution of the problem, and he was prepared to resign in order to impress upon the British Government the necessity for abolishing the Protectorate. In order to explain the urgency of this he went to London at the beginning of February 1922, and returned before the end of the month with a draft Declaration of independence for Egypt in his pocket. This was made public on 28 February; the text was as follows:[2]

Whereas His Majesty's Government, in accordance with their declared intentions, desire forthwith to recognise Egypt as an independent sovereign State; and

Whereas the relations between His Majesty's Government and Egypt are of vital interest to the British Empire:

The following principles are hereby declared:

1. The British Protectorate over Egypt is terminated, and Egypt is declared to be an independent sovereign State.

2. So soon as the Government of His Highness shall pass an Act of Indemnity with application to all inhabitants of Egypt, martial law as proclaimed on 2 November 1914, shall be withdrawn.

3. The following matters are absolutely reserved to the discretion of His Majesty's Government until such time as it may be possible by free discussion and friendly accommodation on both sides to conclude agreements in regard thereto between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt:

(*a*) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt;

(*b*) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect;

(*c*) The protection of foreign interests in Egypt and the protection of minorities;

(*d*) The Sudan.

Pending the conclusion of such agreements, the *status quo* in all these matters shall remain intact.

The next day, 1 March, Egypt was declared an independent sovereign State. The Sultan took the title of King, and pro-

[1] They included student strikes, as well as attacks on the railways and public offices. Two British soldiers were murdered in the Cairo streets.

[2] Egypt No. 1 (1922). Cmd. 1592.

claimed Egypt a monarchy. Within a few days Sarwat Pasha formed a Cabinet. A Minister for Foreign Affairs was appointed, and simultaneously British diplomatic representatives abroad were instructed to communicate to the Governments to which they were accredited a notification stating that the termination of the British Protectorate involved no change in the *status quo* as regards the position of other Powers in Egypt.

THE INTERNAL SITUATION, 1922–4

In a Note from Lord Allenby to the Sultan accompanying the Declaration of 1922, the creation of a Parliament with a right to control the policy and administration of a constitutionally responsible Government was pronounced to be a matter for the Sultan and the Egyptian people to determine. A special committee was set up on 3 April 1922 to draft the Constitution,[1] and pursued its labours without interference from the British Government.[2] It was enacted a year later, on 19 April 1923. On 5 July 1923 an Act of Indemnity was promulgated.[3] A general election was ordered by a royal rescript of 6 September, and this was carried out in January 1924, resulting in the return of 188 of Zaghlul's followers and twenty-seven of other parties. The King accordingly asked Zaghlul Pasha to form a Government and, on his accepting, the first Parliament opened on 15 March 1924.

Agitation against the Declaration continued, however. It was intended on the British side as a preliminary step in a constructive policy, and it was expected that negotiations regarding the four reserved points would be initiated as soon as possible. But in Cairo the position was that the most active political elements refused to admit the validity of the Declaration on the ground that it was a purely unilateral instrument which had no binding effect on the country. The only political group[4] which

[1] Sarwat Pasha, who was Prime Minister at the time the Declaration was made, fell from power in 1922, following a difference with the King over the drafting of the Constitution.

[2] The High Commissioner did, however, intervene to prevent the insertion of a declaration that the Sudan formed a part of the Egyptian Kingdom.

[3] British martial law was abrogated in return for the publication of the Indemnity Act. This was remarkable in view of the number of murderous attempts on the lives of British officers and residents, as well as of Egyptian officials known to be co-operating with the British. For a description of these incidents and demonstrations and an account of the Wafdist activities and trials, see Sir A. (later Lord) Wavell, *Allenby in Egypt* (vol. 2 of *Allenby: a Study of Greatness*; London, Harrap, 1943).

[4] The Wafd was not organized as a political party until April 1924. It had, however, succeeded in establishing a permanent organization, well endowed with funds, which was able to organize public opinion and bring pressure to bear on the Government.

had any popular claim to speak for the country refused to accept the limitations on Egyptian sovereign independence involved in the reserved points.

The acts of amnesty did not prevent continuance of anti-British demonstrations culminating in the murder of Sir Lee Stack on 19 November 1924. For the continuance of these crimes the Wafd bore a heavy responsibility, since the campaign had begun as a result of the organized incitement to violence with which it had identified itself from the beginning of its career. At this time no attempt was made by its leaders to alter their methods or to use their influence to counter the unrest.

THE MACDONALD–ZAGHLUL NEGOTIATIONS, 1924

It was in this setting that Zaghlul Pasha, supported by an overwhelming Wafdist majority in Parliament, initiated discussions with the British Government. A Labour Government had recently been formed with Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister, and Zaghlul may well have considered that the chances of securing liberal terms for the conclusion of a treaty were now better than they had been at any time since the war. In public pronouncements both before and after his accession to power, he had expressed readiness to negotiate with Great Britain 'with a view to arriving at an agreement which will guarantee the independence that we demand, while respecting such British interests as are reasonable and acceptable'. MacDonald, on his side, sent him a cordial invitation to come to London to see whether such an agreement could not be reached.

Even Zaghlul, however, idol of the people though he was, found that he was the prisoner of his own words. He had made unconditional promises to the people of Egypt, and the mere suggestion that he might go back on any of them was the signal for attacks on him by his own press. How great was the part played—in the attitude he took up—by conviction, and how great that played by the desire to retain his popularity it is impossible to judge; the result, at any rate, was that all hope of reaching a settlement was destroyed by the demands he put forward when he met MacDonald in September 1924.

These demands, which ignored the existence of British interests in Egypt, were rejected. As Zaghlul had no alternative suggestion to make there was nothing to be gained by continuing the discussions, and he returned to Egypt in October, to be acclaimed as the successful upholder of the country's rights. What these rights were in the eyes of the Wafd can be judged

from the demands he put forward, which may be summarized as follows:

(1) The withdrawal of all British forces from Egyptian soil and of the Financial and Judicial Advisers from the administration, which should be entirely free of British control.

(2) The abandonment of the British claims to protect foreigners and minorities, and to share in the protection of the Suez Canal.

(3) The withdrawal of the notification to foreign Powers, of 15 March 1922, that H.M. Government would regard as an unfriendly act any attempt at interference in the affairs of Egypt by another Power; and

(4) The reduction of the status of the High Commissioner to that of the representatives of all other foreign Powers.

MacDonald was understood to have made it quite clear to Zaghlul that the attitude he adopted made any agreement quite impossible. In particular, he informed Zaghlul that no British Government could divest itself of all its interest in guarding the Suez Canal, for which security would have to be provided in any treaty concluded between Britain and Egypt. He also gave an assurance that the British force to be maintained in Egypt would neither interfere with the functions of its Government nor encroach upon its sovereignty. But he pointed out that no arrangement could be contemplated that would jeopardize the administration and development of the Sudan. Zaghlul had placed himself in an equivocal position. Backed by an overwhelming parliamentary majority, he had to take some action to try to secure a satisfactory arrangement with Great Britain; at the same time he could not compromise without losing his prestige in Egypt.

THE SUDAN, AND THE MURDER OF THE SIRDAR, 1924

Shortly before Zaghlul Pasha left for Europe to meet MacDonald, a declaration had been made in the House of Lords[1] that Great Britain was 'not going to abandon the Sudan in any sense whatever', and this was confirmed by a statement by the Prime Minister in the Commons on 10 July 1924, and by a dispatch to the High Commissioner, dated 7 October 1924, just after Zaghlul's departure, in which MacDonald gave warning that there could be 'no question of the British Government abandoning the Sudan until their work is done'.[2] Signs of unrest, particularly among detachments of the Egyptian army

[1] By Lord Parmoor on 24 June 1924. H. L. Deb. 5th ser., vol. 57, col. 986.
[2] Egypt No. 1 (1924). Cmd. 2269.

stationed there, were apparent during the early summer in the Sudan, and in August disturbances broke out at Khartoum, Atbara, and Port Sudan, attended by considerable loss of life.

The Egyptian Government proposed that a joint Egyptian–Sudanese commission of inquiry should deal with the affair, but the High Commissioner made it clear that the Governor-General[1] was alone responsible for order in the Sudan. The court of inquiry that was set up was, accordingly, an Anglo–Egyptian one and not Egyptian–Sudanese, and at the time of its appointment, a Note from the British Government[2] was communicated to the Egyptian Government intimating that, by virtue of the 1899 Convention, Great Britain considered herself responsible for the maintenance of order in the Sudan. This was followed by steps taken by the Governor-General to arrest and deport certain officials and others known to be implicated in the disturbances.

It is appropriate to note here that MacDonald also, in his conversations with Zaghlul Pasha in September, warned him that the *status quo* there was being undermined by the action of the Egyptians themselves, and in his October dispatch to the High Commissioner he enumerated the reminders he had given to Zaghlul of the moral responsibility of the Wafd leaders for the unsettled conditions in parts of the country. He said:

> As regards the Sudan, I drew attention to certain statements which His Excellency had made as President of the Council of Ministers before the Egyptian Parliament during the course of the summer. On 17 May, according to my information, Zaghlul Pasha stated that the fact that a foreign officer was Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army and the retention in that army of British officers were inconsistent with the dignity of independent Egypt. The expression of such sentiments in an official pronouncement by the responsible head of the Egyptian Government has obviously placed not only Sir Lee Stack as Sirdar, but all British officers attached to the Egyptian army, in a difficult position. I also had in mind that, in June, Zaghlul Pasha was reported to have claimed for Egypt complete rights of ownership over the Sudan and characterized the British Government as usurpers.[3]

The murder of the Sirdar, Sir Lee Stack, on 19 November 1924, brought matters to a head, and led to further, more drastic, measures in Egypt and the Sudan. The communication

[1] The Governor-General of the Sudan is directly under the authority of the British Ambassador, then the High Commissioner. Sir Lee Stack was also Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief, of the Egyptian army.

[2] *The Times*, 18 August 1924.

[3] Cmd. 2269.

made to the Egyptian Premier by Lord Allenby stated that the British Government considered the crime to be 'the natural outcome of a campaign of hostility to British rights and British subjects in Egypt and the Sudan, founded upon a heedless ingratitude for benefits conferred by Great Britain, not discouraged by your Excellency's Government, and fomented by organizations in close contact with that Government'.

A number of demands were accordingly made in a Note presented to the Egyptian Government by the High Commissioner.[1] They were:

(1) An apology for the murder of the Sirdar.
(2) A thorough inquiry into the crime 'with the utmost energy and without respect of persons'.
(3) The prohibition and vigorous suppression of all political demonstrations.
(4) The payment of an indemnity of £500,000 to the British Government.
(5) The withdrawal of Egyptian troops from the Sudan and of Egyptian officers in Sudanese battalions, which would be formed into a separate Sudan Defence Force, owing allegiance to the Sudan Government.
(6) The extension of the area to be irrigated in the Gezira district of the Sudan.
(7) Pending the conclusion of a further agreement on the subject, the retention, for the protection of foreign interests in Egypt, of their position and powers by the British Financial and Judicial Advisers and the officials of the European Department of the Ministry of the Interior.

Zaghlul, after conferring with his Cabinet and with King Fu'ad, laid the British Note before the Chamber. When that body rejected the last three demands,[2] the High Commission at once ordered the occupation of the Alexandria Customs[3] by British troops, and issued direct instructions to the Sudan Government to carry out as prescribed the conversion of the Sudanese units of the Egyptian army into a separate defence force. Resistance was offered by a regiment of infantry, which

[1] *Journal officiel du Gouvernement Égyptien*, 2 December 1924, No. 107.

[2] The Egyptian Parliament drafted a protest to the League of Nations, addressed also to all the Parliaments of the world, characterizing the British Government's action as imperialist aggression. The protest was not circulated, as it did not come from a Government, but the British Foreign Secretary, on 3 December 1924, expressed his willingness to give the League Council any information it desired as to what had been done, or as to British policy.

[3] The Customs receipts constituted the major source of the revenue of the Egyptian Government.

had to be dealt with by force,[1] but by the beginning of December all the Egyptian troops had been withdrawn.

Faced with this vigorous action in Egypt and the Sudan, Zaghlul resigned on 24 November 1924. He was succeeded by Ziwar Pasha at the head of a non-Wafd Cabinet, who entered into discussions with Lord Allenby. As a result, one of the British demands (that regarding the powers of the British Financial and Judicial Advisers to the Government) was modified. The Egyptian Government pledged itself to consult the Judicial Adviser on certain specified questions concerning foreigners and foreign interests, but the demand that the advice of both of these officials should be accepted without question was withdrawn.

As regards the Department of Public Security, the European section was to remain entirely autonomous, and the Director-General of it was not only to represent and defend foreign interests in general, but was also to represent Great Britain in particular as the Power which had assumed protection of foreign interests in Egypt. By an exchange of Notes on 29 November 1924, the modified British terms were accepted, and the British troops were withdrawn from the Customs Offices at Alexandria.

The British Government's policy in relation to the Sudan was again set forth in the House of Commons on 15 December 1924, by Sir Austen Chamberlain, who had succeeded MacDonald as Foreign Secretary. After referring to Britain's position as trustee for the people of the Sudan, he said 'we insist that we shall have there for the future whatever authority is necessary in order to discharge our duty and our responsibilities to the people whom we govern. We have no desire to terminate the Condominium. If . . . the Government of Egypt will work with us, we will recognize it and be loyal to it . . .'

Within a few days of the Sirdar's murder three prominent Egyptian politicians had been arrested by the British military police, who handed them over to the Egyptian authorities. They were placed on trial, together with several other persons arrested subsequently, in May 1925, and on 7 June eight of them were condemned to death.

[1] Two platoons mutinied at Khartoum and established themselves in the military hospital, whence they were dislodged by British troops and artillery.

CHAPTER II

ANGLO-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS, 1927–30

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS, 1924–7

ZIWAR PASHA himself recognized the share of responsibility which the Wafd Government had to bear for the Sirdar's murder and for other similar crimes. But his position was made difficult by the existence of a Chamber with a large Wafd majority. On 24 December 1924 he therefore obtained a dissolution from the King. Elections held in February 1925 were 'managed' to produce a mainly non-Wafd Chamber, and Ziwar formed a non-Wafd coalition. But when the Chamber met it elected Zaghlul Pasha as President. Ziwar then offered his resignation and, when it was refused, demanded that the new Chamber should be dissolved. He then governed for eleven months by decree. In the summer of 1925 he himself left Egypt on a visit to Europe and the government was carried on by a former Prime Minister, Yahya [Yehia] Ibrahim Pasha, who had joined the Cabinet in March as Minister of Finance. Yahya was not only a friend of the King but also closely associated with a new party of the 'King's Friends' which had been formed in January 1925 by a Palace official, Nash'at Pasha, and was known as the Ittihad (or Unionists). In effect, Yahya Pasha imposed on the country a Palace Government which consisted of Nash'at and the Ittihad. A royal decree for the holding of new elections was not issued until 22 February 1926, when the 1923 electoral law was restored. Polling took place in May and resulted in a complete victory for the Wafd, who obtained 150 seats to sixty.[1]

A Government headed by Zaghlul Pasha, leader of the Wafd, could not at that time be acceptable to Great Britain. Seven members of the Wafd, including two former Ministers, had just stood trial before a Bench consisting of one British and two Egyptian judges on charges of being implicated in political murders in 1922.[2] Six were acquitted, but the British judge resigned on the ground that in the case of four of these six prisoners the verdict was contrary to the weight of evidence and therefore constituted a grave miscarriage of justice. On 2 June the British

[1] The Ittihad Party did not win a single seat.

[2] In the twelve months from December 1921, nineteen attempts were made against the lives of British residents, and in the five years ending with the murder of the third Sirdar in November 1924, the total was forty-six.

Government presented a Note[1] to the Egyptian Government in which they reserved judgement on the verdict, declined to accept it as proof of the innocence of the accused, and reserved full liberty to take any steps that might prove necessary in order to fulfil their obligations in safeguarding foreigners. It was thus quite clear that a Government led by Zaghlul would not enjoy the confidence of Great Britain, and King Fu'ad accordingly sent for 'Adli Pasha instead of the leader of the Wafd. 'Adli Pasha formed a Cabinet of six Wafdists, three Liberals, and one Independent. But the Chamber again elected Zaghlul as its President and did not give support to 'Adli (who resigned in April 1927) on current political issues in Anglo-Egyptian relations. 'Adli was succeeded by the Liberal leader, Sarwat Pasha, who formed a coalition Cabinet. He had been in office only a few weeks, however, when trouble arose over a proposal by the Chamber to increase the strength of the Egyptian army. The British Government had made up its mind that everything relating to the control and organization of the Egyptian army must be treated in effect as being covered by the four reserved points in the Declaration of February 1922. The Egyptian Government was willing, however, to accept this point of view, and relations between it and the High Commission improved. The way was thus clear for further negotiation between the two Governments for the settlement of the four points left outstanding in 1927. During the course of a visit to Europe in the summer of 1927, King Fu'ad, accompanied by his Prime Minister, came to London. Lord Lloyd, who had taken the place of Lord Allenby as High Commissioner in October 1925, was also in London, and the opportunity was taken to resume negotiations.

THE CHAMBERLAIN–SARWAT NEGOTIATIONS OF 1927–8

When Sarwat Pasha reopened conversations with Sir Austen Chamberlain in the middle of July 1927, he was told quite frankly that the position had not changed, and that the rights comprised in the four points were vital to Great Britain. 'No British Government could afford to ignore them', the Foreign Secretary said; they were, in fact, 'so essential to the existence of the British Empire that every British Government in the future, as in the past, whatever its complexion, would be obliged to insist upon them'.

The main difference between the Anglo–Egyptian discussions

[1] *The Times*, 2, 3, and 4 June 1926. Among those charged were the young Ahmad Mahir and Mahmud Fahmi an-Nuqrashi, each of whom was to become Prime Minister.

of 1924 and those of 1927–8 lay in the personality of the Egyptian negotiator; Zaghlul Pasha had come into power as the inveterate opponent of British power in Egypt and by virtue of his reputation found himself unable to adopt any but the most intransigent attitude towards the British Government's counter-proposals.

Sarwat Pasha, on the other hand, agreed at the outset that 'there must be friendly collaboration' between Great Britain and Egypt, and that the aid of the former was necessary for the security of the latter.

After a conversation on 13 July between Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sarwat Pasha,[1] an Egyptian draft treaty[2] was submitted to the Foreign Office on 18 July 1927. It contained proposals for an alliance, the substitution of the Capitulatory regime for one more suitable to the status of Egypt, admission to the League, and reversion to the *status quo ante* 1924.

Ten days later the British Foreign Office presented a counter draft treaty, which, while accepting the general principle of an alliance and the admission of Egypt to the League, required a more far-reaching system of guarantees than was contemplated in the Egyptian draft.

In addition to the agreement regarding foreign policy, the British draft provided for 'full and frank consultation between the High Contracting Parties in all matters of foreign policy which may affect their common interests'. While agreeing to the proposal regarding Capitulations, Great Britain, under the second and third of the reserved points, claimed the right to 'satisfy themselves that adequate protection is afforded to foreign lives and property'. The Egyptian Government was required to maintain a sufficient foreign element in its internal administration to ensure such protection.

The British draft also provided for the maintenance of such armed forces as should be necessary for the protection of Imperial lines of communication.[3]

The two points on which the negotiations sought agreement were the clauses relating to the military occupation and the Sudan.[4] After some weeks of negotiation a third draft treaty was agreed upon by both Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sarwat

[1] For a detailed account of the preceding tension and of the opening stages of the negotiations, see Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer* (London, Macmillan, 1934).

[2] See Egypt No. 1 (1928). Cmd. 3050.

[3] Further points in the British draft and annex related to: (*a*) Communications and supplies for the British armed forces, their disposition and maintenance. (*b*) Employment of British nationals in the civil service and consultation with H.M.G. prior to the appointment of foreigners. (*c*) Position and function of the financial and judicial advisers to remain unchanged. (*d*) *Status quo* in the Sudan to be maintained.

[4] Cmd. 3050.

Pasha. No mention was made of the Sudan and the question was left over for discussion at a later date. Sarwat had to take into consideration the probable attitude of Zaghlul Pasha and of the Wafd majority in the Chamber. Zaghlul died in August 1927 and his death had repercussions on the negotiations both because of his personal prestige which, had he approved, might have carried the draft through the Chamber, and because it deflected the attention of the Wafd to the problem of electing Zaghlul's successor.

In the new draft[1] the British Government agreed to:

(*a*) Use its influence with the other Capitulatory Powers to obtain 'modification' of the Capitulatory regime.

(*b*) Support Egypt's entry into the League of Nations.

(*c*) Reconsider the locality of the British military forces after ten years, with the right of appeal to the League in the event of disagreement.

The Egyptian Government agreed:

(*a*) Not to hamper British foreign policy, and to consult H.M.G. over any difficulties with third Powers.

(*b*) To give preference to British subjects in appointments to the civil service.

Late in November 1927 this treaty was forwarded to Lord Lloyd in Cairo by Sir Austen Chamberlain, who described it both as 'embodying large concessions to his Excellency's (Sarwat's) own views and to Egyptian sentiment', and as 'expressing on the one side and on the other the limit to which each party can advance in his wish to meet the other'. Accompanying the draft treaty were two Notes from the British to the Egyptian Government, which were to form the bases for the negotiations on the subjects of irrigation and the Capitulations.

With the formal presentation of the treaty to Sarwat Pasha in Cairo on 3 December 1927, there began a long and tedious process of negotiation. Sarwat Pasha at first expressed himself optimistically as to the treaty's prospects, but soon began to be aware of the growing antagonism of the Wafd, the strongest party in the coalition Government which he headed. He became increasingly unwilling to submit the treaty either to his Cabinet or to Mustafa Pasha an-Nahhas, the new President of the Wafd.

[1] Both sides agreed on certain points: (*a*) the Governments should enter into an alliance; (*b*) immediate British military assistance if Egypt were threatened; (*c*) British instruction and training of the Egyptian army. A comparison of the Egyptian and British drafts and a commentary on the third agreed draft will be found in Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Survey of International Affairs* (hereinafter referred to as *Survey*), 1928, pp. 245–50, 253–6.

Difficulty after difficulty was raised, first as to the interpretation of certain clauses, then as to further assurances from the British Government. But by 18 January 1928 the only points remaining outstanding were annexes I (A) and II (C), covering respectively the maintenance of British personnel on the existing scale in the Egyptian army during the period of ten years provided for in Article 7 of the treaty, and the maintenance of the number, status, and functions of the British officials then engaged in the public security and police services, pending the reform of the Capitulatory system.

The British Government offered, with regard to I (A), to convert the British personnel in the Egyptian army into a military mission, and with regard to II (C) suggested that if, within five years of the ratification of the treaty, the reform of the Capitulatory system had not taken place, and an Anglo–Egyptian agreement had not been reached on the point in question, the two Powers should ask the Council of the League of Nations to give a decision on the matter. To this latter proposal Sarwat Pasha replied that the matter was an internal one and the League was not concerned.[1] This attitude forms an interesting commentary on that taken up by the Egyptian Government of the day in appealing to the League to interfere after the sanctions taken by the British Government as a result of the Sirdar's murder in November 1924.

The treaty was at length communicated first to Nahhas Pasha and then to the Cabinet, and from this moment Sarwat Pasha ceased to play the predominant role in the negotiations, which was assumed by the President of the Wafd. In an interview with Lord Lloyd at the end of February 1928, Nahhas Pasha refused to discuss the treaty, because it did not provide for the complete evacuation of Egyptian territory by British military forces.

This was a complete return to the situation of 1924. Sir Austen Chamberlain, in a dispatch to Lord Lloyd on 1 March, said:

> Nahas Pasha is as little ready as was Zaghlul Pasha . . . to recognize the realities of the situation . . . It was Sarwat Pasha's recognition of these realities which made it possible to negotiate the Treaty with him; it is Nahas Pasha's refusal to recognize them which, if adopted by the Egyptian Government, will once again have made a settlement impossible.[2]

On 1 March a majority of the Cabinet voted for the rejection of the treaty, and Sarwat Pasha resigned the Premiership, to

[1] Egyptian Green Book No. 1 of 1928, Document 20.
[2] Cmd. 3050, pp. 59–60.

be succeeded by Nahhas Pasha on 16 March. The failure to negotiate a treaty made it necessary for the British Government to take cognisance of certain internal developments, and on 4 March King Fu'ad was informed that, having regard to the Declaration of February 1922, and the obligations incurred therein, the British Government could not be hampered in the discharge of those obligations by legislative proposals[1] introduced in the Egyptian Parliament which, if they were to become law, would be likely to be prejudicial to the maintenance of order and the protection of life and property in Egypt.

On 30 March the new Egyptian Cabinet took exception to the British Note as unwarranted interference in Egyptian affairs. Replying on 4 April, the British Government informed Nahhas that this could not be accepted as a correct exposition, and reminded him of the four reservations attached to the Declaration of 1922. In view of the Egyptian Government's rejection of the treaty designed to settle these four points, the *status quo ante* continued. Nahhas, however, declared that he was determined to proceed with the Bill, which would receive the royal assent and be applied without delay or equivocation. At the same time he maintained that the Bill was entirely innocuous, and reiterated his refusal to recognize the Declaration of 1922 or the four reserved points as valid.

At this point the High Commissioner felt it necessary to intervene. In a Note dated 30 April, he requested Nahhas Pasha, 'as head of the Egyptian Government, immediately to take the necessary steps to prevent the Bill . . . from becoming law', and added:

I am instructed to request your Excellency to give me a categorical assurance in writing that the above-mentioned measure will not be proceeded with. Should this assurance not reach me before 7 p.m. on 2 May, His Britannic Majesty's Government will consider themselves free to take such action as the situation may seem to them to require.

This produced on 1 May a conciliatory reply to the effect that the Egyptian Government were desirous of a friendly undertaking with Great Britain and would adjourn consideration of the Bill until the next session of Parliament. At the same time it categorically denied the British Government's right of interference, denouncing the Declaration of 1922 as a unilateral act which had never been accepted by the Egyptian Government. The incident closed with a reply from the British Government

[1] e.g., amendments to the Public Assemblies Act. This permitted the police to break up public 'gatherings' at their discretion and thereby prevent incitement to riot.

in which they reaffirmed their claim regarding the character and scope of the Declaration, stating that it 'embodies the conditions subject to which independence was accorded to Egypt, and His Majesty's Government will not permit it to be either modified or disregarded'.[1]

Shortly after this Nahhas was dismissed by the King,[2] and on 27 June Muhammad Mahmud Pasha formed a Cabinet. He found himself out of sympathy with the large Wafd majority in Parliament, which, in a letter to the King, he accused of exercising its powers in a dangerous partisan spirit, and of gross maladministration. As a result, on 19 July a royal rescript was issued dissolving Parliament for three years. From that date the Government was carried on by the King assisted by his Ministers, and all legislation was enacted by royal decree. The Wafd protested, but its attempts to stir up public opinion met with little success.

Unhindered by Wafdist influence, the Mahmud Government proceeded to make progress in external affairs. On 4 September 1928 it announced its adherence to the Briand–Kellogg Pact, though with the understanding that this did not imply acceptance of the reservations of any Power.[3] On 30 October a Note was dispatched to all the Capitulatory Powers, in which reference was made to the previous Note of 25 December 1927, and the Egyptian point of view as to the advisability of putting an end to the extraterritorial regime was set forth in detail. The Powers were asked to state whether they would prefer to negotiate direct, or hold a conference in Cairo to discuss the matter. In reply, the British Government reaffirmed the offer made in 1927 to Sarwat Pasha in Article 9[4] of the proposed treaty, and offered all possible support for a conference. Further, on 8 January 1929, conversations were opened regarding the acceptance of the findings of a special Nile Commission, which had issued its report on the question of the regulation of the Nile waters on 21 March 1926. These concluded a few months later with the signature of an agreement, on 1 May 1929, by which this report was accepted *in toto*, and the outlines of future arrangements as regards irrigation works on the Nile were

[1] For this correspondence see Egypt No. 2 (1928). Cmd. 3097.

[2] Following the publication of statements in the Cairo press charging him and two of his associates in the Wafd Party with unprofessional conduct as lawyers.

[3] This referred to the British reservations regarding freedom of action in respect of 'certain regions of which the welfare and integrity constitute a special and vital interest for our peace and safety'.

[4] This read: 'His Britannic Majesty undertakes to use all his influence with the Powers possessing Capitulatory rights in Egypt to obtain the modification of the Capitulatory regime now existing in Egypt so as to make it conform more closely with the spirit of the times and with the present state of Egypt.'

placed on record by an exchange of Notes between the Premier and the British High Commissioner.[1]

In February another outstanding question had been settled with the British Government by the conclusion of an agreement for the settlement of claims against the Egyptian Government in respect of the Ottoman Guaranteed Loan of 1885. The agreement was signed on 17 March 1929,[2] and provided for the discharge by Egypt of her total liability in respect of this Loan, and for certain payments by Great Britain in settlement of Egypt's claim for a share of reparations. Certain shipping and army claims outstanding since the First World War were also finally disposed of on a basis satisfactory to both parties.

THE HENDERSON–MAHMUD NEGOTIATIONS OF 1929

In June 1929 Mahmud visited Great Britain, and took the opportunity presented by the change of Government following the general election to reopen negotiations for a final settlement. On 24 July Lord Lloyd, who had been High Commissioner since 1925, resigned. Negotiations between Arthur Henderson, the new Foreign Secretary, and Mahmud progressed satisfactorily, and the text of new draft proposals was made public on 6 August.[3] Accompanying the draft was a letter from the Foreign Secretary, in which he stated that the proposals agreed upon represented 'the extreme limit to which I could recommend His Majesty's Government to go in their desire to achieve a lasting and honourable settlement of outstanding questions between Great Britain and Egypt'. He hoped for examination of them in a friendly spirit and undertook that, if the verdict of a newly-elected Egyptian Parliament were favourable, 'His Majesty's Government, for their part, will immediately submit the proposals to Parliament with a view to the conclusion and ratification of a treaty carrying them into effect.' On the same day Mahmud replied in a Note declaring himself willing to submit the proposals to the Egyptian people and Parliament 'in the sincere belief that their acceptance would be in the interests of my country'. The proposals were based in general upon those agreed between Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sarwat Pasha in 1927.[4] Attached to the draft treaty was an exchange of Notes

[1] The text of the Nile Waters agreement was published as a White Paper on 5 July 1929 (Cmd. 3348). See Appendix IV.

[2] Treaty Series No. 7 (1929). Cmd. 3305.

[3] Egypt No. 1 (1929). Cmd. 3376.

[4] The main differences occurred over the disposition of the forces, an attempt to deal with the problem of the Sudan, and the protection of foreigners in Egypt. A detailed comparison of the two drafts, as well as a comment on the Wafd leader and on the King's interventions will be found in *Survey*, 1930, pp. 193–200.

dealing with the question of the abolition of the Capitulations, the transfer to the Mixed Courts[1] of the jurisdiction of the existing Consular Courts, and the application of Egyptian legislation to foreigners. Other Notes dealt with army questions, British advisers and instructors, police, minorities, and the Sudan.

On his return to Egypt at the end of August, Mahmud appealed to all parties to examine the draft proposals without prejudice. Egyptian opinion must, he said, be taken into account, and the nation would therefore have the last word. How the nation was to be given an opportunity of expressing its opinion was a difficult problem. It was obvious that a return to constitutional government would first have to be made, apart from the fact that the draft treaty stipulated for ratification of its terms by the Egyptian Parliament prior to its submission to the Parliament of Great Britain. The Premier wished to go to the country on the issue of the acceptance or rejection of the treaty, and during the few weeks following his return to Egypt secured definite pledges of support for it from the Liberal Constitutional and the Ittihad (or Palace) parties. The Wafd, however, proved as uncompromising as before, and while conducting a campaign of abuse of the Premier, refused to express any opinion on the treaty. Its leader, Nahhas, insisted that Parliament must first be elected by universal suffrage, and that only after that, 'under the Dome of the Chamber', would it discuss the terms of the British Government's offer.

Mahmud Pasha offered to resign, leaving a coalition Government to handle the treaty and introduce it to the Chamber, but the Wafd remained adamant. He asked it to take part in the coalition, but it continued to demand the holding of a general election as the essential preliminary to any steps taken towards recognition of the treaty proposals. On 21 September 1929 'Adli Pasha who, as an experienced statesman of moderate views had been appealed to as the man most likely to be able to head a coalition Cabinet, informed the King that there was no hope of inducing the Wafd to modify its attitude, and by the end of the month it was evident that the Premier would have to resign to make way for a Cabinet of a purely interim character, whose work would be more or less confined to arranging for the holding of the elections.

Mahmud Pasha accordingly resigned on 2 October 1929, and on the following day 'Adli Pasha accepted the King's invitation to form a Cabinet for this purpose. The new Ministers were almost without exception men of long political experience and moderate views, and the feeling in the country appears to have

[1] Cmd. 3376.

been that, in the circumstances, the best step possible had been taken to put an end to the crisis. The character of the new Ministry was regarded as a guarantee that orderly government would be maintained during the electoral period, and it was expected that a decree would be promulgated at once, ordering a general election under the direct suffrage law, under which every man of thirty years of age and over was entitled to vote.

The royal decree authorizing the holding of a general election was published on 31 October 1929. The decree at the same time restored those Articles of the Constitution which had been suspended on 19 July 1928, when the King had dissolved Parliament. The elections were duly held on 21 December and resulted in a sweeping victory for the Wafd—a foregone conclusion. The Liberal Constitutional Party, the only other party with any considerable following in the country, had decided to boycott the election and did not take any part, and of the twenty-nine non-Wafd members returned, twenty described themselves as Independents, which meant that they would probably vote with the majority when Parliament met. 'Adli Pasha tendered his resignation on the last day of the year, and on 1 January 1930 a new Government was formed by Nahhas Pasha.

THE HENDERSON–NAHHAS NEGOTIATIONS OF 1930

In his speech on the occasion of the opening of Parliament on 11 January 1930, the King referred to the possibility of opening negotiations with the British Government which should have as their object the conclusion of a solid and honourable accord between the two countries. Shortly afterwards the question was debated in the Chamber, but on 6 February Nahhas Pasha obtained a mandate to begin the negotiations, which were formally opened in London on 31 March. The negotiations[1] proceeded fairly smoothly on thirteen out of the sixteen clauses of the Henderson–Mahmud proposals. Thus, agreement was reached on the immediate termination of the military occupation, on British support for Egypt's application for membership of the League of Nations, on the Capitulations, and on the establishment of an alliance. The question of the Capitulations called for considerable discussion before agreement was reached, and the defence of the Suez Canal[2] gave rise to very lengthy discussions, but agreement in principle was reached on this subject also.

[1] For an account (from which some sentences have been quoted) see Egypt No. 1 (1930). Cmd. 3575.

[2] See *Survey*, 1930, p. 207.

It was early recognized that the Sudan . . . was likely to present a formidable problem to the negotiators. The insertion of the words 'without prejudice to Egypt's rights and material interests' in the treaty article[1] . . . and of a sentence of the connected note providing for no discrimination in the Sudan between British subjects and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce and immigration or the possession of property, furnishes no measure of the time devoted to discussion of all aspects of the question.[2]

Despite efforts to meet the Egyptian point of view, Nahhas Pasha on the morning of 17 April informed the British negotiators that the Egyptian delegation 'could not commit themselves to accept the treaty as they did not feel that their requirements in regard to the Sudan had been adequately met'. Negotiations were therefore adjourned to allow him to communicate with Cairo.

When discussions were resumed on 5 May, Nahhas presented a modified Egyptian draft treaty (with two alternative drafts for the Sudan clause,[3]) but was informed that unless he agreed to the restoration of the British draft of Article 11 (the Sudan clause), no treaty would be possible. The Egyptian drafts of the Sudan clause contained two unacceptable demands. The first was that immigration into the Sudan should be unrestricted. The British Government could not consent thus to deprive the Governor-General of all control over immigration, in view of the events of 1924 when, with the advent of the Wafd Government early in that year, a systematic campaign of anti-British propaganda had been begun in the Sudan leading to an outbreak of sedition and mutiny which had made necessary the removal of Egyptian officials and Egyptian troops.[4] The second demand was that either of the High Contracting Parties might within a year after the coming into force of the treaty be allowed to raise the question of the 1899 Condominium. This second demand might have meant that, since the draft treaty provided

[1] Article 11 in the British draft read: 'While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future modifying the Convention of 1899, the High Contracting Parties agree that, without prejudice to Egypt's rights and material interests, the status of the Sudan shall be that resulting from the same conventions. Accordingly the Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred on him by the said conventions.'

[2] It was agreed that if difficulties of interpretation arose within one year, either Party could request discussion of the points at issue.

[3] (*a*) 'Without prejudice to Egypt's rights and material interests in the Sudan, the High Contracting Parties agreed that the question of the Sudan shall be reserved for future negotiations to be conducted between them in the course of the period of one year from the ratification of the present treaty.' (*b*) Alternatively, '. . . reserved for future negotiations. Meanwhile the *de facto* position obtaining in the Sudan before 1924 shall be restored.'

[4] See above, p. 14.

for Egypt's admission to membership of the League of Nations, Great Britain could within twelve months have been summoned before an international tribunal to justify the manner in which she had administered the 1899 Convention.

Thus all that had been achieved during the negotiations towards settling the questions at issue between Great Britain and Egypt had to be abandoned because of the impossibility of coming to an agreement regarding the Sudan. Perhaps a crumb of comfort was to be found in Nahhas Pasha's words just before his departure from London: 'We have lost a Treaty of Friendship with Great Britain, but we have won her actual friendship, which is all-important.'

CHAPTER III

EGYPTIAN POLITICS, 1930–5

THE WAFD AND THE PALACE, 1930–5

WITH the failure of negotiations in May 1930, the clock was set back to 28 February 1922. During the greater part of the succeeding five years Egypt was living under a dictatorship, and the Government had its hands full in dealing with domestic problems, both political and economic.

It will be remembered that Nahhas Pasha had been removed from office by King Fu'ad in June 1928, after which Parliament had been dissolved and forbidden to meet again for three years. Anxious to prevent a recurrence of such interference by the Palace, Nahhas, in May 1930, submitted to the King two Bills designed to prevent infringement of the Constitution, drafted in such a form as to ensure that the Wafd would be in a position to frustrate any future suspension of Parliament or violation by Ministers of certain articles of the Constitution. Since the principal object of the Bills was to curtail the influence of the Palace it was not surprising that King Fu'ad, in the exercise of his constitutional prerogative, refused to initial them.[1] Had he done so and sent them on to the Chamber they would certainly have been passed, since the Wafd enjoyed an overwhelming majority in Parliament.[2]

As it was, Nahhas Pasha regarded the refusal as an occasion for resigning, though why he should have done so is not clear,[3] since the question of the Bills could not become a matter of practical politics so long as his Cabinet continued to carry out the normal functions of government. The incident seemed to indicate that the Wafdists were more interested in political

[1] A recognized authority on Egypt summed up the Bills by saying: 'The Wafd hoped by this combination in legislation to secure control over the exercise by the King of the prerogatives reserved to him under the Constitution, and make it impossible for anyone to challenge its position. In the circumstances, in holding up these decrees the King was defending not only his prerogatives, but also his people against the creation of a permanent dictatorship, which the legislation in question was clearly intended to confer on the Wafd.'

[2] The elections held in December 1929 had been boycotted by the Liberal-Constitutional Party. The Sha'b Party had not yet been formed. The Wafd, besides controlling Parliament, commanded the support of the vast majority of the people, and Nahhas had just been accorded an almost unanimous vote of confidence by both Houses.

[3] It is supposed that he counted on a show of firmness making the King give way, as had happened in 1924 when Zaghlul took up a similar attitude.

controversy and the promotion of legislation solely for their own protection than in concentrating upon the solution of economic problems or the carrying out of domestic reforms.

The Premier's resignation gave the King his opportunity, and he asked Isma'il Sidqi [Sidky] Pasha, who had a reputation as an experienced economist, to form a Cabinet. Parliament was at first adjourned for a month, and on 12 July the session was closed. This last step was taken chiefly owing to the outbreak of serious disturbances, for which the Wafd leaders were mainly responsible. Regardless of the fact that he had resigned voluntarily, and that he and his party had refused to recognize the Constitution at the time it was drafted and adopted (in 1922 and 1923), Nahhas now posed as the champion of that Constitution, which he accused the Government of violating, and preached non-cooperation to his followers, exhorting them to refuse to pay taxes.

It is true that Sidqi had in contemplation a certain number of changes in the electoral law, by which he hoped to do something towards making the representation of the interests of the people a reality. The 1923 Constitution had originally provided for elections by the two-degree system, as being best suited to an electorate of whom between 80 and 90 per cent were illiterate,[1] but Zaghlul Pasha had altered this, in 1924, and instituted the direct system. Under this there was elected not a Parliament which really represented the will of the nation, but a body which, largely because it was too ill-informed to formulate any policy of its own, laid itself open to the accusation of doing little more than carry out the wishes of the Wafd caucus.

Sidqi Pasha was acting on behalf of most of the enlightened political opinion of the country in now proposing modifications which the experience of six or more years had shown to be advisable. Among these were reductions in the size of both the Senate and Chamber, and the return to two-degree elections. The Wafd, on its side, adopted three methods by which to work against the Government. In the first place it preached non-cooperation, and incited the populace to riot and to destroy Government property; in the second, it attempted to hold meetings of the suspended Parliament and petitioned the King to convene it in extraordinary session; and in the third, it conducted a campaign in Great Britain which had as its object the persuading of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Egypt.[2]

[1] Groups of thirty electors, on the basis of adult suffrage, were to select delegates, who in turn elected the parliamentary deputies. The delegates had to possess certain qualifications of property and capacity. See Appendix II.

The retort to the disturbances was the arrest of Wafd leaders and the suppression of its papers. To the petition to the King the Premier replied that it was unconstitutional. It was true that a majority in Parliament had the right to ask for the convening of the session, but this right could only be exercised if it did not affect any other right granted under the Constitution. The presentation of the petition just after the King had accepted the advice of his Ministers to end the ordinary session could have no other object than to defy His Majesty's prerogative of prorogation.

Attention has been drawn to the development of this constitutional crisis not only because it had its effect on the subsequent progress of events, but also because it led to something in the nature of a passage of arms between the Egyptian and British Governments. MacDonald, in his anxiety to dissociate the British Government from the struggle which was going on between Sidqi Pasha and the Wafd, made a statement[1] which was interpreted in Cairo as constituting an assumption of the right to interfere. He was careful to emphasize that the British Government's policy was one of neutrality in 'what appeared to them to be a purely internal issue for the Egyptians themselves to decide', but he went on to say that the High Commissioner had been instructed 'to make it quite plain that H.M. Government did not intend to be used as an instrument for an attack on the Egyptian Constitution. In consequence they could be no party to an alteration to the electoral law, even if precluded by their Declaration of 1922 from actual intervention in an internal issue of this nature.'

Since Sidqi Pasha and his Cabinet were then preparing to make alterations in the electoral law, this statement was seized upon as evidence of the assumption of a right to intervene, and they retorted, in effect, that no one had asked for the British Government's help. In a reply on 18 July, Sidqi said that this declaration of the British Government's intention could be justified only if the Egyptian Government had asked its support in the execution of such a matter. But that in the absence of such a request, which the Government retained the right to make as an independent State, the statement could only be interpreted in Egypt as intervention in a definite and precise sense in affairs of an internal character.

Another point to which Sidqi Pasha took exception was that

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behalf of intervention by Great Britain on the Wafd side against the Egyptian Government.

[1] In the House of Commons on 16 July 1930. (H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 241, col. 241.)

MacDonald had warned him that the British Government held him responsible for the protection of foreign lives and property in Egypt, at the same time sending a similar warning to Nahhas Pasha, holding him 'equally responsible'. As Sidqi pointed out, Nahhas had ceased to have a *locus standi* in the matter when he resigned his office.

In October 1930 the changes in the electoral law were published,[1] and the new Constitution was promulgated by royal decree on 22 October. Sidqi Pasha had stated earlier that if he altered the electoral law it would only be with a view to obtaining real representation of the country and the return of deputies who understood the meaning of representation, and he now emphasized that the new Constitution safeguarded the fundamental principles of that of 1923, which, as he pointed out, had been drafted by men who were for the most part members of his own Cabinet.

The new Constitution was to enter into force on the next assembly of Parliament, for which elections would be held in the following May (1931). The Wafd at once decided to boycott them, to fight the new Constitution, and to refuse to accept any treaty with Britain which might be negotiated by Sidqi's Government, and in this programme of action they were joined by the Liberal-Constitutional Party, led by Mahmud Pasha, the ex-Premier. Riots and strikes followed in Cairo and some provincial towns.

While the Opposition was active in this direction Sidqi himself was making good progress in his task of restoring the economic position of the country and reforming the administration. In providing for the preservation of order he was compelled to use methods which could be described as high-handed by his opponents, and protests against certain administrative acts[2] were issued from the Wafd headquarters, among them being one from the women of Cairo, addressed to the British Residency, against the systematic use of British police to prevent 'pacific' demonstrations.

The elections were duly held, in spite of the boycott, Sidqi Pasha having meanwhile founded a new party under the title of the Sha'b, or People's Party of Reform.[3] The Wafd claimed that few people went to the polls, but the Government figures

[1] The age for voting was raised from twenty-one to twenty-five years, and the elector delegates were to be men of education and standing in their constituencies. The Senate was reduced from 132 to 100 members, and the Chamber from 235 to 150.

[2] In May 1931, just before the elections, for instance, the Governor of Cairo prohibited the holding of the Wafd National Congress.

[3] Eighty-three Sha'bists were returned, 38 Ittihad Party, 17 Independents, and 8 Nationalists.

purported to show that in Middle Egypt 65 per cent of the electorate had voted, in Cairo, 38 per cent, and in Alexandria, 71 per cent.[1] The Premier issued a statement maintaining that the issue had been a constitutional one, and that the ballot showed that the new Constitution had been accepted by the country, and actually the number of electors who voted was stated to be greater than in 1929, when voting had been carried out under the direct system with adult suffrage. Parliament met on 20 June 1931, and from that moment until 1934 Egypt disappeared from the news.

The Premier himself concentrated on dealing with the economic depression, ignoring the agitation carried on by the Wafd, and in this he was helped by the indifference of the masses of the country to political problems, of which, to begin with, they understood little or nothing, and which could never compare in importance in their eyes with the question whether they could obtain the water they needed or could sell their cotton advantageously.

There was much to be done, since the Wafd Cabinet's neglect of the routine 'business' of administration had added to the difficulties due to the economic depression. In September 1933, Sidqi Pasha's health broke down, largely owing to overwork, and he was succeeded by Yahya Pasha, who formed a Government of Independents. It was not until October 1934 that any further political developments of concern to the British Government again occurred, and this time the Wafd was not involved. King Fu'ad's health had been giving cause for much anxiety during the year, and his withdrawal from public life had allowed a situation to develop in which Ibrashi Pasha, the Director of the Royal Privy Purse, had taken decisions in his name which were severely criticized both by the Government and by public opinion.

There was thus established in the Palace an unofficial and unconstitutional—but none the less effective—regency with which the Government could not work.

Faced by a growing tide of criticism and anxious to divert attention from his own weakness, Yehia Pasha sought the advice of the British chargé d'affaires who, acting on instructions, proffered the advice demanded. This advice was not to the liking of the Prime Minister who very disingenuously then launched a press campaign accusing the Residency of interfering in the internal politics of Egypt. Yehia Pasha's position was not strong enough to survive the false situation he had created for himself, and King Fuad, whose health had improved, accepted his resignation . . .[2]

[1] In the Canal area, however, where the Governor disobeyed the Government's order to 'manage' the elections, the poll was extremely small.

[2] *The Times*, 29 September 1951.

He was succeeded by Tawfiq Nisim [Tewfik Nessim] Pasha, who at once realized that the causes of the Ministerial crisis must be removed, and that these lay in the situation which had come about as the result of the illness first of Sidqi Pasha and then of the King, two strong men who had jointly taken control during the previous four years. The effects of Sidqi's withdrawal were rendered less noticeable at the time by King Fu'ad's own efforts; but when the King's illness temporarily removed the second dominant personality in the State, a crisis became only a matter of time. During the King's illness a deadlock ensued between the Palace entourage and the Government of Yahya Pasha. But fortunately the King's health improved enough for him to come to the conclusion that provision must be made for a substitute for his own direct supervision. The Council of 1930 had been modelled on the belief that there would always be two strong men in the country to make a success of it. It was now realized that certain modifications must be made. The new Premier, a former Minister of Finance and a man of independent outlook, was known to have very definite views on the subject of unconstitutional methods. Among the conditions he put forward for accepting office were the dissolution of Parliament and the holding of elections for a new Parliament which should give its verdict on the Constitution. He himself was not believed to have any fondness for the 1930 Constitution, and to object particularly to Article 156, which provided that no amendment could be brought within ten years. He seems to have persuaded the King, at his first audience, that the Constitution should be abolished, and on 30 November 1934 His Majesty signed a decree to that effect. This provided that the form of State should be maintained, and until a new Constitution had been promulgated the legislative and other powers of Parliament were vested in the Sovereign, who governed through his Ministers. All decree laws were, however, to be submitted to the new Parliament when it was formed.

The fact that Nisim Pasha did not approve of the 1930 Constitution was interpreted in the country, in Wafd circles at any rate, as foreshadowing the restoration of that of 1923, and his advent to power was acclaimed as a Wafdist triumph, but Nisim soon gave evidence of his independence of Wafd influence, if only by his choice of Ministers.

The Wafd leaders, finding that the Government could get on without them, began to adopt new methods of extending their influence, for example, the establishment in February 1935 of a Higher Council for Labour, by which it was hoped to bring labour within the orbit of the party, a move which challenged

the authority of the official Labour Office, as the Government had been engaged in organizing local labour on legal and non-political lines for over three years. In January 1936 the Wafd also decided to organize the young men among its followers in bodies with a distinctive uniform, and with a programme in which the teaching of the spirit of discipline and love of country took a prominent part.[1]

In May 1935 a letter was published from the King to Nisim Pasha, dated 18 April, in which His Majesty expressed a wish for a return to constitutional government, preferably by the restoration of the 1923 Constitution 'with any modifications which the representatives would demand'. From this moment the movement in support of a return to that Constitution spread from the Wafd to nearly all the other sections of Egyptian opinion. In June the Wafd, in the belief that the Cabinet favoured this, issued a manifesto worded in such a way as to suggest that they would now give Nisim Pasha their support, and attributing to British interference the fact that nothing had yet been done towards restoring the Constitution of 1923.

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS

The unilateral British declaration of 28 December 1922 had made certain reservations with regard to defence, among them 'the security of communications of the British Empire in Egypt' and 'the defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference direct or indirect'.[2] When Italy invaded Abyssinia, the

conflict affected Egypt closely in several different ways. In the first place her sympathies were engaged on behalf of a fellow African country. In the second place, decisions were required of her, as a State with at least the formal attributes of sovereignty, in face of a war between two of her neighbours. In the third place, she found herself at closer quarters geographically with the belligerents than any of the other countries that, like Egypt herself, were not actually engaged in the struggle. And in the fourth place the difficulties and dangers of her position were vastly increased by the consequences that now began to flow from her anomalous relation with Great Britain.[3]

In fact, 'the Italo–Abyssinian conflict forced an Anglo–Egyptian issue which had been pending for fifty-three years.'[4]

The first consequences, in the field of Egyptian internal politics, were seen in a speech by Nahhas Pasha on 8 September.

[1] On 11 January the Government prohibited parades of these 'Blueshirts'.
[2] See above, p. 8. [3] *Survey*, 1936, pp. 669–70. [4] ibid. p. 672.

He said that there could be no co-operation with Great Britain unless the people of Egypt so willed, and added 'we shall not take part in a coming war unless we can do so on a basis of co-operation between equals.'[1] Meanwhile conversations had been going on between the Premier's office and the Residency as to the effects the developments in Libya and East Africa might have on Egypt, and on 16 September the Acting High Commissioner handed to the Prime Minister, Nisim Pasha, a Note assuring him that Great Britain was fully alive to the interests and anxieties of Egypt and would, if occasion arose, 'keep the Egyptian Government informed and enter into consultation with them regarding any developments of the international situation which may closely concern Egypt'.

During October a number of steps were taken by joint arrangement between the Egyptian and British authorities, among them being the strengthening of the British garrison and the stationing of additional troops on the Libyan frontier.[2] Although these measures were taken with the consent of the Prime Minister, his continuance in office largely depended on Wafdist support. When it appeared that Nisim was working in collaboration with the Residency over defence measures, the followers of Nahhas became restive and raised the issue of British interference. Mahmud Pasha, the Liberal Party leader, also attacked Nisim for governing without a Constitution.[3]

On 18 October Walter Runciman, in an election speech at Penzance, announced that the base of the British Mediterranean Fleet had been temporarily transferred from Malta to Alexandria. This made possible the accusation that British military and naval dispositions could be made without reference to Egypt, and led to a renewed call for a 'united front' which had already been urged by Sidqi Pasha on 12 October. Early in November Mahmud, addressing representatives of the non-Wafdist political parties, criticized Nisim for his subservience to British policy and suggested that treaty negotiations should be reopened.

In reply a statement of British policy towards Egypt came from the Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, on 9 November. He referred to the friendly collaboration between the two countries in the past and went on to say that the allegations made against Great Britain were untrue, suggesting that His Majesty's Government opposed the return in Egypt of a constitutional regime suited to her special requirements. He added, however,

[1] *The Times*, 9 September 1935.

[2] Thus the garrison was composed of a part British and part Egyptian force.

[3] The occasion was a meeting in Cairo on 7 November, attended by all parties except the Wafd leaders.

that when the British Government had been consulted, they had advised against the re-enactment of the Constitutions of 1923 and 1930, since one had proved unworkable and the other was universally unpopular. 'History and Geography', he said, 'have linked together our fortunes. As friends and associates we must deal frankly with each other, facing the facts, overcoming, if we can, the difficulties, and always determined to understand each other's point of view.'[1] A wave of anti-British feeling followed this speech. The Wafdists had lent their support to Nisim Pasha on the understanding that he intended to work towards the re-establishment of the 1923 Constitution. This support was withdrawn at a party meeting immediately following the Guildhall speech, and on 13 November the Wafd formally called upon Nisim to resign.

This prompted the Prime Minister to issue an official statement giving the record of his efforts to raise the constitutional question with the British Government through Sir Miles Lampson. He stated that earlier in the year, directly after King Fu'ad's conditional assent to the re-establishment of the Constitution, the British High Commissioner had conveyed to him the British Government's advice—which was against its renewal. He had raised the question again in November, and the only indication of the British attitude that he had received had been Sir Samuel Hoare's passing reference in his speech.

The anti-British feeling which followed Sir Samuel Hoare's speech resulted in riots on 13 and 14 November. A student died from injuries received in these riots and on the day of his funeral a national demonstration was staged in which four former Prime Ministers (Sidqi, Mahmud, Nahhas, and Yahya) took part. A day of national mourning was held on 21 November without serious disturbances, but on 2 December rioting broke out again. The Wafd addressed an appeal[2] to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations in which Egypt was described as 'a victim of manifest aggression'. Early in December the British Foreign Secretary made another reference to Egypt in a speech in the House of Commons on 5 December. He denied that Great Britain had given advice—tantamount to a veto—against the revival of the 1923 Constitution, although that had been the Egyptian Prime Minister's interpretation.

Referring to the possibility of an Anglo-Egyptian treaty, he said the negotiations could not be carried on simultaneously with the difficulties that had arisen out of the Abyssinian situation.[3] In the Egyptian view this was merely further procrastination, but serious rioting was prevented by a hint, given to

[1] *Survey*, 1936, p. 674. [2] Published 19 November. [3] *Survey*, 1936, p. 676.

Nisim Pasha by Sir Miles Lampson, that the British Government had no intention of dictating the form of the Egyptian Constitution—even if it deemed that of 1923 to be unsuitable. Nisim acted promptly and on the same day, 12 December, by the re-enactment, with slight modifications, of the electoral law of 1923.

On 9 December a meeting was held in Cairo at which a United Front was formed of the parties in opposition to Nisim. However, the Premier's position had been saved by the King's agreement to restore the 1923 Constitution. Three days later the United Front leaders presented to the High Commissioner a Note requesting the opening of treaty negotiations. They pointed out that the co-operation with Great Britain entailed by the Abyssinian crisis provided an excellent opportunity for the conclusion of a treaty, and that they were ready to conclude a treaty on the same terms as those agreed to in 1930 and 'to settle questions on which agreement is not reached in the same friendly spirit'. It was signed by men of such divergent views as Nahhas, Mahmud, and Sidqi—the two last irreconcilable opponents of Nahhas—and by 'Ali Shamsi Pasha, leader of a group of dissident Wafdists. However, Nahhas, counting on victory at the coming elections, announced a few days later that the Wafd would share with no other party the privilege of negotiating a treaty with Great Britain.

Once a rescript for the re-establishment of the 1923 Constitution and the electoral law of the same year had been promulgated on 19 December, the United Front could be undermined by the action of the Wafd. In fact, when Nisim Pasha resigned on 21 January, King Fu'ad sent for the leaders of the United Front and asked Nahhas to form a Coalition Government. The Wafd refused, thus creating a political deadlock which led to further outbreaks of violence among the students, resulting in the closing of the National University of Cairo. But a way out of a difficult situation was found by the formation of a neutral Cabinet under 'Ali Mahir [Maher] Pasha, the chief of the Royal Cabinet.

In the meantime the British answer to the United Front's Note had been handed to the Egyptian Government and to the leader of the Wafd on 20 January and had contributed not a little to the political deadlock. In answer to a question on 4 February Anthony Eden, the new Foreign Secretary, told the House of Commons that

> the High Commissioner was instructed to state that His Majesty's Government were prepared to enter forthwith into conversations with the Egyptian Government with the object of arriving at an

Anglo-Egyptian treaty settlement. With a view to promoting the prospects of a comprehensive settlement, His Majesty's Government thought it desirable to begin with the categories which have given most difficulty in 1930. They felt that, if these difficulties were surmounted, the prospects of reaching a settlement would clearly be favourable.[1]

The categories which had given most difficulty in 1930 were military questions and the Sudan. The British Note made it clear that already conditions resulting from the changed strategic situation in East Africa rendered impracticable the undertakings given in the military clause of the 1930 treaty. But although some Egyptians were prepared to recognize the fact that, many years must elapse before the Egyptian army could be equal to the duty of defending the country against the dangers which might threaten it were the Eastern Mediterranean to be the scene of a war, Egyptian opinion as a whole received a shock, since it believed that the British Government were bound by the pledge given by the British Secretary of State for Air on 8 May 1930 that his Government 'would not regard the agreement which had been reached by that date on the majority of the questions at issue as having been voided by the failure to complete the negotiations by arriving at a similar agreement on the points that still remained over.'[2]

The second point stressed in the British answer was that should agreement be reached it would also be desirable to arrive at a preliminary agreement on the status of the Sudan. This question of the degree of Egyptian control in the Sudan had proved an inevitable stumbling block in all past negotiations. Moreover, recent events in East Africa had given the problem a new significance. The fact could not be overlooked that the Sudan frontiers marched with Abyssinia for about 800 miles and that the source of three important rivers contributing to Egypt's water supply—the Blue Nile, the Atbara, and the Sobat—were in Abyssinian territory. Not least significant from the Egyptian point of view was a statement made by the High Commissioner when handing over the British Government's Note that, if the negotiations were to fail, the British Government would feel obliged to review their position in Egypt and to define their relations with her anew.[3]

The Egyptian Government was anxious that, if the negotiations failed, the *status quo ante* should remain. A formula was agreed upon between Mahir Pasha and Sir Miles Lampson, and on 13 February Notes were exchanged between the two Governments based on this formula. Sir Miles Lampson led the

[1] *Survey*, 1936, p. 684. [2] ibid. p. 681. [3] *The Times*, 22 January 1936.

British delegation, which included a staff of senior naval and military advisers. The conversations opened on 2 March in a somewhat pessimistic atmosphere. No concrete results had been achieved and, indeed, by the end of March there had been reports of deadlock in the military conversations, when Egyptian domestic affairs were thrown into confusion by the death of King Fu'ad on 25 April. His son, Faruq [Farouk], was a minor; therefore the question arose of the appointment of a Council of Regency. A controversy of some importance developed over the appointment of the Council, which was complicated by the fact that three of King Fu'ad's nominees had died and the fourth was unacceptable to some parties. There was a further constitutional tangle, as the elections to the new Parliament had not then taken place and the rescript of 12 December 1935 had provided that the 1923 Constitution would not enter into force until a new Parliament had been elected. Mahir Pasha's Ministry resigned over the regency question, and on 2 and 7 May elections were held in which the Wafd won 166 seats out of 232 in the Chamber and 62 out of 79 elective seats in the Senate. On 10 May Nahhas formed a new Ministry consisting exclusively of members of the Wafd.

The preliminary conversations which had been going on throughout the spring were frequently adjourned. On 30 May Sir Miles Lampson left for consultations in London. He returned to Cairo on 30 June, and conversations were resumed on 1 July. While the British High Commissioner was in London, a leading article in *The Times*[1] 'floodlighted' the obstacles which were impeding the negotiations. It pointed out that although an ideal security for Britain's interests in Egypt for ever must be the object of technical advisers, this military ideal of 100 per cent security could take no account of the political side of the Egyptian question. The Egyptian delegates had shown readiness to modify considerably the military clauses of the draft treaty of 1930, but it was far from certain that the technical advisers of the British Government had recognized the wisdom of setting a limit to their demands. In short, 'An Anglo–Egyptian alliance based upon common interests and reciprocal confidence is surely worth minor military risks, some of which are likely to prove imaginary on closer examination.'

[1] 10 June 1936.

CHAPTER IV

A 'NEW DEAL' IN ANGLO-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS, 1936–7

THE TREATY OF 1936; THE SUDAN

THE two most difficult subjects to be discussed, as has been seen, were the military clauses and the administration of the Sudan. The military conversations took place in Cairo, the completion of a new draft of the military clauses was announced on 10 July, and on 24 July this was initialed by Nahhas Pasha and Sir Miles Lampson. Negotiations on the Sudan opened in Alexandria and progressed more quickly than the military discussions, with the result that a draft was initialed on 31 July. The preliminary conversations were brought to a close after the British had declared their readiness to concur in the Egyptian desire to end the system of Capitulations, a relic, in Egyptian eyes, of the Ottoman Empire.

The first two articles of the draft Treaty[1] stated that the military occupation of Egypt by forces of His Majesty's Government was terminated and that Ambassadors would be exchanged between the two countries. Article 3 said that the British Government would support Egypt's application for membership of the League of Nations. Articles 7 and 8 defined the assistance which would be required from Egypt in the event of war. Article 7 ran as follows:

> Should, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 6 above, either of the High Contracting Parties become engaged in war, the other High Contracting Party will, subject always to the provisions of Article 10 below, immediately come to his aid in the capacity of an ally.
>
> The aid of His Majesty the King of Egypt in the event of war, imminent menace of war, or *apprehended international emergency* will consist in furnishing to His Majesty the King and Emperor on Egyptian territory, in accordance with the Egyptian system of administration and legislation, all the facilities and assistance in his power, including the use of his ports, aerodromes, and means of communication. It will accordingly be for the Egyptian Government to take all the administrative and legislative measures, *including the establishment of martial law and an effective censorship*, necessary to render these facilities and assistance effective.[2]

[1] For the definitive treaty see Cmd. 5360, and Appendix III.

[2] The italics mark the difference between the 1930 draft and the final text of the 1936 Treaty.

Article 8 (and an Annex) dealt with the military situation. It ran as follows:

In view of the fact that the Suez Canal, whilst being an integral part of Egypt, is a universal means of communication as also an essential means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire, His Majesty the King of Egypt, until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal, authorises His Majesty the King and Emperor to station forces *in Egyptian territory* in the vicinity of the Canal, in the zone specified in the Annex to this Article, with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal. The detailed arrangements for the carrying into effect of this Article are contained in the Annex hereto. The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt.

As regards the military clauses, there were concessions on both sides. The British agreed that the strength of British forces normally to be stationed in Egypt in peace-time should be only a little larger than those agreed in the 1930 draft, and they agreed that in peace-time British occupation would be limited to a Canal Zone only slightly wider than that fixed in the 1930 draft; lastly, they accepted a limit of twenty years from the coming into force of the Treaty, after which it would be open to the Egyptian Government to raise the question, to be settled by third-party judgement, whether British forces could then be dispensed with. The Egyptian concessions were technical: the British air forces could range outside the Canal Zone; the British Navy could have the use of Alexandria for not more than eight years after the Treaty came into force; and the British Army was permitted to move outside the peace-time Canal Zone in the event of war, imminent menace of war, or apprehended international emergency.

Article 11 and an Annex dealt with the Sudan. The administration was to continue according to the agreements of 19 January and 10 July 1899. But the Article went on:

The High Contracting Parties agree that the primary aim of their administration in the Sudan must be the welfare of the Sudanese.

Nothing in this article prejudices the question of sovereignty over the Sudan.

There was to be no discrimination between British and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce, immigration, or the possession of property, and while the power to appoint officials remained vested in the Governor-General, he would select suitable candidates of British and Egyptian nationality

for posts for which qualified Sudanese were not available.[1] The changes to be brought about by the Sudan clauses were thus largely in favour of Egypt. There were concessions in comparison with the 1930 draft, as in the provision that Egyptian immigration into the Sudan should be unrestricted except for reasons of public order and health, and in the selection of suitable candidates from Egyptian as well as British nationals for positions for which qualified Sudanese were not available.

It will be seen that the draft initialed at Alexandria on 31 July 1936 paved the way for a restoration in the Sudan of the *status quo ante* the assassination of Sir Lee Stack on 19 November 1924; and, in view of the general improvement in Anglo-Egyptian relations which the conclusion of the treaty might be expected to bring about, it was hoped that, in the Sudan, the renewed collaboration of an Egyptian with a British personnel would be marked by that indispensable atmosphere of goodwill which had been so disastrously lacking in the years 1919–24.[2]

The Treaty signed on 26 August 1936 was a treaty of mutual defence and alliance which also appeared to solve, for the time being at all events, the problem of Egypt's political sovereignty and independence by terminating an occupation which had long been abhorrent to the Egyptians. The military clauses provided for adequate and clearly defined training areas and an elaborate system of communications designed to secure the necessary mobility for a modern mechanized army.[3] An exchange of Notes between Nahhas and Eden dated London, 26 August, placed on record further understandings in regard to military matters, included the establishment of a British Military Mission to assist in training in Egypt the Egyptian army and air force and in the standardization of Egyptian armament and equipment, 'to be supplied by Great Britain at prices similar to those which would be paid by His Majesty's Government, whenever the Egyptian Government so desired'.[4] The Treaty was approved in Cairo on 14 November by 202 votes to 11 in the Chamber and on the 18th by 109 to 7 votes in the Senate. In the House of Commons at Westminster it was approved without

[1] In the *Agreed Minute* (paragraph 15) it was stated that 'the promotion and advancement of members of the Sudan Service was to be irrespective of nationality up to any rank by selection in accordance with individual merits. It is also noted that these provisions do not prevent the Governor-General occasionally appointing to special posts persons of another nationality when no qualified British subjects, Egyptian nationals or Sudanese are available.'

[2] *Survey*, 1936, p. 697.

[3] Article 8, Annexes 6, 7, and 8. The Foreign Secretary, speaking in the House of Commons on 24 November 1936, said that the reasons why the Government had been able to agree to the withdrawal of British forces from Cairo and Alexandria were the mechanization of the forces and the treaty provisions for the construction of road and rail communications.

[4] Cmd. 5360.

a division on 24 November, and on the 25th by the House of Lords, also without a division.

The reception which was given to it in both countries showed that the agreement reached by the statesmen and the diplomatists was substantially in accord with the wishes of the peoples. The first symptoms of satisfaction were the praises of the treaty which were sung in chorus without a discordant note, in both the Egyptian and the British press. On 28 August, at Abukir, British troops were actually cheered by an Egyptian crowd; when Nahhas Pasha landed at Alexandria on 13 October he received an ovation which was only surpassed by the welcome which was given him in Cairo upon his arrival in the capital on the 17th.[1]

MONTREUX: ABOLITION OF THE CAPITULATIONS

According to Article 13 of the 1936 Treaty, His Majesty the King and Emperor recognized that the Capitulatory regime then existing in Egypt was no longer in accordance with the spirit of the times and the then State of Egypt, and that His Majesty the King of Egypt desired this abolition without delay.

In order to appreciate what was involved in the abolition of this regime, it is necessary to know something of the system of Capitulations as defined by the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire. The word 'Capitulation' probably came from the *capitula*, or articles of a unilateral character under which the Sultan conceded fiscal and judicial privilege to a foreign Power. In the eighteenth century the privileges granted unilaterally were converted into bilateral agreements. The privileges which were granted to the nationals of these Treaty or 'Capitulatory' Powers in effect conferred on them fiscal, political, and judicial immunities, freedom from personal taxation without the consent of their Governments, inviolability of domicile, protection from arbitrary arrest, and the right to be tried only through their own Courts.[2] By the beginning of the nineteenth century these Capitulatory privileges had been considerably extended in Egypt and had created much judicial confusion. In an attempt to simplify the situation the Règlement d'Organisation Judiciaire set up in 1875 'Mixed Courts' with a majority of European judges to deal with all criminal cases (whether for crimes committed by Egyptians or foreigners) and with commercial disputes and civil cases between individuals of different nationalities. Three Mixed Courts were created, in Cairo, Alexandria, and Mansura, and a Court of Appeal at Alexan-

[1] *Survey*, 1936, pp. 698–9.
[2] In 1914 fifteen Powers enjoyed these Capitulatory privileges.

dria. A foreign judge presided over each Court, and the number of foreign and Egyptian judges was in a fixed proportion. Any increase in the number of Egyptian judges, possible with the permission of the Court of Appeal, automatically necessitated an increase in the number of foreign judges so as to maintain the proportion. The nomination and choice of judges rested with the Egyptian Government, but in actual practice the foreign Powers concerned were invited to suggest names for consideration. Vacancies in the Court of Appeal were generally filled by promotion from District Courts. The Charter of 1875 made no provision for the distribution of seats amongst the Capitulatory Powers. Eventually, however, this very delicate question was settled by a series of special agreements and diplomatic understandings, with the result that in practice each Capitulatory Power claimed a minimum of two seats in the District Courts; in the event of a smaller Power being represented in the Court of Appeal it could only claim one seat in the Lower Courts. The Egyptian Government could, at its discretion, appoint representatives of non-Capitulatory Powers to seats not specially assigned to any Capitulatory Power.[1]

This was the position when Ottoman sovereignty over Egypt was definitively extinguished by the Peace Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. The Capitulations were abolished in the former Ottoman Empire, but in Egypt they were still valid. Great Britain agreed to collaborate actively with the Egyptian Government in bringing about a rapid abolition of the existing regime by using all her influence with the other Capitulatory Powers in response to frequent requests from Egypt since 1914 when she had been declared a British Protectorate. In the exchange of Notes annexed to the draft treaty of 1930 the British Government had undertaken to persuade other Capitulatory Powers to agree to the suppression of the Consular Courts, and to the transfer of Egyptian law to their nationals on conditions which would safeguard the legitimate interests of foreigners.[2]

Article 13 of the Treaty of 1936 laid down the new policy on lines which fitted in with the motif of the Treaty—ultimate complete independence and sovereignty for Egypt. The first clause of the Annex stated:

> It is the object of the arrangements set out in this Annex:
>
> (i) To bring about speedily the abolition of the Capitulations in

[1] e.g. the appointment of a Swiss judge in 1929, and of a German in 1926.

[2] In addition to the judicial privileges accorded to nationals of the Capitulatory Powers resident in Egypt, they were also entitled to complete fiscal immunity. This was an interpretation of the system peculiar to Egypt, and the Egyptian Treasury were denied any right to impose taxes without the consent of the Governments of these nationals, though they did in fact pay a small land tax.

Egypt with the disappearance of the existing restrictions on Egyptian sovereignty in the matter of the application of Egyptian legislation (including financial legislation) to foreigners as its necessary consequence;

(ii) To institute a transitional regime for a reasonable and not unduly prolonged period to be fixed, during which the Mixed Tribunals will remain and will, in addition to their present judicial jurisdiction, exercise the jurisdiction at present vested in the Consular Courts.

At the end of this transitional period the Egyptian Government will be free to dispense with the Mixed Tribunals.

On 16 January 1937 the Egyptian Government invited the Capitulatory Powers to a conference at Montreux, which was to meet on 12 April. The intentions of the Egyptian Government were made clear in a circular which was handed to the Legations in Cairo on 3 February. The first three articles of this memorandum, which were in line with the Annex to Article 13 of the Treaty, proposed the transference, for an unspecified interim period, of all consular jurisdiction to the Mixed Tribunals. The eleventh article of the memorandum sought to deprive the General Assembly of the Mixed Courts of its right to pronounce on the applicability of Egyptian laws to foreigners. The Egyptian Note also raised the tricky question of the mixed interest cases. Over a long period the Mixed Tribunals had asserted their authority over all cases where a 'mixed' interest was involved even where the two contesting parties were of the same nationality. According to the Règlement d'Organisation, the terms of reference of these Tribunals covered cases between a foreigner and an Egyptian, or between foreigners of different nationalities; but the operation of the wider interpretation of mixed interest cases had given the courts a practical monopoly of commercial litigation. Since the Egyptian memorandum proposed a strict interpretation of the Règlement, there was a general outcry from the international business world because it was doubted whether the native courts were competent to take over the work.

Apart from the specific doubts of the commercial communities, the Governments of the Capitulatory Powers who were responsible for the foreign communities in Egypt, those of France, Greece, and Italy in particular,[1] were concerned lest the Egyptian Government should not prove strong enough to resist the excessive demands of their own extremists. Not merely had the nationalist anti-European feelings of the students of

[1] For figures of the communities and their financial interests, see *Survey*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 594–5.

al-Azhar been whipped up into riots on 18 March 1937, but the University authorities themselves were alleged to be making an attempt to be gaining political support for a return to the old Muslim legal system of the Shari'a.[1]

In the event, Nahhas obtained a unanimous vote of confidence in the Chamber on 31 March, and thus encouraged was able to take with him to Montreux a Draft Convention for the abolition of the Capitulations and a revised Règlement d'Organisation Judiciaire covering the conditions under which the Mixed Tribunals were to operate during the interim period.

THE CONFERENCE OF MONTREUX

Fifteen delegations met at Lausanne for the Conference of Montreux, or 'La Conférence des Capitulaires' as it was officially called. They represented Great Britain, the United States, France, the three Scandinavian countries, Holland, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece.[2] Nahhas was elected to the presidency of the Conference. The negotiations were primarily concerned with the character and duration of the transitional regime provided for in the Treaty of 1936. The whole nature of the discussions favoured the Egyptian cause. In the first place their delegation had the advantage of an impregnable logical position. The problem was essentially one of ways and means and of the speed with which the change should be effected. The formal abolition of the Capitulations (Article 1) took up little time.[3] Article 2, agreed after some discussion, consisted of a declaration that, subject to the principles of international law, foreigners should be subject to Egyptian legislation, and the following two paragraphs:

> It is understood that the legislation to which foreigners will be subject will not be inconsistent with the principles generally adopted in modern legislation, and will not, with particular relation to legislation of a fiscal nature, entail any discrimination against foreigners or against companies incorporated in accordance with Egyptian law wherein foreigners are substantially interested.
>
> The immediately preceding paragraph, in so far as it does not constitute a recognised rule of international law, shall apply only during the transition period.

In reality the transition period was a very much softened form of the Capitulatory regime. Egypt, although formally

[1] *The Middle East* (London, R.I.I.A., 1950), p. 50.

[2] Of the former Capitulatory Powers, Germany, Austria, and Russia had lost their privileges as the result of the First World War and were not represented.

[3] For the text of the Convention and its Annex, see Cmd. 5630, Treaty Series No. 55 (1937).

recognized as a sovereign State, was bound to certain obligations concerning her legislation. These mainly consisted in the maintenance of the Mixed Courts although their composition was reorganized and their competence restricted. The idea was to accustom the Egyptian judges to delivering judgement on foreigners and for foreigners to get accustomed to being judged by national magistrates. This idea dominated the changes which were agreed at Montreux. The principle of a majority of foreign judges in the Mixed Court of Appeal was retained.[1] According to Article 2 of the Règlement, the Court of Appeal continued to have eighteen members, judges, of whom eleven were foreigners. It was laid down that the President was to be a foreigner and the Vice-President an Egyptian. Furthermore, Egypt was charged to show no discrimination in law between Egyptian nationals and foreigners. She accepted this obligation for the duration of the twelve-year transitory period only.

The Convention was signed at Montreux on 8 May. In the short space of one month the Conference had produced a series of agreements covering every aspect of the Capitulatory regime —a regime probably more complicated in its structure and more delicate in its adjustments than that which has governed the rights of foreigners in any other country. Thanks to the efforts of various special commissions, it had been possible to publish revised versions of the penal code and the code of criminal procedure immediately after the signature of the Convention. As agreed under its terms, the Convention came into force on 15 October 1937 when three ratifications had been received; by the following June all the signatories had ratified it. The Convention removed the last restrictions on Egypt's legislative sovereignty and envisaged her complete judicial sovereignty after twelve years.[2]

Even before the Montreux Conference met, steps were being taken to admit Egypt to membership of the League of Nations. On 7 February the Iraqi Foreign Minister sent a Note to the Secretary-General of the League informing him that he had invited Egypt to apply for membership. In accordance with Article 3 of the Treaty of 1936 the United Kingdom suggested to the Governments of the Dominions, India, and certain non-British States that they should invite Egypt to make her application. By the middle of March twenty-four invitations had assured Egypt of the necessary two-thirds majority in the

[1] In the tribunals of Cairo, Alexandria, and Mansura the proportion of Egyptian judges was increased although it was stipulated that the proportion of foreign judges should not fall below one-third.

[2] See *Survey*, 1937, vol. I, pp. 581–605 for a fuller account.

Assembly, and on 8 March she made her application. On the 11th the British Government suggested that there should be a special meeting of the Assembly to consider the application. On 26 May the Special Main Committee of the League recommended that Egypt should be admitted, and the Assembly accepted their resolution by a unanimous vote. The speeches in the Assembly after Egypt's election were not without significance for the future. Nahhas emphasized that before joining the League Egypt had shown her desire to employ its methods in her foreign policy by negotiating an agreed revision of the judicial status of foreigners in her territory instead of taking unilateral action. The British Foreign Secretary, Eden, endorsing on behalf of Great Britain the President's welcome, drew attention to the connexion between the two events. He said that the admission of Egypt to the League had set the seal upon her independence. Egypt had always had close relations with the outside world, which had grown closer in recent times when foreign capital and technical advice had been called on to play so prominent a part in the making of modern Egypt. This experience of co-operation with the outside world would now be applied to the wider sphere represented by the activities of the League.[1]

[1] *Survey*, 1937, vol. I, p. 606.

CHAPTER V

EGYPTIAN POLITICS, 1936–40

THE Wafd Government elected on 7 May 1936[1] was not unnaturally popular after the signing of the Treaty and the abolition of the Capitulations. It might have been expected that a period of consolidation and good will in internal politics would follow these achievements. In fact, there was a series of crises culminating in the defeat of the Wafd at elections in April 1938. The party had been formed originally to secure Egyptian independence, and that overriding aim had brought together men of very different political outlook. The policy pursued by Nahhas Pasha on his return from Montreux emphasized these differences and produced a conflict of personalities. In the first place, it soon appeared that the Government did not intend to initiate any reforms, however urgently needed, which might diminish their popularity. In the second place, Nahhas continued to attack the royal prerogative as he had done with some support if with little success under King Fu'ad; he failed to adjust himself to the changed circumstances of a young and popular King, who might have been guided and led to work with his Prime Minister instead of learning to rely on advisers outside the Government, who were later to form a Palace clique of considerable power which became an extra-parliamentary 'Opposition'. Within the Government, Mahmud Fahmi Pasha an-Nuqrashi [Nokrashy] and Ahmad Mahir [Maher] resented the influence of Makram 'Ubaid [Ebeid] Pasha the Coptic Minister of Finance, to whom, in their view, Nahhas delegated too much authority; and there were complaints that Nahhas's wife personally interfered in Government appointments on behalf of her family.

Immediately after King Faruq came of age, on 29 July 1937, Nahhas Pasha announced Cabinet changes and dropped Nuqrashi from the Government. During the next three months personal relations worsened between the King and the Prime Minister on the one hand and between the latter and Ahmad Mahir, President of the Chamber, on the other. On 21 October 1937 the King appointed 'Ali Mahir Pasha, brother of Ahmad Mahir and Prime Minister for four months in 1936, as Chief of the Royal Cabinet, an office whose holder acted as liaison be-

[1] See above, p. 38.

tween King and Government and between King and foreign representatives. The next two months saw a series of complicated moves, in which the King and his advisers tried to deny the royal assent to Government measures under the terms of the 1923 Constitution, and Nahhas tried to limit the royal prerogative. At the same time his opponents, led by Ahmad Mahir, hoped that they could force the King to dismiss Nahhas and call upon another Wafdist leader, since the party had a strong majority in Parliament. The Liberal-Constitutionalists believed that with a new Prime Minister they might be able to insist on a coalition.

When Nahhas Pasha went to Alexandria on 26 October 1937 to complain to the King that his actions in withholding the royal assent to Government measures constituted a threat to the 'national liberties', he was greeted there, and in Cairo on his return, by parades of Wafdist 'Blue Shirts'. A month later he was shot at by a member of the Misr al-Fatah 'Green Shirts', a small extremist body believed to have been originally called into existence by King Fu'ad as a counterblast to the Wafdist Blue Shirts. This attempt on Nahhas led to wholesale arrests, to Blue Shirt demonstrations, and to a proposed Bill to safeguard the Constitution. This Bill never reached Parliament, and it was alleged that 'Ali Mahir had told Nahhas that the King would disallow it on the grounds that its real purpose—to inflict penalties on any Prime Minister who, lacking a parliamentary majority should attempt to govern for more than two months before holding a general election—was potentially offensive to the Crown, because this would imply that a royal nominee would necessarily violate the Constitution.[1]

The breach between the Prime Minister and the Palace gradually became unbridgeable. In mid-December it was rumoured that Nahhas Pasha was about to be dismissed. Rioting by students outside the Royal Palace and an attack on Makram Pasha caused Nahhas to summon a meeting of the Wafd Party in Parliament to ask them to take an oath to support him alone as Prime Minister. The day before this meeting the British Ambassador had an audience with the King, and about a fortnight previously he had visited Nahhas who then happened to be ill. These two visits gave rise to the belief that the British Government were determined to keep the Wafd in power because they were the party which had negotiated the Treaty, and because relations between the Prime Minister and the British Ambassador were cordial. Nahhas was finally dis-

[1] See Philip Graves, 'The Story of the Egyptian Crisis', *Nineteenth Century*, March 1938 (on which this Chapter largely draws).

missed by the King on 30 December 1937 on the ground that his Cabinet's methods of governing 'were no longer supported by the people, who blamed it for having deviated from the spirit of the Constitution and for having failed to protect public liberties'.[1] Later, when he was in opposition and until the elections in April 1938, Nahhas found it useful to declare that he had been dismissed against the country's wishes and because of British support.[2] The King called on the Liberal-Constitutional leader, Muhammad Mahmud Pasha, to form a new Cabinet. The new Government at once ordered the disbandment of Blue Shirts and Green Shirts, order appeared to have been restored, and Parliament met on 3 January 1938. On this occasion the President of the Chamber, Ahmad Mahir, although himself a member of the Wafd, refused to allow the outgoing Prime Minister, Nahhas, to speak before the King's speech was read. The meeting broke up in disorder, and the Wafd executive promptly expelled Ahmad Mahir from the party, as they had dismissed Nuqrashi in the previous September. Alleging that the supporters of Nahhas were proposing to organize disorders on the occasion of the Chamber's next meeting on 2 February 1938, Muhammad Mahmud asked the King to dissolve Parliament and order elections.

Out of this political turmoil and the expulsion from the Wafd executive of Ahmad Mahir and Nuqrashi, a new party was born. Nuqrashi and Ahmad Mahir became the leaders of a group of Wafdist dissidents who disapproved of Nahhas's policy towards the Palace and of the power and influence of Makram. They decided to call their party the Sa'dist Wafd in order to show that they were opponents of the Wafd only because Nahhas had departed from the principles of Sa'd Zaghlul, its founder. In less than a month after a majority of the members of the Wafd Party (in which the Sa'dists were still included) had taken an oath to give their support only to Nahhas, the Sa'dists had nearly fifty members. They decided to fight the election which the King had ordered to take place in April independently and not in coalition with Nahhas's followers. This led to an exceedingly bitter election campaign in which at least a dozen people lost their lives. The elections resulted in the complete defeat of the Wafd Party which had won 163 seats in the elections of 1936. In April 1938 Nahhas's followers won only 12 seats com-

[1] ibid.

[2] *Manchester Guardian*, 13 June 1938. Graves, in a second article in the *Nineteenth Century*, May 1938, points out that during the days of crisis in September 1937 after the British Ambassador had visited the King, 'British interference' was held to have strengthened the King's intention not to call on another member of the Wafd to form a new Government.

pared with 84 held by the Sa'dists. A coalition consisting of Liberal-Constitutionalists, Sha'bists, and Ittihad (Palace Party) fought the election in support of Muhammad Mahmud Pasha and won 99 seats. This Government remained in power until August 1939 when Muhammad Mahmud was compelled to resign because of ill-health. The Blue Shirts and Green Shirts were dissolved by decree, and there seemed a chance of a period of good government with co-operation between King and Prime Minister and adherence to the spirit as well as to the letter of the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty. But unfortunately Egypt could not remain unaffected by the increasing tension in international relations.

CHAPTER VI

THE APPROACH OF WAR

THE Montreux Convention was the first international instrument signed by an Italian delegate in the name of His Majesty the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia.[1] A few weeks before the Convention was signed, Mussolini undertook a tour of Italian North Africa. On 12 March 1937 he opened at Benghazi a military road across Libya from the Tunisian to the Egyptian borders. During the tour he was invested with a 'Sword of Islam' and addressed as the 'Protector of Islam'; and he himself answered another address of welcome with the words 'Moslems may rest assured that Italy will always be the friend and protector of Islam throughout the world.'[2] Italy's policy in Africa and the state of Anglo–Italian relations could not fail to be matters of direct concern to Egypt. She felt that as a sovereign State she should take part in any Anglo–Italian discussion of African questions, or the Eastern Mediterranean. It was also natural enough that Egypt, as a neighbouring Muslim State, should support the Arab cause in Palestine. In particular, the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun), a militant group under the leadership of the provincial schoolmaster Hasan al-Banna, working for a 'revival of a purely Islamic government and the building up of Muslim society according to the laws of Islam',[3] found the Palestine Arab cause a fruitful theme in its own propaganda campaign. From the latter part of 1937 and the outbreak of war in 1939 Axis propaganda was quick to seize every opportunity of exploiting any anti-British feeling in Egypt.

Against this immediate background and also against the wider background of increasing international tension in Europe as a whole, the implementation of the military clauses of the 1936 Treaty—providing for the termination of British military occupation, apart from 'the maintenance of a limited number of British troops in the Canal Zone', and mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and Egypt in the event of war or of an 'apprehended international emergency'—was a matter of urgency but also of difficulty. Despite the efforts of Axis pro-

[1] *Survey*, 1937, vol. I, p. 607.
[2] Cited in Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1937, p. 259.
[3] J. Heyworth-Dunne, *Religious and Political Trends in Modern Egypt* (Washington, Author, 1950), p. 16.

paganda, Italian and German interests fortunately did not always coincide with those of Egypt. For example, Egyptian opinion disliked the Abyssinian war and Marshal Graziani's offensive against the Muslim population in Libya. At the same time, Italy's outcry against 'monopoly in the Suez Canal' and a supporting echo from her German ally[1] did not appeal to Egypt, which had gained an increased share of profits and an increased quota of employees in the revised Suez Canal agreement of June 1937. Nevertheless the Axis Powers continued to lay emphasis on the common interests and natural links binding Egypt to Italy and Germany. Mussolini described Egypt and Italy as 'two peoples united by the same sea'; Marshal Balbo paid a visit to King Faruq in May 1939; the Germans sought to cultivate good relations with Egypt, and Dr Cotta, President of the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce, was entertained in Berlin and decorated by Hitler.[2] Other examples of Axis interest could be cited, but there was little indication that they achieved anything more positive than the stirring up of anti-British feeling whenever opportunity arose.

In the spring of 1938 the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, decided that a détente in Anglo–Italian relations would serve the cause of European peace, and negotiations in February of that year resulted in the resignation of the British Foreign Secretary, Eden, and in the signature of an agreement on 16 April 1938. The larger part of the agreement consisted of an agreed schedule of particular British and Italian 'interests' wherever these touched one another. On 14 April the British Ambassador, Sir Miles Lampson, handed the Egyptian Prime Minister, Muhammad Mahmud Pasha, those portions of the Anglo–Italian draft agreement which affected Egypt. In accordance with assurances given by the British Ambassador to the Egyptian Government in the previous month, no decisions which concerned Egypt had been taken during the negotiations without her knowledge. There were three Annexes to the agreement in which she was interested: the second Annex arranged for an exchange of information on the armed forces of the Contracting Parties in the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, Egypt, and the Sudan; in the fifth Annex, the Italian Government reaffirmed that they were fully conscious of their obligations concerning Lake Tana, and in a Note to the Egyptian Minister, the British Minister in Rome associated Egypt with this Annex by stating that these assurances applied equally to the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Government were

[1] 'The Canal is a vital artery of Italy's empire', *Völkischer Beobachter*, 12 December 1938. [2] *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 11 June 1938.

also associated with the eighth Annex, in which each signatory Power affirmed its intention of abiding by the Convention of 1888 guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal. A Bon Voisinage agreement was also signed,[1] by the British and Egyptian Ministers in Rome and the Italian Foreign Minister, for the furtherance of good relations on the frontiers of Italian East Africa, the Sudan, Kenya, and British Somaliland.[2]

This attempt on the part of Great Britain to come to an understanding with Italy did not check the flow of Axis propaganda directed to Egypt. Nor, despite the Egyptian Government's concern to ensure that the negotiations should in no way detract from Egypt's newly acquired sovereignty, did it prevent Nahhas in his role as Leader of the Opposition from accusing the Prime Minister of having 'weakly allowed Egyptian interests to be traded between Great Britain and Italy over Egypt's head'.[3] Indeed, by the summer of 1938 the Wafd, in the role of nationalist Opposition, were pursuing a very different policy from that of the Wafd Government which had signed the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty of 1936. They had declared, after their defeat at the polls in April, that they had been dismissed by the King against the country's wishes, and more or less at British instigation. They therefore felt themselves compelled to attack British policy and in particular all action taken towards the implementation of the treaty. Thus, despite Egyptian anxiety concerning Italian ambitions in Africa,[4] a steady stream of anti-British articles in the Wafdist press gave encouragement to the Axis.[5] In a debate in the Chamber on army estimates early in June 1938, the Wafd representatives asserted that the British Ambassador and the head of the British Military Mission dominated Egypt no less than had the Residency and the Inspector-General before the Treaty.[6]

In the previous month the Prime Minister had publicly denied at a press conference the charge inspired and supported by the Wafd that the British Military Mission was exceeding the terms of its contract and assuming executive and administrative functions.[7] The particular point in dispute was the erection of British barracks in the Canal Zone which had been agreed in the Treaty. If the British Government were allowed to pay for them, Egyptians believed, that might give them a claim to keep

[1] Texts in *Documents on International Affairs*, 1938, vol. 1, pp. 151–6.
[2] For a fuller account of the negotiations, see *Survey*, 1938, vol. 1, pp. 137–43.
[3] ibid. p. 132.
[4] On 12 November 1938 the Egyptian Minister in Rome was declared to be accredited to the 'King of Italy and Emperor of Abyssinia'.
[5] *Manchester Guardian*, 13 June 1938.
[6] *The Times*, 8 July 1938. [7] ibid. 9 June 1938.

troops permanently in the Canal Zone. On the other hand, the Egyptian Government stated categorically that the budget could not stand this extra charge upon it as well as other increasing defence expenditure. Muhammad Mahmud went to London in July to discuss military matters arising from the Treaty. On his return a new Inspector-General of the army was appointed, 'Aziz 'Ali al-Misri Pasha, who as a young man had distinguished himself against the Italian invaders of Libya. The army estimates were also doubled. The increased defence costs were unpopular because the Egyptians had hoped for a reduction as a result of the Anglo–Italian agreement.

Anglo–Egyptian negotiations continued during August on defence matters in general and the construction of the Canal Zone barracks in particular. They resulted in the signature at Alexandria on 27 September 1938 of an amendment to the Annex to Article 8 of the 1936 Treaty.[1] The British Government agreed to increase their contribution to the cost of providing accommodation for the British forces in the vicinity of the Suez Canal. The Egyptian Government undertook, as in the Treaty, to make available the land and construct the accommodation, water supplies, etc. His Majesty's Government agreed to pay half the cost, excluding means of communication, railway works, and sanitary and public services necessary for civilian personnel. During these negotiations, the Wafdist press alleged that the Egyptian Government were selling Egypt's sovereign rights and the Wafd executive passed a resolution declaring that the modifications in the Treaty would be prejudicial to Egypt's political, financial, and military interests.[2] The revised agreement was quickly followed by further defence measures. In the Speech from the Throne on the occasion of the opening of the Egyptian Parliament on 19 November 1938 reference was made to the strengthening of Egypt's defence. Arms factories were to be opened, the military service law amended, and more officers trained. In December the Council of Defence announced a five-year plan for the reorganization and increase of the army, the building of 500 aeroplanes, and the making of new airfields.

These defence measures did not, however, go unchallenged. In the debate on the King's Speech in December, Isma'il Sidqi Pasha, one of the authors of the Treaty, complained of the revision of Article 8, and said that the Treaty should not entail 'Egypt's being bound to the chariot wheels of Great Britain'. But he was attacked in both the Government and the Wafdist

[1] *Protocol for the Amendment of the Annex to Article* 8 *of the Treaty of Alliance with Egypt of August 26, 1936*. Cmd. 5861 of 1938.
[2] *Manchester Guardian*, 6 September 1938.

press on the ground that his intention was to wreck the Treaty and align Egypt with Italy. It was alleged that in some of his speeches he had praised some of the aspects of the totalitarian States. Towards the end of December there were references in the Egyptian press to Italian activities on Egypt's borders. An article in *al-Misri* reported that 100,000 Italian troops were massed on Egypt's western frontier and that Italian planes were landing on Egyptian territory in order to gain knowledge of coastal defences, on the plea that the pilots were lost or that their petrol supply had run out.[1] Despite much agitation in the press as well as in Parliament, a Wafdist vote of no confidence in the Government gained only seven votes.[2] Nevertheless, the Minister of Defence, Hasan Sabri Pasha, resigned on 6 January 1939 because of proposed cuts in army pay.

The autumn of 1938, which saw the signature of the Munich agreement in which the British Government sought to set a limit to the ambition of Nazi Germany, also saw the culmination of the Arab rebellion in Palestine, and the close of the year appeared to be a period in which the apparent weakness of Britain might be successfully exploited. As has already been mentioned, the Muslim Brotherhood under the leadership of Hasan al-Banna were doing all they could in Egypt to support the cause of the Arabs, and at the same time they launched an anti-British campaign all over Egypt, which gave the Axis propagandists just the material they needed. Hasan al-Banna also made contact with the Mufti of Jerusalem and the members of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee in exile.[3] The Mufti was alleged to be playing the part of intermediary between the Ikhwan and leading Nazis.[4] Egyptian support for the Palestine Arabs was, however, far from being confined to the Muslim Brotherhood. On 7 October a Muslim Congress of 2,000 representatives of fourteen countries met in Cairo, convened by the President of the Egyptian Parliamentary Committee for the Defence of Palestine. The Congress passed a number of resolutions demanding the cessation of Jewish immigration, a National Government, and the abandonment of the idea of the Jewish National Home in Palestine. If these resolutions were not accepted, the Congress declared, the Arab people would regard Great Britain as hostile.

In a White Paper published in the autumn of 1938, the British Government stated that in their view it was clear that

[1] Cited in the *Manchester Guardian*, 24 December 1938.
[2] *The Times*, 29 December 1938.
[3] For an account of the situation in Palestine, see *Great Britain and Palestine* 3rd ed. (London, R.I.I.A., 1946), pp. 112–24.
[4] See Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 22–3.

the surest foundation for peace and progress in Palestine would be an understanding between the Arabs and the Jews, and His Majesty's Government were prepared to make a determined effort to promote such an understanding. With this end in view they proposed immediately to invite representatives of the Palestine Arabs and of neighbouring States, on the one hand, and of the Jewish Agency, on the other, to confer with them as soon as possible in London regarding future policy, including the question of immigration into Palestine.[1] Invitations were issued to the Palestinian Arabs, to Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Yemen, and Transjordan on the Arab side, and to the Jewish Agency representing the Jews. Egypt's representatives were 'Ali Mahir, Chief of the Royal Cabinet, 'Abd ur-Rahman Pasha 'Azzam, the Egyptian Minister in Baghdad, and Prince Muhammad 'Abdul-Mun'im. At the beginning of January 1939 the Palestine Arab delegation met in Cairo for preliminary discussions. Among the delegates were the four Palestinian leaders who had been in exile in the Seychelles, had had a triumphal journey to Cairo, and were received by the Egyptian Prime Minister on 3 January. All the Arab delegations except one met in Cairo in the middle of the month to discuss their policy, and then proceeded to London for the opening of the conference on 23 February. After two weeks' friendly but indefinite discussion, revised British proposals which had been laid before it were rejected by both Arabs and Jews. In April a further conference met in Cairo, consisting of representatives of the Palestinian Arabs and the Arab States represented in London together with those of the Muslims of India. The conference submitted unofficial proposals to the British Government to try to bridge the gap between that Government's London proposals and those of the Palestinian Arabs. The White Paper of May 1939 contained the British Government's own final proposals. The chief contrast with the Cairo terms lay in the British decision to set up an independent Palestinian State, in treaty relations with Great Britain, at the end of ten years. It was believed that the Cairo Conference proposals had asked for the immediate setting up of a National Government of Palestinian ministers with British advisers and a National Assembly to meet after three years and draw up a Constitution for an independent Palestinian State.

Egypt's interest in the creation, within as short a time as possible, of an independent, peaceful, and stable Palestinian State based on a just recognition of Arab aspirations, was obvious in view of her geographical position and the possibility that a

[1] Cmd. 5893 of 1939.

general war might break out. But the failure of the London Conference and the rejection by the British Government of the Cairo terms were felt also to be a blow to Egyptian prestige. In trying to work out a policy on Palestine 'Ali Mahir (whose appointment as a delegate to the London Conference had been the occasion of protests in Egypt[1] outside the ranks of the Muslim Brotherhood which supported him), was perhaps the first Egyptian politician to conceive the possibility of winning for Egypt the political leadership of the Arab world, a possibility which others were to realize during and after the Second World War. It was probably with this end in view that he 'endeavoured to make use of Islamic propaganda by emphasizing religious ceremonial in order to give Egypt a greater prestige within the Muslim world'.[2] King Faruq was in January 1939 unofficially acclaimed as Caliph in the Mosque of al-Qusun where he had led the prayers as Imam. This proclamation took place in the presence of the Amirs of the Yemen and Saudi Arabia and of a number of Senior Egyptian officials and army officers.[3] On 20 February the King broadcast to the nation. He declared that if he had not inherited all his father's sterling qualities, he had at least inherited the most outstanding: 'like him, no one can influence me.' He went on to express his confidence in Egyptian youth, but warned them that they must work hard and respect the law if they wished to realize their aspirations. He emphasized the need for a strong Egypt, prepared to impose respect for herself on anyone attempting to interfere with her dignity.[4]

The spring and summer of 1939 saw Egypt faced with the consequences of an adverse trade balance in 1938, the effect of the fall in the price of cotton, and of the rising cost of defence measures. The 1938 budget had been unpopular because of the economies it had sought to introduce, including a 16 per cent reduction in salaries. The Government passed new laws on taxation and national defence, and tried to take measures to improve the economic and social situation. The British White Paper on Palestine published in May 1939 had a bad press in Egypt. An anti-Jewish campaign was in progress, undoubtedly with Italian and German backing. There were alleged plots against Ministers, and a further fall in the price of cotton. In short, there was enough dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, for Axis propaganda from outside and Wafd Opposition tactics inside the country, to meet with some success.[5] In the Chamber,

[1] *The Times*, 23 January 1939.
[2] Heyworth-Dunne, p. 26.
[3] ibid. p. 86.
[4] *The Times*, 21 February 1939.
[5] ibid. 15 August 1939.

the coalition Government had a large majority; but in the Senate the Wafd was in control and able to delay legislation and generally make things difficult for the Government. Early in August, for example, the Senate refused to approve a Death Duties Bill introduced by the Government as a means of raising revenue, and it also threw out the budget with its unpopular salary reductions. The Opposition campaigned against the Government and also against Great Britain. Nahhas did not stop at slander and accused Ahmad Mahir, the Minister of Finance, of using his official position for his own financial advantage. This resulted in a libel action which dragged on through the autumn and became something of a *cause célèbre*.

On 12 August Muhammad Mahmud Pasha tendered his resignation to King Faruq. In a letter dated the previous day he gave poor health as his reason, adding that the delicate international situation called for incessant efforts on his part which he did not feel able to sustain. King Faruq invited 'Ali Mahir Pasha, Chief of the Royal Cabinet, to form a Government. The Prime Minister allotted himself the portfolios of the Foreign Minister and Minister of the Interior; the Cabinet was composed of five Sa'dists and nine Independents, but no Liberal-Constitutionalists, and was described as a strong Cabinet of expert technicians. There was one innovation of importance, the appointment of a Minister of Social Services, who it was hoped would be able to tackle urgently needed reforms. The royal rescript, charging 'Ali Mahir with the formation of a Government, referred to the extreme gravity of the world situation and to the unremitting efforts which that situation demanded of Egyptians 'to enable them to complete their preparations on the basis of national unity, vigorous patriotism, and the development of energy and initiative throughout the country'.[1]

[1] J. Lugol, *Egypt and World War II*, tr. from the French by A. G. Mitchell (Cairo, Société Orientale de la Publicité, 1945), p. 18.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

On the evening of 1 September 1939, the date of the German attack on Poland which precipitated the world war, the British Ambassador, Sir Miles Lampson, saw 'Ali Mahir; and the Egyptian Premier took the necessary steps to implement the terms of Article 8 of the 1936 Treaty under which, in the event of war, Egypt undertook immediately to come to British aid in the capacity of an ally. A state of siege was established in Egypt; the Prime Minister was appointed Military Governor of Egypt, charged with the maintenance of security, the country was divided into four military districts, and put her communications, ports, and aerodromes at British disposal. The arrest of all German nationals was announced and their property seized.[1] The Prime Minister declared that the Government as well as all Egyptians were heart and soul with Britain in the great struggle for justice and the preservation of liberty and freedom.[2] The immediate concern of most Egyptians was, however, whether or not Italy would declare war in favour of her ally Germany. There was some discussion in the Egyptian press as to whether or not Egypt should declare war on Germany, but the general impression was that Egypt would have everything to lose and nothing to gain from entry into the war. The point of view of most Egyptians was, in fact, expressed by 'Ali Mahir himself in reading the Speech from the Throne on the occasion of the opening of Parliament of 18 November 1939.

If, faithful to our promises, we have placed ourselves at the side of our ally, ready, with God's help, to defend our Fatherland with all the strength at our command, that does not prevent us from having a profound desire for peace. . . . Egypt, which seeks peace and believes firmly in its benefits, has understood that its alliance with Great Britain would confirm that peace and consolidate it in the Middle East. Our ally having gone down into the arena to defend the right, Egypt could not do otherwise than fulfil her duty and she has done so without hesitation, faithful to her given word. . . . At the start of this new session, while the war is raging around us, it is a pleasure for me to repeat to you that collaboration with our ally will be in the future, as it has always been in the past, our best guide

[1] *New York Times*, 5 September 1939; Lugol, Chapter II.
[2] *The Times*, 6 September 1939.

in the accomplishment of our task. Our ally will therefore receive from us every possible assistance.[1]

Apart from some slight economic difficulties resulting from restricted exports and imports, Egypt was not directly affected by the consequences of the war until the late spring of 1940. A visit by General Weygand in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief in the Levant to review British and French forces at Heliopolis took place on 7 February 1940, and a week later the first Australian and New Zealand forces to take part in the war arrived at Suez, where they were welcomed by the British Dominions Secretary (Anthony Eden), Sir Miles Lampson, and General Wavell. Eden had an audience with King Faruq on the 13th. There was, however, some friction concerning the Egyptian armed forces between the British Military Mission and the Egyptian Chief-of-Staff, the nationalist 'Aziz 'Ali al-Misri, who was sent on 'sick-leave' at the beginning of February.[2] During the next three months there was undoubtedly pressure on Egypt from the Axis, a kind of 'war of nerves'. The war situation itself, as well as this Axis propaganda, caused much concern in Egypt and also gave rise to considerable party strife. According to press reports Marshal Balbo passed through Egypt in March, ostensibly on a hunting expedition to Ethiopia, and returned through Egypt again in April. The paper *al-Balagh* was reported as writing on 24 April: 'Egypt is a small independent State in alliance with Great Britain, but this does not prevent her from being friendly with other States.'[3] Nahhas Pasha, leader of the Wafd Opposition, addressed a memorandum to Great Britain on 1 April 1940 in which he asked for a promise that after the war all foreign troops should be withdrawn from Egypt, negotiations should be opened on the subject of the Sudan, and finally Egypt should be represented at the Peace Conference.[4] This attempt to put a price on Egypt's assistance during the war apparently called forth a sharp reply from the British Foreign Secretary. But no direct report of the contents of the memorandum or of the British answer to it appeared in the Egyptian press. There were, nevertheless, from time to time discussions in that press which suggested that Egyptian opinion fully supported the aims which Nahhas Pasha was attempting to secure, if not his method of approach.

It was perhaps not surprising that Nahhas should have used

[1] Lugol, p. 38.

[2] See Lord Wilson of Libya, *Eight Years Overseas, 1939–47* (London, Hutchinson, 1950), p. 23.

[3] *New York Times*, 27 April 1940.

[4] *News Chronicle*, 3 April 1940. Text in *Oriente Moderno*, May 1940, pp. 228–31.

this period of the 'phoney' war into which Egypt, in Egyptian eyes at least, seemed to have been drawn by her alliance with Britain, to seek to obtain promises for the future. With Axis propaganda at full blast and no immediate danger of attack, it could not but seem to some Egyptians a time in which an Egypt not bound by treaty to Great Britain could have improved her status by successful bargaining. At all events during April the Prime Minister, 'Ali Mahir, had several interviews with the Italian Ambassador, Mazzolini. But at the same time defence measures were pushed ahead. On 16 and 17 April the Chamber and Senate respectively passed a £E675,000 emergency credit for the Ministry of Defence. No loan was raised to meet it, but an increase of 1 per cent on the land, house, and income taxes was imposed together with customs and excise duty. Sidqi Pasha protested during the debate in the Chamber that this credit should be regarded as falling under the terms of the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty and therefore not chargeable to Egypt. The Wafd speakers seemed not to have been opposed in principle to the Government's measure, but to have held that the sum should have been raised by economies rather than by new taxes.

In a speech in Parliament on 30 April, 'Ali Mahir reverted to the Wafd manifesto to the British Government and denounced this action in appealing to a foreign Power as an outrage upon the Constitution, the Throne, and the honour of the country. 'I say plainly that nothing would be more welcome to the Government in office than the withdrawal of foreign forces from the soil of Egypt in the shortest possible time.' He added that the conditions of achieving this were to make the Egyptian army strong enough to defend the Suez Canal and to act in the fullest good faith with Egypt's allies. He continued, 'When the war ends I say plainly that the Government is determined in this event to seize its opportunities for action to remove every limitation upon the independence of the country.'

By the end of May, despite further defence measures such as the recruiting of 50,000 special constables and preparations for the formation of a national guard, Egyptian interest appeared to be concentrating on party politics. There was much recrimination in the press arising mainly from the libel action then being heard in which Ahmad Mahir complained of Nahhas's slander during the previous summer.[1] Apart from reporting and commenting on this action, the press demanded national unity in the face of danger; there were rumours of every kind, and the public was nervous. The cotton contract market closed on 13

[1] See above, p. 59.

May, and there was a run on silver.[1] It was feared that if Italy were to declare war, British action would compromise Egypt's neutrality. The Italian Minister gave the Egyptian Premier the assurance that Egypt's frontiers would be respected even if Italy were to join Germany in the war, and that Italy had no intention of attacking Egypt.[2] On 11 June the Italian Minister delivered Italy's declaration of war to the Egyptian Council of Ministers. On the following day relations with Italy were severed and the Chamber passed a resolution to the effect that it placed full confidence in the Government and supported its action regarding Egypt's position in the present crisis. It would continue to support the Government in its stand beside the Allies who were fighting for justice and liberty.[3] *al-Balagh*[4] declared that the nation was behind the Government's policy, which combined adherence to the terms of the Treaty with the maintenance of the constitutional rights of Egypt and was dictated by purely national considerations. On 13 June 'Ali Mahir said that Egypt would fulfil her obligations under the Treaty but intended to refrain from offensive action against Italy; she would protect herself from attack but would not send an expeditionary force.[5] The Egyptian Government sent a Note to Italy on the 16th stating that Egypt would take part in the war only if Italian soldiers took the initiative in an invasion of Egyptian territory, destroyed Egyptian towns by bombardment, or if Italy carried out air raids on Egyptian military objectives.[6] The first Italian air raid on Egyptian soil took place on 17 June, while the Italian Minister was still in Cairo, and on the day on which the French Government asked the Germans for an armistice. According to the then General Officer Commanding British Troops in Egypt, Field-Marshal Lord Wilson, the Egyptian Government adopted a very different attitude over the internment of Italians and the taking over of banks and business premises in comparison with their action the previous summer when dealing with the Germans and the greatest difficulty was experienced 'in getting the Egyptian Government to function'.[7] Meanwhile Italian propaganda reiterated incessantly that Great Britain was bent on forcing Egypt to declare war.

On the 19th the Prime Minister had told the Chamber that the Government would make light of every difficulty in order to keep Egypt out of the war. Frontier troops had been with-

[1] A Bill was passed on 9 June to authorize the issue of notes in place of silver currency.

[2] *Manchester Guardian*, 1 June 1940. [3] *New York Times*, 13 June 1940.

[4] 13 June 1940. [5] *New York Times* and *Manchester Guardian*, 14 June 1940.

[6] *Daily Telegraph*, 17 June 1940. [7] Wilson, p. 39.

drawn in order that hostilities should not be precipitated before the Government and Parliament could reach a decision in conformity with the interests of the country. There is some reason to believe that 'Ali Mahir subsequently informed the Senate that the Allies tried to insist that Egypt should declare war, adding that the difference arose from the opposition between the interests of the two States, each acting in a manner dictated by loyalty and devotion to the fatherland. Whether or not 'Ali Mahir had chosen to construe British pressure for complete Egyptian co-operation as a demand that Egypt should declare war, he was clearly unwilling, in what he believed to be Egyptian interests, to commit his country too far at a moment when an Allied victory seemed, on a short view, extremely unlikely.[1] As a result of 'strong representations' from the British Government,[2] King Faruq dismissed him on 22 June, and it was only then that the Italian legation staff finally left Egypt. Hasan Sabri now formed a Government consisting of 6 Independents, 4 Sa'dists, 4 Liberal-Constitutionalists, and 1 member each from the Ittihad and the Watanist parties.

For a month or six weeks after the formation of this Government Egypt was granted a breathing space from further attack, though not from the Italian propaganda barrage. Egyptian public opinion swung uneasily between two poles: avoidance of war at all costs and determination to resist attack.[3] The Chamber met in secret session on 22 August; it apparently expressed full confidence in the Government and full support for the decision of 12 June that Egypt would declare war if Italy were to invade her territory. The Italian press and radio continued to affirm that Italy did not intend any attack on Egypt's sovereignty, though she could not allow herself to be menaced by British forces operating from Egyptian bases. On 26 August, however, the fourth anniversary of the signature of the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty, an editorial in the *Giornale d'Italia* declared that Egypt would be regarded as an enemy if she were to give Britain military support. On the following day Count Ciano's paper, *Il Telegrafo*, stated that Italy was confronted with a tragic and grotesque political paradox in Egypt: the Egyptians were Italy's friends even while they gave hospitality to Italy's British foes.

[1] 'It would be quite unfair to say that 'Ali Pasha Mahir had no sympathizers from among the Egyptian people. He was, in fact, very much admired for his stand against the British Ambassador, and he was undoubtedly one of the first Egyptian ministers to express his opinions openly and frankly. Moreover most Egyptians were convinced that Britain would lose the War against the Germans, especially after the fall of France' (Heyworth-Dunne, p. 86, n. 22).

[2] Sir Alexander Cadogan at the Security Council, 13 August 1947 (*Official Records*, 2nd year, no. 76, p. 1953).

[3] *The Times*, 14 August 1940.

WAR ON EGYPTIAN SOIL

By 17 September Italian troops had invaded Egypt, occupied Sallum, and advanced fifty miles to Sidi Barrani; and as a result martial law was declared in Egypt on 23 September. On the previous day *al-Balagh* had written that Egypt's attitude was definite and unequivocal; if the Italians attacked, they would find British and Egyptian troops fighting side by side.[1] By October the Italians were seventy miles inside Egyptian territory, but the Egyptian Government still maintained its role of non-belligerency.[2] Ahmad Mahir, President of the Chamber and leader of the Sa'dist Party, demanded[3] that Parliament should meet to settle Egypt's attitude. Some people might say, he argued, that there was no need for Egyptians to do anything while they had an ally who undertook to defend them. But if they were to accept this situation they would pay for it dearly. How would they be able to say to their allies at the end of the war, 'Now leave us to run our own affairs,' he asked. The participation of Egyptian troops in the war was in his view necessary, not in order to defend Egypt against the Italians, but in order to defend her against Britain. Two days later the Sa'dists resigned from the Government in protest. The Wafd attacked them for trying to push the country into the war, but general opinion seemed to regard the question as being, not whether, but when, Egypt should decide to take action in her own defence. A leading article in the *Egyptian Gazette* on 23 September discussed this problem of Egypt's entry into the war from another standpoint. This said that from the point of view of the High Command there would seem to be little advantage to be gained in the conduct of the war as a whole from making Egypt into a belligerent instead of leaving her as a hundred per cent non-belligerent. The article pointed out that the Egyptian and British authorities were working in the closest contact and harmony and that Egypt was probably playing, with the utmost success, the role in which for the present she could best serve the Allied cause. Many Egyptians were uncertain in their own minds what Egypt's policy should be. The Nahhas memorandum of April which sought to use the war situation as a bargaining point for the future had not been without its effect. Articles appeared in the press asking why Egypt should fight to avert an eventual occupation in order to maintain a present one, and whether definite British undertakings for the future might not be the best means of proving

[1] Quoted in the *Egyptian Gazette*, 16 September 1940.
[2] Wilson, p. 45. [3] In a speech at al Mansura on 19 September.

the falsehood of Italy's claim to be fighting for Egyptian freedom.

The early autumn of 1940 brought to Egypt, in addition to considerable political uncertainty and disturbance of mind, growing unemployment and rising prices. This, too, became a political issue, although a Director of the Bank of Egypt broadcast an appeal to the country to face the consequences of reduced imports and to spend the sum of money (£E30 million) paid by Great Britain for the year's cotton crop to the best possible advantage in starting agricultural industries, buying up the foreign shares of industrial companies, and ending land debts. The mercantile community was apparently more concerned with its immediate profits and was denounced in the Wafdist paper, *al-Wafd al-Misri*,[1] which declared that the bargain struck with Britain over the cotton crop had failed in its purpose to help the Egyptian fellahin, because of the activities of a few selfish traders. Before the end of September decrees were passed by the Chamber, directed in the short run to the improvement of the immediate economic situation, and in the long run to further Egyptianization. The decrees used the occasion of the removal of enemy nationals from industry and commerce to insist that all companies founded after 1 September 1940 must employ Egyptians except where no Egyptians were technically qualified for a given post, and that all foreign companies must fill vacancies caused by the removal of foreigners with Egyptians.

The Prime Minister, Hasan Sabri Pasha, died while reading the Speech from the Throne in the Chamber on 14 November 1940, and King Faruq called on Husain Sirri Pasha to take his place. Despite the fact that the Sa'dist members of the previous Cabinet had resigned at the end of September, and to general surprise, their leader Ahmad Mahir was re-elected President of the Chamber. In mid-December the Italian defeat at Sidi Barrani relieved Egyptian anxieties. It was recorded in the Arab press with widely differing comment. *al-Ahram* declared that the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty had been completely vindicated and had proved itself essential to Egypt's safety; the paper pointed out that Egypt's most important contribution had been that she had not declared war on Italy, thus protecting the communications and supplies of the fighting forces.[2] There was, nevertheless,

[1] 30 September 1940.

[2] Field-Marshal Lord Wilson, however, records that among the documents of the Italian Commanding General taken prisoner in the battle there was found a facsimile copy of a personal and most secret letter which he (Lord Wilson) had written a few months previously to 'Aziz al-Misri Pasha, Chief of the Egyptian Staff, confirming an agreed policy as to the defence and strength of the garrison of Siwa (*Eight Years Overseas*, pp. 53–4).

in some quarters a feeling of regret, voiced by the Sa'dist press, that Egypt had taken no share in her own defence. The paper of the extremist Misr al-Fatah Party (the former Green Shirts) in its issue of 19 December devoted a long leader to the Italian defeat without mentioning the presence of British forces, arguing that it would be foolish to attribute that defeat to any weakness on the part of the Italians; it was proof that the will of God was that the Roman Empire should not be revived at the expense of the Arab and Muslim peoples. The uneasy and sensitive state of Egyptian opinion may perhaps be gauged from the outcry which greeted a phrase used by Churchill in a broadcast on 23 December 1940. Speaking on the course of the war, he said there was no need for any attack on Egypt 'which is under British protection'. The Egyptian Government immediately asked for an 'elucidation' of the phrase, and an official communiqué was published on the 28th which included a statement by the new British Foreign Secretary, Eden, that the phrase did not 'cast a shadow of a doubt on Egypt's independence'.[1]

The month of January 1941 should have seen elections for the Senate, which consisted of 147 members, of whom 88 members were elected and 59 were nominated. The first stage in the elections was a ballot to create vacancies, held on 7 March, as the result of which 32 Wafdists, 23 Liberals, and 9 Sa'dists lost their seats. On the 24th of the same month the Prime Minister announced that in view of the international situation the elections to fill these vacancies would be indefinitely postponed, and the mandates of the unseated members would be extended. In fact only 16 were re-appointed and 13 replaced, among them only 1 Wafdist member. The Wafdists thereupon absented themselves from all sittings of both the Chamber and the Senate. A month or two later there were reports that a new National Government would be formed under Husain Sirri, which would include Sa'dist but not Wafd representatives. In fact a new Cabinet was not formed until the end of July; it was composed of the Liberal and Independent members of the previous Gov-

[1] Nahhas Pasha, as President of the delegation which had signed the Treaty of 1936, asked Sir Miles Lampson on the 24th for an official interpretation of the phrase 'in a form fully concordant with the provisions of the Treaty and the independence of Egypt'. He followed up his inquiry to the British Ambassador with a memorandum to King Faruq dated 2 January 1951. This memorandum declared that the Treaty of 1936 had been of benefit to Great Britain but not to Egypt; that Britain had been attacked by Italy—the attack had not been against Egypt; that the war was causing economic hardship, and interfered with production and with imports and exports. It continued: 'Egypt has risked her strength and wealth and indeed her freedom and political life in aiding her ally. She has gone beyond mere performance of her Treaty obligations.' But Egypt had not so far succeeded in securing from her ally so much as a promise concerning her independence that could be put into execution after the war.

ernment and five Sa'dists, but the Wafd refused to be represented.[1]

By February 1941 the British forces, with never more than two divisions in action at one time, had defeated at least four Italian divisions and advanced 500 miles to the frontier of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. The withdrawal of British formations from this front for the anticipated need to defend Greece, however, and the simultaneous reinforcement of the disorganized Italians by the nucleus of the Afrika Korps, completely altered the balance, both on land and in the air, where the Luftwaffe obtained the ascendancy. Rommel, with his tactical resourcefulness, quickly grasped the situation, and by 11 April had driven the British back to the Egyptian frontier and isolated the fortress of Tobruk on the land side. This British setback naturally affected Egyptian morale, which was further disturbed by the political and military resistance offered to Britain by the extremist Government of Rashid 'Ali al-Gilani in Iraq which, taking advantage of the British preoccupation with Greece, had seized power by a coup d'état at the beginning of April. When in May the situation in Iraq degenerated into open warfare, the Egyptian Government took precautionary measures against potentially subversive elements, including the late Prime Minister, 'Ali Mahir, who was ordered to leave Cairo and remain on his country estate, and the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, who was temporarily transferred to a teaching post in Upper Egypt. On the night of 15–16 May the stormy petrel 'Aziz al-Misri set out clandestinely for Beirut (either intending to make contact with the German armistice commission there, or to go on to Baghdad) in an aircraft piloted by two Egyptian air force officers. The air control authorities forced them to land in Egypt, however, and they were arrested; al-Misri's ostensible reason for his flight was that the British authorities had rejected a proposal he had made for an Anglo–Arab accommodation in Palestine at the Zionists' expense.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

Early in June air raids on Alexandria killed about 650 people, and caused a temporary flight from the city estimated at 300,000 people or nearly half the population. Air raids of less severity continued at intervals during July and the first part of August, directed mainly against the port installations of Alexandria. Immediately after the first severe raids, the British offered £1 million and trained personnel for civil defence. But the

[1] *New York Times*, 1 August 1941.

raids not unnaturally produced demands in the Chamber that Egypt should reaffirm her non-belligerency and also that Cairo should be declared an open city. The Senate debated on 24 June a motion that the Government should endeavour by all means to avert air raids on non-military objectives. One senator asked that the British Navy should be compelled to evacuate Alexandria. Nevertheless an Axis Declaration on 1 July recognizing the complete independence and national sovereignty of Egypt was not, as they had probably hoped, made the occasion for further Egyptian demands on the British of a kind which could not possibly be granted. On the contrary, a further Egyptian contribution to the common defence was made on 7 August when the Egyptian army took over responsibility for the defences of the Suez Canal. By September air raids on Egyptian cities ceased, but the economic situation had by then taken the place of direct enemy action as the chief cause of Egyptian discontent. There was a shortage of bread, meat, and sugar, and the bread was by order made of an unpopular mixture of wheat and rice flour. Egypt's imports of wheat and meat came in normal times from Australia, so that it was difficult to maintain supplies in view of shipping difficulties, whether shortage of cargo ships or delays through the need for convoys.[1]

Early in November King Faruq was reported to have called party leaders together and urged them to tackle the supply position, and also to have suggested to his Cabinet that they should give instructions for the growing of more cereals and less cotton.[2] It was also reported about this time that the British authorities had complained to the Egyptian Government that they had frequently received incorrect estimates of required supplies. There was considerable hoarding, and the machinery of distribution, both wholesale and retail, did not work adequately. On 5 and 6 January 1942 the Chamber debated the supply question. The Minister of Supply refuted accusations by Sidqi Pasha and others that the shortages were due to lack of foresight[3] and also to the fact that the Allies were taking an undue proportion of cereals for their troops. The Minister of Supply said that when it had been realized that there would be a crop deficiency in the year 1941, the Allies at once agreed to bring in more wheat. The Government proposed a further limitation of cotton acreage, but its plan was modified in Committee and the principle of reduction agreed to only on 17 January after heated debate.

During the same week that the supply debates were taking

[1] *New York Times*, 31 October 1941. [2] *The Times*, 8 November 1941.
[3] *al-Balagh*, 6, 7, and 8 January 1942; Lugol, p. 301.

place, the Government, which had previously broken off relations with Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Japan, also on 6 January broke off relations with Vichy France. This announcement caused a considerable stir in Egypt; not only was the French Minister, Jean Pozzi, a popular figure, but Egypt and France had for two centuries maintained the closest relations, in which affection had played a large part.[1] The British had requested the Egyptian Prime Minister to take this action on the grounds that the behaviour of officials of the Vichy Government in Egypt was inconsistent with the security of British forces in the country. When the suspension of relations was discussed in the Chamber, Sidqi introduced an interpellation to the effect that nothing in the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty justified this move, and that the moment was ill-chosen because the Vichy Government in France was trying to hold out against Germany. He said there had been no ill-treatment of Egyptians in France or a wrong attitude by the French Legation in Egypt, and the Egyptian Government had disregarded French services, both past and present.[2] On 5 January President Roosevelt had announced lease-lend for Egypt, and, despite denials in the press, rumours flew round that this grant was connected with the breach with Vichy. By the end of January German victories in Cyrenaica, and in particular the capture of Benghazi on 9 February, underlined the urgency of the situation.

King Faruq, who had been away from Cairo when relations with Vichy were suspended, held that his royal prerogative had been infringed by the Government's alleged failure to consult him fully, and called for the resignation of the Foreign Minister. Sirri Pasha supported his subordinate, and the British Ambassador sought to smooth the matter over; but it became evident that political forces inspired by 'Ali Mahir were at work in the Palace to bring in a government less committed to support of the British, so that a policy of reinsurance might be initiated to meet the possibility of an Axis victory, which seemed not improbable at this time of Axis successes in the Far East and the Western Desert and the prospect of the German 'spring offensive' on the Russian front. Student demonstrations against the Government on 1 February were directed partly against the bread shortage, but also showed their political inspiration in the shouts of 'We are Rommel's soldiers.' Sirri Pasha, feeling that he no longer had the confidence of the Crown, resigned on the following day; and on the 3rd the British Ambassador is understood to have requested of the King that, in accordance

[1] See Lugol, p. 303 and pp. 304–5, for an account of events.
[2] *al-Ahram*, 15 January 1942; Lugol, p. 308.

with constitutional practice, a government should be formed which commanded a majority in the country and would therefore be able to control the internal situation: only a government headed by Nahhas Pasha, as leader of the Wafd, could be sure of commanding such a majority.[1] King Faruq, however, replied that he would consult the leaders of all parties, including Nahhas, with a view to the formation of a coalition government; and it was believed that he intended to recall to power 'Ali Mahir whose reliability in a crisis the British had had good reason to doubt. This could not be tolerated at a time when the strategic outlook was far from good. At midday on 4 February, therefore, the British Ambassador delivered a warning that 'unless I hear by 6 p.m. that Nahhas Pasha has been asked to form a cabinet, His Majesty King Faruq must expect the consequences.'[2] The King rejected this ultimatum on the advice of a conference of 'elder statesmen', and at 9 p.m. was visited by the British Ambassador, accompanied by the G.O.C. British Troops in Egypt and an armoured escort. The Ambassador insisted upon the absolute necessity of his sending for Nahhas, as representing the majority in the country. The King recalled the 'elder statesmen' and told them that he would ask Nahhas Pasha to form a government. There were reports in the Egyptian press that Ahmad Mahir had urged Nahhas to refuse to form a government in the circumstances, and that he had made an excited speech, on leaving the Palace, in which he said that Nahhas had accepted office supported by bayonets.[3] Nahhas, on taking office, sent a letter to the British Ambassador in which he said that he had agreed to form a government on the basis that neither the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty nor Egypt's situation as a sovereign independent country permitted her ally to intervene in her internal affairs and particularly in matters such as the constitution or resignation of the Cabinet. The British Ambassador replied that the policy of His Majesty's Government was to secure the sincere collaboration of the Egyptian Government in carrying out the Treaty.[4]

Nahhas Pasha took the offices of Foreign Minister and Minister of the Interior and made Makram Pasha Minister of Finance; there was no Minister of Supply. The Prime Minister announced that he would not govern dictatorially but through a freely-elected Parliament; Parliament was therefore dissolved on 7 February and elections were planned for the end of March. A

[1] The United States Minister also informed the King that his Government would prefer the appointment of a Prime Minister friendly to the Allied cause.

[2] Quoted verbatim as propaganda against the Wafd before the Egyptian general election of January 1951.

[3] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 14 February 1942.

[4] *Chicago Daily News*, 6 February 1942.

few days after the Cabinet crisis and the formation of a Wafd Government under Nahhas, King Faruq's twenty-second birthday was celebrated on 11 February. The Egyptian press, in offering him congratulations, stressed his interest in the welfare of his people and his efforts to bridge political dissensions. The Opposition (non-Wafd) press emphasized that the King and the King alone bore all responsibility in time of stress, and that from him alone was salvation sought when matters came to a head between political parties and others.

The elections took place on 24 March 1942. An attempt had been made during the previous month to arrive at a distribution of seats, so as not to embitter the atmosphere by party strife, but negotiations were broken off without result on 23 February. On 10 March the Prime Minister sent instructions to provincial governors on the conduct of the election. The freedom of candidates was limited by three conditions: there must be no reference to 'recent events leading to the change of Government, to the King, or to Great Britain' in any speeches. Demonstrations were also banned. The Liberal and Sa'dist parties did not take part in the campaign, though the latter permitted individual members to stand as candidates. The election was peaceful, and marred by very few 'incidents'. There were no contests in 110 out of 264 constituencies. In the new Chamber and Senate the seats were divided as follows (seats in the Senate are given in brackets): Wafd 223 (81); Sa'dists 2 (10); Liberal-Constitutionalists 4 (11); Watanists 4 (2); Ittihadists 0 (5); Independents 14 (37).[1] The victory of the Wafd brought to an end the ascendancy of 'Ali Mahir over the young King, and secured a strong Government, loyal to the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty. The majority of the hitherto turbulent students at the University of al-Ahzar supported the Wafd, and there were therefore no more cries of the kind heard in Cairo at the beginning of 1942, 'Long live Rommel, long live 'Ali Mahir',[2] although so long as Shaikh Mustafa al-Maraghi remained Rector, the University continued to be a centre of Muslim 'solidarity'.[3] There was still a minority, however, which continued to demonstrate its antagonism to the Treaty, at least until Hasan al-Banna, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, had an interview with Nahhas in March and pledged its support. In the light of later events it is perhaps worth noting that the Wafd press at the time of the elections had contained hints that once the Wafd was in power there might be no further need of party government, since a multiplicity of parties, found necessary in some countries, was

[1] *The Times*, 27 March 1942.
[2] *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 August 1942.
[3] Heyworth-Dunne, p. 34.

harmful in others. There were also comments in what was described as 'the programme of the future' which envisaged a radical revision of the Treaty, the achievement of economic self-sufficiency and adequate outlets (in the Sudan) for Egypt's surplus population.

THE WAFD IN OFFICE

The new Wafd Government had immediately to deal with the problem of essential supplies for the civil population which had played so large a part in undermining the Government of Husain Sirri Pasha. The Wafd sought to remedy the situation by promoting the free movement of commodities inside Egypt (abolishing the controls which its predecessors had enacted with so little effect), by enacting penalties for hoarding by offering a 50 per cent increase in the price the Government would pay for home-grown wheat and maize, and by ordering an equivalent increase in the earnings of agricultural labourers and state-employed labourers. It was announced on 1 March 1942 that the British authorities had agreed to lend the Egyptian Government a large quantity of wheat from the stocks imported for the Allied armed forces, in order to fill the gap until shipments for Egypt arrived from overseas. The control which the Middle East Supply Centre was imposing over essential supplies for the whole Middle East began to become effective in 1942,[1] and the menace of widespread famine was averted. The internal distribution of essential commodities by the Egyptian authorities continued to be far from equitable, however, and contributed not a little to the acute epidemic of a malignant type of malaria which raged in the remote and neglected provinces of Upper Egypt from 1942 to 1944, causing many thousands of deaths. It was aggravated by the Government's prolonged unwillingness to admit its severity by accepting the offered help of the British and United States army medical services.

The Wafd were under the necessity of countering the charge that they had been hoisted into power on British bayonets on 4 February, and therefore sought to improve their credit in nationalist quarters by releasing some of the extremists who had been interned by the previous Government. Nahhas also enforced good behaviour on the leader of the potentially very dangerous Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun); but when 'Ali Mahir defied the Government's order that he should reside on his country estate and refrain from political activity, and appeared in the Senate on 8 April, Nahhas had him arrested

[1] See Keith A. H. Murray, 'Feeding the Middle East in War-Time', *Royal Central Asian Journal* (July–October 1945), vol. 32, pp. 233–47.

and detained in the country. The Prime Minister received an overwhelming vote of confidence from the Chamber when he explained that 'Ali Mahir's name had been constantly mentioned in connexion with 'certain important facts which menace the safety and security of the State', and that as Military Governor he (Nahhas) would not tolerate any behaviour 'which might disturb the confidence to which the Allied Power has a right while she is defending the existence of democracy and liberty'.

The Wafd faithfully observed this policy of ensuring the public security of Egypt for Britain during the military crisis which followed when the Axis forces commanded by Rommel seized the initiative to break through the Eighth Army's defence system west of Tobruk, captured that fortress on 21 June, and compelled the Eighth Army to withdraw to the strongly defended natural position of al-'Alamain, some 350 miles east of Tobruk and only sixty miles west of Alexandria. The unexpectedness of the fall of Tobruk gave rise to many wild rumours in the Egyptian cities, but public order and morale were preserved by the Government's prompt action in interning a considerable number of fifth-columnists, including some resident Italian civilians who had hitherto been spared, and in closing the Royal Automobile Club of Egypt, a resort of fashionable society where pro-Axis sentiments had been freely expressed, whether for motives of malice or as reinsurance. In reply to a message of warm appreciation which the British Ambassador transmitted on behalf of the (British) Turf Club of Cairo to the Egyptian Prime Minister, Nahhas Pasha replied:

> I had to act with a view to the preservation of the interests of the Egyptian people, to secure their rights and guard them from all injury and to inspire confidence amongst them. It gives me pleasure to say that the Egyptians gave proof of their courage and firm conviction. Each one of them is conscious of the duty of supporting our friend and ally, England, in the hour of its need. The Egyptian Government and people offered, as I too offered, with the greatest willingness every possible assistance which did not conflict with the interests of the country, and I am proud to say that every Egyptian did at that moment his duty to his country and to Egypt's ally.[1]

In return for these invaluable services Nahhas had asked for British support for Egypt's interests in the post-war settlement, and the Ambassador was eventually authorized to assure him that the British Government would use its good offices (with a view to securing Egypt's representation on a footing of equality at all peace negotiations which will directly affect her interests),

[1] *al-Misri*, 5 August 1942.

and that Britain would take no part in discussions directly affecting Egypt's interests without having prior consultations with the Egyptian Government.[1] Britain also had to acquiesce while the Allied and Axis forces still confronted each other at al-'Alamain, in the rushing into law of a Bill to make the Arabic language compulsory for commercial accountancy and all official correspondence, which had been hotly resisted by the extensive foreign commercial interests in Egypt when it had been proposed a year before. A Government newspaper expressed the belief, however, that Egypt's British allies would strongly resent the 'foolish tone and inverted mentality' displayed by the foreign-language press at this critical moment.[2]

Even after the defeat of the Axis forces in Egypt and their final expulsion from the continent of Africa in May 1943, the strategic bases of Lower Egypt remained vital to Britain for the wider prosecution of the war, and it therefore remained British policy to support the Wafd in power as long as it effectively ensured public security in Egypt. This policy, however, could not fail to involve the British in matters of internal politics: for already in May 1942 Nahhas had quarrelled with his Coptic lieutenant Makram 'Ubaid [Ebeid], who had been for fifteen years secretary-general of the Wafd Party. Apparently the capable and power-loving Makram, who as a Copt could not hope to lead the party himself, had been manoeuvring to maintain his ascendancy over Nahhas and the party, while Nahhas's wife (considerably younger than her ageing husband) was intriguing against Makram on behalf of the political influence and commercial interests of her own relatives, the Wakil family. At all events Makram, who had already been dropped from his appointment as Minister of Finance in May, was in July 1942 dismissed from his post as secretary-general and expelled from the party, together with fifteen deputies and four senators who reorganized themselves round him in the Independent Wafdist group, or Kutla. Makram was speedily furnished with material for the revenge which he was seeking in the mass of rumours which now became prevalent concerning the manner in which prominent Wafdists, and particularly the Wakil family, were allegedly enriching themselves by black-market transactions and other abuses of war-time scarcities and

[1] *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, 20 November 1942.

[2] *al-Wafd al-Misri*, 8 and 9 August 1942. It added that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the desire to alleviate unemployment among young 'educated' Egyptians; but the foreign-language press had overlooked the relation of the new law to the pride, national self-respect, and cultural progress, not only of Egypt but of the whole Arab and Muslim world. Cf. the Turkish Language Law of 1916, and similar legislation in Persia during the reign of Riza Shah.

regulations.[1] Makram busied himself for some months in chronicling those rumours for which he was able to find some substantiation, and on 29 March 1943 presented the fruit of his labours as a petition to the King, while thousands of copies in the form of a 'Black Book' were clandestinely distributed.

The antagonism between the Crown and Nahhas, which went back to 1928,[2] had been exacerbated both by Nahhas's dismissal in 1937 and by the compulsion exerted upon King Faruq on 4 February 1942 to reinstate him as Prime Minister. Already in September 1942 the Government had taken steps, perhaps at the request of the British, to prevent the King from exploiting the influence which he exercised through his confidant, the Rector of al-Azhar University, Shaikh Mustafa al-Maraghi, upon the politically inflammable student body of that venerable Muslim institution which was now celebrating its millenary by the Hijra calendar. The King now ordered the secretariat of his Royal Cabinet to transmit Makram's petition to Nahhas, who thereupon upbraided Ahmad Hasanain Pasha, the Chief of the Royal Cabinet, for having taken official cognizance of it. The King, it appears, now determined to dismiss Nahhas; but the British Ambassador, to the embarrassment of the army commanders,[3] obtained the conditional consent of the Foreign Office to resort, if necessary, to military action, as on 4 February 1942, to deter the King from such a course. The political tension abated,[4] but the struggle between the King and Nahhas went on below the surface. One aspect which it assumed was agitation by the students of al-Azhar at the end of 1943 against the Wafd Government's establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union[5] and against a rumour that the Mufti of the Soviet Union would visit Egypt.

[1] An experienced observer has commented: 'The corruption of the Wafd Government was more widespread but less deep than that of minority governments. The Wafd had more hungry clients to satisfy than minority governments, and its clients had been longer in the wilderness. Minority personalities, moreover, had more skill and knew better how to cover up their tracks.' Analogies, *mutatis mutandis*, in countries nearer home will come readily to mind, e.g. the *Report of the Tribunal appointed to inquire into Allegations reflecting on the Official Conduct of Ministers and other Public Servants* (the 'Lynskey Tribunal'), Cmd. 7616 of 1949, and cf. the 'Marconi Scandal' of 1912–13.

[2] See above, p. 21.

[3] Lord Wilson of Libya (then General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East Forces), *Eight Years Overseas*, pp. 158–9.

[4] Makram challenged Nahhas to bring a libel action against him, but Nahhas argued that the matter was one not for the Courts, but for Parliament, where the large Wafdist majority naturally gave him an overwhelming vote of confidence.

[5] After the matter had been considered without result by the Government of Muhammad Mahmud in 1938, 'Ali Mahir's Government had established diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. on 21 August 1939, the very day of the signing of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact by Ribbentrop and Molotov. Egypt's honouring of her treaty obligations to Britain at the outbreak of war had, however, prevented the recognition from taking effect.

In the spring of 1944 their rivalry led the King and Nahhas to make competitive tours of the country in a bid for popularity, and in April the King apparently sought to dismiss the Prime Minister a second time, but was again deterred by the British Ambassador.[1] Nahhas Pasha had already been freely using his powers as Military Governor to suppress any public criticism by the Opposition of the shortcomings of his administration; and he celebrated this second reprieve from the royal displeasure by ordering the internment of Makram himself on 9 May, on the grounds that in spite of repeated warnings he had continued to hold meetings and distribute pamphlets which constituted a threat to public security.

Meanwhile, the daily spectacle of the presence of scores of thousands of British and Allied troops in and around the principal towns of Egypt had been a constant reminder to politically-minded Egyptians of the unwelcome reality of the British occupation. It must be admitted that, as always in such circumstances, the conduct of the troops not infrequently left much to be desired, for however much the onward march of civilization had tempered the character of the soldiery it had done little to remedy their ignorance of the peculiar susceptibilities of the middle-class Egyptian; and the troops, in their turn, were the natural prey of that underworld of vice and crime for which the cities of Egypt have long been notorious. Almost as soon as the Axis military threat to Egypt had been removed, therefore, the latent anti-foreign sentiments of the Egyptians began to manifest themselves again, especially in the middle and lower ranks of the official class. Passport officials made difficulties, on the pretext of 'security measures', for resident foreigners who wished to obtain return visas after a temporary absence from Egypt; and the debate on the Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament in November 1943 found speakers of all parties in agreement that Egypt should call for the complete evacuation of British troops immediately after the war and the union of the Sudan with Egypt. These were, of course, the traditional demands of Egyptian nationalism, and merely confirmed the contents of a memorandum which the Wafd, when in Opposition, had presented to the British Embassy on 1 April 1940.[2] In a debate on 30 May 1944 Opposition speakers took exception to a phrase in a published telegram from the British Government

[1] Owing to the rigorous application of the Anglo-Egyptian censorship, the incident has remained even more obscure than its predecessors in February 1942 and April 1943; but see Wilson, *Eight Years Overseas*, pp. 214–15; F. Lawrence Babcock, 'The Explosive Middle East', *Fortune*, September 1944, p. 266; George Bilainkin, *Cairo to Riadh Diary* (London, Williams & Norgate, 1950), p. 61.

[2] See above, p. 61.

to the Greek Prime Minister, in which Churchill had referred to 'the Egyptian sovereign Power, whom we have protected against all German and Italian assaults'.[1] In reply, Nahhas stated that he had obtained a formal assurance from the British Ambassador that his Prime Minister's use of the detonator-like word 'protected' carried no implication of a Protectorate, as was shown by the reference to 'the Egyptian sovereign Power', Nahhas Pasha went on to acknowledge that 'on many occasions British statesmen have recognized that Egypt had loyally carried out her obligations to her ally and has done her duty to the full': he enumerated some of these tokens of recognition, remarking that they left not the slightest room for doubt about the sincere good will of the responsible British statesmen.

In the Anglo–Egyptian Sudan the process of evolution towards ultimate self-government, which had been set in motion soon after the First World War, was taken an important step further by the inauguration on 16 May 1944 of an Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan, which the Governor-General described as 'the first concrete expression of a Sudanese nation'. The Egyptian press complained that the step had been taken without consultation with the Egyptian Government, that they should have been invited to send a representative to the opening ceremony, and that the Vice-President of the Council should have been an Egyptian. There were also press references to 'inspired separatists' in the Sudan, notably Saiyid Sir 'Abd ur-Rahman al-Mahdi, son of the Mahdi, who had led the successful revolt against Khedival misrule in 1881. The Deputy Civil Secretary of the Sudan on 6 September denied the persistent Egyptian press allegations that his Government were taking steps to separate the Sudan from Egypt, asserting that constitutionally the Sudan 'is a part neither of Egypt nor of Britain, and it is administered by the Sudan Government under the authority of a Condominium of the Powers'. But Nahhas Pasha had already declared on Egyptian Independence Day (the anniversary of the signing of the 1936 Treaty) that he considered Egypt and the Sudan as one nation, and he afterwards pointed out that the Treaty had referred only to the 'welfare' of the Sudanese as the 'primary aim' of the Condominium, but had not spoken of their right to self-government. The semi-official *al-Ahram*, for its part, complained that Egypt's part in the Condominium was purely nominal, while the British demonstrated their authority in such acts as the creation of the Advisory Council.

Meanwhile, the conflict between Nahhas and the King was rapidly moving to its *dénouement*. In September Nahhas dismissed

[1] For a similar incident in 1941, see above, p. 67.

the Director of Public Security for obeying an order of the King to remove from the Cairo streets placards reading 'Long live the King' and 'Long live Nahhas Pasha'. The King is said to have resolved to be rid of the contumacious Prime Minister, but was prevailed upon to hold his hand until the preparatory conference for a League of Arab States—negotiations for which had been proceeding under Nahhas's leadership and with British encouragement for some eighteen months—had been held at Alexandria with Nahhas as chairman. On the very morrow (8 October) of the successful close of the conference, however, the King is said to have learnt of Nahhas's intention to resign and go to the country on a programme violently attacking the British and the Crown. Anticipating Nahhas's action by a few hours, he sent him a letter couched in the following carefully chosen terms:

> As I am anxious to see my country governed by a democratic Ministry working for the fatherland and enforcing the laws of the Constitution in the spirit as well as in the letter, giving equality to all Egyptians in rights and duties and bringing to the masses food and clothing, I have decided to dismiss you from office.[1]

The letter ended with conventional words of thanks 'for what services you were able to render during your term of office'.

The formation of a new Government was entrusted to the Sa'dist leader Ahmad Mahir Pasha, who had lived down his reputation for extremism twenty years before.[2] He allotted four portfolios each to his own and the Liberal parties and to Makram's Kutla, and one to the leader of the small Watanist Party; Makram was released from internment (together with many others interned by Nahhas) and became Finance Minister. The new Premier declared his desire for sincere co-operation with Britain and expressed the opinion that it was due to friendship, rather than the legal requirements of the Treaty, that Egypt had faithfully discharged her obligations and pooled all her resources with Britain; she would continue to do so until the war with Japan had been brought to an end. During the preparations for a general election,[3] however, difficulty arose over the candidature of a Sudanese in one of the Cairo constituencies, which led six members of the Advisory Council in the Sudan to put questions to the Government about Sudanese nationality. The Legal Secretary's reply, that the Government were think-

[1] *The Times*, 9 October 1944. [2] See above, p. 16.

[3] The elections, held on 8 January 1945, were boycotted by the Wafd because they alleged that the Government were using their emergency powers to obtain a falsified result. In fact, they probably feared defeat as a consequence of their domestic record while in office.

ing of issuing regulations on the matter, revived the reports in the Cairo press that attempts were being made to separate the Sudan from Egypt. The Sudanese candidate decided to stand down 'after consultation with responsible authorities, in consideration of the higher politics affecting the unity of the Nile Valley'; and this unity was again affirmed in the Senate's reply to the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the new Parliament in February 1945.

The Middle East Supply Centre announced on 1 January 1945 that in response to pressure which had been growing for the past eighteen months, the import restrictions on a large range of goods would be lifted, and Britain would place foreign exchange at Egypt's disposal to the value of £10 million for normal supplies, £3 million for wheat imports to cover regional deficiencies, and a possible £2 million for fertilizer. The British business community, however, criticized this allocation as 'unnecessarily generous' since it would assist imports from the United States at Britain's expense. The British Chamber of Commerce had recently drawn the Egyptian Government's attention to the recent growth of nationalist tendencies to the detriment of foreign commercial interests; it cited the Arabic Language Law (a proposed law to compel foreign companies to employ a high percentage of Egyptian employees in each grade), and the difficulties of obtaining return visas; it declared that it might be necessary for the British Government to intervene if Egypt pressed the creation of new home industries without weighing other considerations; and it asked that when new industries were set up, the right to invest in them should be freely open to foreigners and not restricted to Egyptians, as in the Misr group of companies.[1] On 12 January the English-language *Egyptian Gazette* published a summary of this report with the somewhat tactless comment that it was high time that Egyptians gave up the slogan of nationalism, which had proved 'a good vote-catching line for so many years', and paid more attention to much-needed economic and social reforms. This drew from the distinguished jurist, diplomat, and financier 'Abdul Hamid Pasha al-Badawi the rebuke that, while neither Egyptian legislation nor administration was infallible, some foreigners suffered from a 'Capitulations complex' and must understand that times had changed if they wished to win Egyptian co-operation.

[1] For these see Charles Issawi, *Egypt, an Economic and Social Analysis* (London, Oxford University Press for R.I.I.A., 1947), pp. 130–1.

EGYPT DECLARES WAR

In February, as the Egyptian Government were preparing to comply with the decision of the Yalta Conference that States must have declared war on Germany and Japan by 1 March if they wished to take part in the San Francisco Conference and become founder-members of the United Nations, the Wafdist press strongly insisted that a declaration of war must have the 'agreement of the whole people', i.e. must be preceded by a general election; and rumours were spread that Egypt would be required to send a labour corps to the Far East. On 25 February Ahmad Mahir, addressing the Chamber, denied these rumours on the authority of the British Ambassador and emphasized the enhanced international status that Egypt would derive from declaring war; but as he was leaving to make a similar statement to the Senate, he was shot dead by a young lawyer, stated to belong to the extremist Misr al-Fatah Party.[1] The motion approving a declaration of war was carried in the Senate by only 65 votes to 41.

[1] Ahmad Mahir was the first distinguished victim of a wave of political assassination, for which see Sir Thomas Russell, *Egyptian Service, 1902–46* (London, Murray 1949), pp. 215–16. The next victim was Sir Amin 'Uthman (Osman), who had been the principal intermediary between Nahhas and the British Embassy during the Wafdist Government, and who was shot dead on 5 January 1946 by the twenty-two-year-old son of the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Communications. The trial was protracted until July 1948, and before his conviction and sentence the murderer had been enabled to escape to Syria, where he again became a member of a terrorist gang.

CHAPTER VIII

NEGOTIATIONS FOR TREATY REVISION, 1945–7

IT was under a Government led by Mahmud Fahmi Pasha an-Nuqrashi, who succeeded Ahmad Mahir as leader of the Sa'dist Party and like him had lived down his youthful reputation for extremism,[1] that Egypt awaited the end of the war. It has been stated on the authority of an article in *The Times* (unsigned, as is the custom) that she 'was in a mood generously to generous treatment. There is every reason to believe that the 1936 Treaty could then have been replaced by an agreement . . . which would have secured Britain's vital interests in the Middle East on the soundest foundation of a willing co-operation of a grateful Egypt.'[2] This view is perhaps too sanguine, however, for the growth of nationalist feeling had continued unchecked. Tentative proposals for continuing after the war the regional economic planning initiated by the Middle East Supply Centre, with the Middle East Governments taking part henceforward on an equal footing with the interested Great Powers, were rejected as an encroachment on local sovereignties; and at the San Francisco Conference Egypt wished to limit membership of 'regional arrangements' under the United Nations Charter to nations having 'immediate geographical vicinity'.[3] On 9 July 1945 Makram, who remained as Finance Minister in the new Egyptian Government, announced that there would be no budgetary provision for building barracks in the Canal Zone to receive the British troops who, under the terms of the 1936 Treaty, were to be concentrated there as they were withdrawn from the Delta; he said that the Government proposed to ask instead for the complete evacuation of Egyptian territory. Politically-conscious Egyptians were confident at this time that the United Nations would see justice done between a smaller and a greater Power, and equally confident that the justice of their own ambitions in the direction of the Sudan or Cyrenaica was self-evident to all.[4] The return of

[1] See above, p. 16.

[2] 'Anglo-Egyptian Relations', *Round Table*, March 1951, p. 115.

[3] United Nations, Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, 1945, *Documents*, vol. 3, p. 541, vol. 11, p. 57. Similarly, an Egyptian delegate to the United Nations General Assembly in 1951 argued that regional arrangements under the Charter 'presupposed a certain propinquity not only of a geographical character but also of language, religion, and custom' (*The Times*, 23 November 1951).

[4] Egypt sought the return of the Jaghbub oasis which Lord Lloyd had ceded to

the Labour Party to power in the British general election gave them hope that the new British Government would be more amenable than a Government led by Churchill;[1] and immediately, on 30 July, the Wafdist Opposition presented to the British Ambassador a memorandum containing Egypt's full demands, which Nuqrashi Pasha endorsed when questioned in the Senate on 6 August.

Lord Altrincham, who as Sir Edward Grigg was British Minister Resident in the Middle East until 12 August, afterwards stated that early in September he had 'endeavoured to impress the Government with the danger of the situation in Cairo', and advised them to announce the evacuation of Cairo and Alexandria immediately[2] and to take steps to carry it out as expeditiously as conditions allowed.[3] This would have improved relations for the time, and might have avoided the clashes between the city mobs and British troops which inflamed the situation in February and March 1946; but it is doubtful whether it would have made Egyptian negotiators any more ready to accept the provisions which the British authorities considered essential for ensuring the security of the Middle East and good order in the Sudan. Indeed, the Egyptians might well have concluded that the new British Government were in the mood to make further concessions, and that they had only to keep up the pressure to be rid of the British altogether.

PRELIMINARIES TO THE FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS

The heir-presumptive of Egypt, Prince Muhammad 'Ali, stated in a press interview on returning from a visit to Britain at the end of September that the Great Powers were so much occupied with major post-war problems that the questions of Egypt and the Middle East must wait for the present. Nuqrashi discussed Anglo-Egyptian relations with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Lord Alanbrooke, who visited Egypt in October in the course of a tour; but meanwhile the pressure

Italy in 1925; but there were larger designs for making Cyrenaica as a whole a sort of Egyptian dependency.

[1] The Egyptian conservative Isma'il Sidqi Pasha heralded the Labour victory as a sign of the 'new spirit prevailing throughout the world' (*New York Times*, 3 August 1945).

[2] When the British Government in 1924 had offered the withdrawal of British troops from Cairo within two years, its other terms had been unacceptable to the Egyptian Government (Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, vol. 2, pp. 86, 396). The 1936 Treaty had stipulated their withdrawal when the installations in the Canal Zone should be ready to receive them; and as has been seen above, the Egyptian Government were now re-opening this part of the agreement.

[3] The British Embassy in Cairo advised against an immediate offer to evacuate the two cities or open negotiations.

from Opposition and extremist circles was increasing,[1] and a section of Nuqrashi's Cabinet, led by Makram, demanded immediate action. On 20 December, accordingly, the Egyptian Government delivered a Note asking for negotiations for a revision of the 1936 Treaty to be opened in London at an early date. It recalled that Egypt had concluded the Treaty 'in the middle of an international crisis, when the spectre of war was already appearing', and had accepted 'all that it implied in the way of restrictions on her independence' only 'because she knew that they were of a transitory character and were destined to disappear' with the circumstances that had led her to agree to them. Her war-time collaboration with Britain had surely dispelled the British 'mistrust which had not yet entirely disappeared in 1936'. She would 'shrink from no sacrifice in order, in the immediate future, to place her military potential in a state enabling her to repel aggression pending the arrival of the reinforcements of her allies and of the United Nations'. The British Government were, however, preoccupied at that time by the threat to Middle East security implicit in the recent creation of an 'autonomist' puppet-government in Persian Azarbaijan under the protection of the Red Army and in the Soviet pressure on Turkey; and on 27 January 1946 they made a veiled reference to this challenge as one reason for not having replied earlier to the Egyptian Note. Since it was British policy to place Anglo–Egyptian relations 'on a footing of full and free partnership, as between equals, in the defence of their mutual interests and with full respect for the independence and sovereignty of Egypt', the British Ambassador would be instructed to open preliminary conversations with the Egyptian Government; but the Foreign Office 'took leave to observe' that one of the lessons of the Second World War had been 'the essential soundness of the fundamental principles' underlying the 1936 Treaty.[2]

The Wafdist opposition press had already been threatening Britain with Egyptian recourse to the Soviet Union, thanks to whom, it was said, Egypt had obtained a seat in the Security Council;[3] and the reopening of the Fu'ad I University of Cairo

[1] Nuqrashi's position was not helped by Ernest Bevin's stating, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, that he had received no formal representation on Egyptian claims (23 October 1945, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol 414, cols. 2004–5), when in fact the British Embassy in Cairo had been requesting Nuqrashi not to raise the question at present.

[2] Texts of the Egyptian and British Notes in *The Times*, 31 January 1946.

[3] Alex Small, Cairo correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, reported on 27 January 'a vigorous pro-Russian propaganda campaign . . . in a certain section of the Wafdist . . . press' during the previous week. 'It took the familiar line that the Russians are liberators of small peoples from imperialism, and that "fascist

on 9 February was the signal for a demonstration of 1,500 students demanding the dismissal of the Government. There were riots of students and factory workers in Alexandria and other towns, and nine persons were officially reported to have been killed. It was afterwards rumoured that at this point the British Ambassador informed King Faruq that his Government were not satisfied of Nuqrashi's ability to keep order while a revised treaty was being negotiated. At all events Nuqrashi resigned on 15 February, and the King entrusted the formation of a new Government to the seventy-one-year-old Isma'il Sidqi Pasha, who had played a prominent part in the nationalist struggle in 1919 but had followed an independent anti-Wafdist policy as Prime Minister from 1930 to 1933.[1] He was a wealthy capitalist who feared social revolution and detested the demagogy of the Wafd as a step in that direction. His Cabinet consisted solely of Independents and Liberals.

In September 1945 an Egyptian trade union delegation had attended the Paris Conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions, which was already being brought under Communist control; and on its return three of its members, belonging to the Cairo industrial suburb of Shubra al-Khaima where 10,000–15,000 workers were employed in bad conditions (mainly in textile factories), had formed on 8 October a Workers' Committee of National Liberation, a title of unmistakably Communist inspiration. Their manifesto included, besides social aims, that of 'rescuing Egypt from the occupying Power by working for the complete independence of the Nile Valley and winning her a place among the democratic States'.[2] The organizing of large-scale strikes had led to the arrest of the leaders of this Committee on 2 January 1946, but relations were established with the executive committee of the student extremists belonging to such organizations as the Muslim Brotherhood and Misr al-Fatah, and a National Committee of Workers and Students was formed whose leading figure, Mustafa Musa, was afterwards to become a Wafdist left-wing deputy. On 20

oppression" is everywhere. Examples given were Poland, Finland, Hungary, and Baltic and Balkan countries. There were strong hints that the same has just happened in Azerbaijan. . . . There were suggestions of Russian intentions to "liberate" the Kurds and Armenians from Turkey and Iraq. . . .' A number of suspected Communists had been arrested in December 1945 as the result of the circulation of propaganda newspapers and pamphlets.

[1] See above, pp. 28–31.

[2] See Dr Zaki Badaoui, *Les Problèmes du Travail et les Organisations Ouvrières en Égypte* (Alexandria, Société de Publications Égyptiennes, 1948), pp. 153–4, 168–70; William J. Handley: 'The Labor Movement in Egypt', *Middle East Journal* (July 1949), vol. 3, pp. 283–5. It might be asked whether the word 'democratic' in the above manifesto was used in the Western or in the Eastern European sense.

February this Committee called for a general strike on the following day without disturbances or destruction of property 'to make Great Britain and the world understand that Egypt is ready for a struggle which will end only when the sixty-five-years occupation is terminated'. On forming his Government Sidqi had received from King Faruq a letter which had described the desire for demonstrations as 'a healthy manifestation of the people's ambition to realize their just claims',[1] and had accordingly removed the ban on demonstrations imposed by his predecessor a week earlier. The general strike on the 21st was accompanied by extensive burning and looting of British property in Cairo, and during further demonstrations at Alexandria on 4 March to commemorate the 'evacuation martyrs' a mob set fire to a British military police outpost and stoned to death two of its five occupants. While Sidqi Pasha publicly sought to turn back upon the British military forces the responsibility for this violence, and the Egyptian lives which were lost in repressing it, the Soviet Minister in Cairo was reported to have expressed his sympathy to the Committee of Workers and Students, and the world Communist press characteristically twisted the facts to report 'attacks by British motorized units on unarmed Egyptian students' taking part in 'a nation-wide demand for national liberation'.[2]

THE BRITISH OFFER OF MAY 1946

It was amid the continuation of this disorder, manifesting itself in bomb-outrages against British troops and civilians, that Sidqi sought to form a delegation composed of all parties, as in 1935, for negotiations with Britain. The Wafd, however, made their participation conditional on their having majority representation with Nahhas as chairman of the delegation, and the guarantee of new elections. Sidqi Pasha thereupon excluded the Wafd from a delegation, otherwise representative of all parties and leading personalities, which he succeeded in forming on 8 March, and made a further show of firmness by suppressing three Wafdist newspapers and ordering the arrest of the leader and four other members of the terrorist Misr al-Fatah organization. According to the autobiography which Sidqi subsequently published,[3] the failure of the British Government to announce promptly the names of their delegation caused much surprise in

[1] Quoted by the Secretary for the Dominions to the House of Lords, 26 February 1946 (H. L. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 139, col. 873).

[2] A *Pravda* correspondent reported by diplomatic correspondent of *The Times*, 12 March 1946; *Daily Worker*, 22 February.

[3] *Mudhakarati* (Cairo, Dar ul-Hilal, 1950; in Arabic). The short passages quoted in translation from this work have been furnished by Mr Emile Marmorstein, who is engaged in making a complete translation.

Egyptian political circles, and it was not until 30 March that the new British Ambassador (Sir Ronald Campbell, who had succeeded Lord Killearn a month before) stated in reply to Sidqi's inquiry that he himself was to lead a delegation composed of senior military experts and Embassy officials. Sidqi objected very strongly that the members of the Egyptian delegation were among the most distinguished figures in Egyptian political life and expected to negotiate with British personalities of the same order; and, he added, 'People in Egypt believe, and will not forget, that the policy adopted during the last decade and especially during the war—a policy which did not leave a good impression—was planned and executed by the very Embassy officials whom you now wish to have as your political assistants.'[1] On 2 April, accordingly, the British Foreign Secretary announced that he would lead the delegation, although the earlier part of the discussions would be entrusted to the Secretary for Air, Lord Stansgate, and the British Ambassador; Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, British Ambassador to Iraq 1941–5 and now head of the Middle East secretariat of the Foreign Office, would be the chief political adviser, and the three Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East, military advisers. The appointment of the former radical Lord Stansgate was publicly welcomed by Sidqi with the remark that 'as Mr Wedgwood Benn he defended the Egyptian cause in and out of Parliament just after the First World War, when few other Britons spoke favourably on behalf of my country. Thus Wedgwood Benn's name is always remembered as a ray of hope in Egypt.'[2]

When the delegation arrived in Cairo on 15 April, the 'first thing' which it heard from Sidqi, according to Lord Stansgate's subsequent account, was: 'You can have no agreement with Egypt except on the basis of evacuation.' The British military advisers, however, sought to awaken the Egyptian delegation to the threat to the security of the whole Middle East inherent in the Soviet cold war pressure on Persia, Turkey, and Greece; they emphasized the vital importance, as a base for the defence of the Middle East, of the military installations and communications of Lower Egypt, with its abundant supply of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labour which had proved so serviceable in two world wars; they urged the Egyptians to think of the defence of the region as a whole, not of the narrower interests of the Nile Valley, and, since Egypt's unaided resources were inadequate for this wider concept, to accept British technical specialists in civilian clothes in peace-time, with the main-

[1] ibid. pp. 61–2.

[2] *The Times*, 22 April 1946. British Conservative circles were correspondingly critical of Lord Stansgate's appointment.

tenance of a regional headquarters in the Canal Zone.[1] The vision of the Egyptian delegation, however, tended to be restricted to the narrow confines of their Nile Valley, and the desire to put an end to the British occupation excluded any wider considerations. Moreover, the continuing student demonstrations and bomb outrages, and the ever present risk of assassination, were deterrents to any divergence from the basic Egyptian demands; and on 7 May the British Government sought to break the deadlock by offering

> the withdrawal of all British . . . forces from Egyptian territory, and to settle in negotiation the stages and date of completion of this withdrawal, and the arrangements to be made by the Egyptian Government to make possible mutual assistance in time of war or imminent threat of war in accordance with the alliance.[2]

This offer was debated twice in the Commons, and once in the Lords, in the course of the next seventeen days. While some Government supporters who had served in the Middle East during the war argued that the Canal would be equally well defended from bases not on Egyptian territory, Opposition speakers pointed to the impermanence of Britain's tenure of the obvious alternatives, Palestine and Cyrenaica, and the inadequacy of Cyprus. Churchill and Eden, with the experience born of the Egyptian Government's hesitation in the crisis of June 1940[3] (although they did not refer directly to this incident), gave a warning of the danger of relying solely on a British right to reoccupy installations in a time of international emergency:

> The Great Power with whom we shall be in dispute would, of course, say to the Egyptian Government: 'We should regard any movement into the Canal zone of British Forces as an unfriendly act.' Can anyone suppose that the Egyptian Government, confronted with this situation and not desiring anyhow to have British troops or Air Forces in the Canal Zone, will not refuse permission for us to re-enter? . . .
>
> Can one imagine the British Government in such a situation, when the dread issue of peace or war in a renewed world struggle may be hanging in the balance, forcing the issue . . .? It is a positive act, an act which will be widely regarded and denounced as an act of aggression, as an act destroying the last hopes of peace. . . .[4]

Herbert Morrison inadvertently let slip that the Government

[1] Lord Stansgate afterwards asserted that 'had we been able on our arrival to announce that in future British troops would only be in Egypt by Egyptian consent, we could have had a treaty in a month' ('The Egyptian Point of View', *The Listener*, 25 January 1951, p. 127); but he said nothing at this point about the Sudan question, which was just as important to the Egyptian extremists.

[2] The Prime Minister, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 422, cols. 781–2.

[3] See above, p. 63.

[4] Churchill, 24 May 1946, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 423, cols. 774–5.

had acceded 'reluctantly' to the Egyptian request for a decision on withdrawal as a preliminary to a study of the future of the Anglo–Egyptian alliance and military aid; the Prime Minister said, 'If the whole matter breaks down there is still, of course, the Treaty'; and Bevin wound up the series of debates by giving the assurance:

> There must not be a vacuum. If the Egyptian Government try to force a situation in which there is a vacuum—meaning that we have gone and that there is nothing there for security instead, regional defence or other organization—to that I can never agree. But I have offered . . . a new basis of approach, in which I believe. Perhaps partnership is the wrong term, but it is a joint effort for mutual defence not only in the interests of Great Britain and her Commonwealth, but in the interests ultimately of the contribution to what I hope will yet become a United Nations defence for the security of the world.[1]

Meanwhile, the whole of the Egyptian press, with the exception of the Sa'dist *ad-Dastur*, had commented unfavourably on the British offer. The Wafdists condemned the principle of the Anglo–Egyptian alliance as such, and others expressed suspicion of the condition that Britain must have facilities in Egypt in case of war or the threat of war. On 21 May Britain presented to the Egyptian Government what Nuqrashi Pasha subsequently described as 'a draft of a treaty of alliance, together with a draft of a military treaty which incorporated in substance the burdensome and objectionable military conditions imposed in the 1936 Treaty'.[2] The writer of the article in the *Round Table* already quoted remarked that the Egyptian delegation soon saw, and resented the fact, that the Foreign Office were 'treating Egypt as a slippery customer who had to be made to sign an absolutely watertight bond. . . . More caution could not have been taken in dealing with a defeated enemy.'[3] On this a British authority has commented that his long experience in the Middle East led him to the conclusion that, while it is essential in documents such as treaties to safeguard one's interests by the most careful drafting of the main clauses, the dotting of too many i's and the insistence on too much detail is unnecessary and unfruitful; but he added that he knew that the Services—no doubt rightly from their point of view—liked to see everything cut and

[1] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 423, col. 788.

[2] To the Security Council, 5 August 1947 (*Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 70, p. 1747).

[3] *Round Table*, March 1951, p. 125. Some British observers thought that the Liberal and Sa'dist, and some of the independent, members of the Egyptian delegation were ready to collaborate with Britain, though not on Britain's terms, and that their position vis-à-vis the Wafdist Opposition and the extremists was made untenable by the attitude of the Foreign Office and its military advisers.

dried. The recollection of the attempts made in June 1940 and February 1942[1] to evade Egypt's responsibilities under the Treaty was still fresh in the minds of the Foreign Office, and they may well have felt that it was unsafe to leave too much to future Egyptian good will in view of the cold war that was already being waged on the northern periphery of the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the tactical coalition between the Wafd and both the extreme nationalists and the Communists[2] continued its unscrupulous opposition both to the Anglo–Egyptian alliance and to Sidqi personally, successfully exploiting the social unrest which had been growing as a consequence of the cessation of the war-time demand for labour, now aggravated by the beginning of the withdrawal of British troops. It was already estimated that there were at least 200,000 unemployed, while those in work, having been organized in embryonic trade unions during the war, refused to recognize the present lessened demand for labour and not only tried to enforce a forty-hour week by stay-in strikes but also demanded that employers should be compelled to maintain production regardless of fluctuations in the demand for their goods. The Communist-inspired Workers' Committee of National Liberation had renamed itself the Workers' Congress and ambitiously claimed to have federated the entire trade union movement. Amid strikes of State telegraph workers, government engineers, and teachers, and the threat of a general strike, the Government on 9 July approved a Bill imposing heavy penalties for strikes by state employees; and since the Wafd and Makram's Kutla party had called for a general strike on the 11th (the anniversary of the Royal Navy's destruction of the Alexandria forts in 1882 which was followed by the British occupation), there were large-scale police raids on the premises of Wafdists and suspected Communists. Eleven ostensibly educational, scientific, and cultural organizations were closed down. Among those arrested were a wealthy young Italo–Egyptian Jew who maintained a bookshop in a fashionable Cairo square for the display and sale of Marxist literature; the well-known Coptic 'progressive' writer, Salama Musa;[3] and the Muslim editor of the Wafdist newspaper *al-Wafd al-Misri*,

[1] See above, Chapter VII.

[2] A writer in the Paris Communist *Humanité* of 23 July 1946 wrote approvingly of 'relatively progressive and nationalist forces, such as the Wafd'. In their flirtations at various times with Communist influences, for the purpose of bringing pressure on Britain or (if the Wafd were in opposition) the Egyptian Government of the day, the Wafdist leaders were rashly assuming the role of the young lady of Riga.

[3] This member of a small landowning family, who had before 1914 been a member of the London Fabian Society and the Rationalist Press Association and an apostle of all the European prophets of revolt from Voltaire to Marx (see the

whom a government organ described as 'an agent of the Third International who had been seeking a rapprochement between it and the Wafd'. His newspaper was suspended, as also were seven 'progressive' periodicals. The estimated number of those arrested rose to 220; and although by November nearly all of them had been released without being formally charged, the 'cultural' organizations had been allowed to reopen, and the editor of *al-Wafd al-Misri* was back at his desk, the incident gave the Communist *Humanité* the opportunity to write an article under the title: 'Fascism in Egypt: Under Bevin's Flail'.

The three months of June, July, and August passed in Anglo–Egyptian negotiations amid the summer heat, interspersed with the exchange of formal Notes and consultations with London. The Egyptian delegation was kept rigidly to its original demands by the stiffness of three or four of its members, among whom Makram rendered himself conspicuous by publicly announcing his determination to abide by those demands,[1] while the British delegation continued to hold out compromises between their own original standpoint and that of the Egyptians. Thus, while the Egyptians insisted on the complete withdrawal of the British troops within a year (which was probably a physical impossibility on account of the extensiveness of their technical installations), and the British originally proposed a maximum of five years 'to avert the danger of a "defensive vacuum" between the departure of the last British forces and the Egyptian assumption of their commitments',[2] a British offer in mid-August proposed to strike the average at three years. Again, the Egyptians wished to limit the invocation of their joint defence obligations to an act of aggression committed against Egypt or one of her immediate neighbours, while the British sought to extend it to those countries on the periphery of the Middle East that were most threatened by the Soviet cold war—Persia, Turkey, and Greece; the British mid-August offer held out the following concession to Egyptian fears, that in the case of those remoter countries not immediately bordering on Egypt her obligation should be restricted to 'consultation on the action to be taken'. The Egyptian claim for the immediate

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summary of his autobiography in *Middle Eastern Affairs* (New York), August–September 1951, ii. 279–85), had recently found in the New York *Daily Worker* (10 February 1946) a vehicle for his thesis that all Egypt's social evils were due to the British occupation.

[1] In a press interview he attacked the proposed Joint Defence Board as 'certainly some sort of masked protectorate . . . practically an Anglo–Egyptian Control Board, or rather a joint Ministry of National Defence' (*al-Ahram*, 17 July 1946).

[2] The Alexandria correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Scotsman*, 5 August 1946.

proclamation of Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan was, in British eyes, lacking in guarantees of the Sudanese right to self-determination; and this was no British *ad hoc* invention but the clear demand of that politically-conscious minority of Sudanese who for the past two years had been taking part in the work of the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan.[1] In their proposals of mid-August, therefore, the British suggested separating this difficult question from that of the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty and making it the subject of separate negotiations.

It was reported that the Egyptian Ambassador in London was told that the mid-August proposals represented Britain's final offer, and that both Sidqi and King Faruq were prepared to accept it as such. The intransigent section of the Egyptian delegation led by Makram, refused, however, to be moved, and

> consistently exploited their official knowledge of the negotiations to publicize confidential discussions and secret documents in an endeavour to prove that they are more patriotic than their colleagues. . . . The climax came . . . when a complete text of the latest Egyptian reply to the British proposals was published in an Arabic weekly paper before it was communicated to the British delegation, while concerted efforts were made to invest the document with the uncompromising finality of an ultimatum.[2]

Sidqi Pasha accordingly resigned his premiership on 28 September; but after the King's uncle, Sharif Sabri Pasha, had unsuccessfully attempted to form an all-party Cabinet embracing the Wafd together with Liberals and Sa'dists, the King again turned to Sidqi on 2 October. Lord Stansgate and the British Ambassador had meanwhile gone to London for consultations, and Sidqi proposed to the Foreign Office that he should follow them 'to explain personally to Mr Bevin the national ideals inspiring his Government's policy, and to assure himself that the British Foreign Secretary is fully informed of the reasons for the Egyptian attitude'. Whereupon there were more hostile demonstrations of students and workers.

SIDQI PASHA'S NEGOTIATIONS IN CAIRO AND LONDON, 1946

Sidqi and his Foreign Minister, the Sa'dist Ibrahim 'Abd ul-Hadi Pasha, had five meetings with Ernest Bevin in London between 17 and 25 October, as a result of which they initialed a new draft treaty.[3] Britain undertook to evacuate Cairo, Alexan-

[1] See above, p. 76.

[2] *The Times*, Alexandria correspondent, 30 September, and leading article, 1 October 1946.

[3] Egypt No. 2 (1947). Cmd. 7179.

dria, and the Delta by 31 March 1947, and the rest of Egyptian territory by 1 September 1949. Egypt, in return, agreed to take action in the event of aggression 'against countries adjacent to Egypt', while the Joint Defence Board would examine the repercussions of

all events which may threaten the security of the Middle East, and shall make . . . suitable recommendations to the two Governments, who, in the case of events threatening the security of any one of the neighbouring countries of Egypt, will consult together in order to take in agreement such measures as may be recognized as necessary.[1]

There remained the difficult problem of reconciling the Egyptian claim for sovereignty over the Sudan with the statement that Bevin had made to the House of Commons on 26 March:

The welfare of the Sudanese cannot be secured unless a stable and disinterested administration is maintained in the Sudan. The objects of such an administration must be to establish organs of self-government as a first step towards eventual independence, to accelerate the process of appointing Sudanese to higher Government posts in consultation with Sudanese representatives, and to raise the capacity of the mass of the people for effective citizenship. These are the objects of the present Sudan Government, and His Majesty's Government fully support them. In the meantime, His Majesty's Government consider that no change should be made in the status of the Sudan as a result of treaty revision until the Sudanese have been consulted through constitutional channels.[2]

Bevin afterwards stated that he now felt justified in admitting a reference, in the Sudan Protocol of his draft treaty with Sidqi Pasha, to

the existence of a symbolic dynastic union between Egypt and the Sudan, provided always that no change was introduced into the existing system of administration, whereby the Sudan is administered by the Governor-General under the powers conferred on him by the 1889 Agreements, as confirmed and interpreted by the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty of 1936; and provided that no change took place in the arrangements under which the defence of the Sudan is assured.

Bevin reported Sidqi as admitting that nothing in the proposed treaty could prejudice the right of the Sudanese to achieve their

[1] A British authority previously cited 'did not think that the defence clause adequately protected our interests, and was glad when it all came to nothing'.

[2] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 421, col. 217. Lord Stansgate afterwards claimed that the Anglo–Egyptian negotiations had been 'bedevilled' by this statement, particularly the reference to 'eventual independence' which had 'prejudiced the whole issue' for the Egyptians ('The Egyptian Point of View', *The Listener*, 25 January 1951, p. 127).

independence, but as arguing that this was a universal principle, not a matter for incorporation in the draft treaty.[1]

The result of this attempt to combine the Egyptian and the British theses on the Sudan in a single compromise formula[2] was no more successful than the attempt (which it so closely resembled) of the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451 to reconcile the Orthodox and the (Egyptian and Syrian) Monophysite views on the Incarnation.[3] Sidqi had secured the key-phrase 'unity . . . under the common Crown' and was probably trusting to the interplay of Egyptian intransigence with British compromise to cut its own course through the British phraseology that followed those key-words. At all events, on his return to Cairo on 26 October, he made a statement to an Egyptian journalist which was reported as follows: 'I said last month that I should bring the Sudan to Egypt, and I say now that I have succeeded, that it has definitely been decided to achieve unity between Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown.'[4] The British Prime Minister on the 28th 'regretted' this report, which seemed to him 'partial and misleading'.[5] On the following day Egyptian official sources released a paraphrase of the Sudan Protocol which, while probably not departing deliberately from the still unpublished authentic English text, seems to have been slightly coloured in a sense favourable to the Egyptian thesis. These Egyptian publications gave rise to some excitement among the politically-conscious minority in the Sudan who, while virtually unanimous in their desire for self-govern-

[1] Bevin, 27 January 1947, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 432, cols. 617–18. When, however, his alleged admission had been divulged by the Governor-General of the Sudan, Sidqi had issued on 8 December 1946 a communiqué denying that he had agreed in London to recognize the Sudan's right to eventual secession from the Egyptian Crown. His resignation followed immediately.

[2] 'The policy which the High Contracting Parties undertake to follow in the Sudan, within the framework of the unity between the Sudan and Egypt under the common Crown of Egypt, will have for its essential objectives to assure the well-being of the Sudanese, the development of their interests and their active preparation for self-government, and consequently the exercise of the right to choose the future status of the Sudan. Until the High Contracting Parties can, in full common agreement, realize this latter objective after consultation with the Sudanese, the Agreement of 1899 will continue. . . .'

[3] '. . . in two natures, uncommingled, unchangeable, indivisible, inseparable; the differences between the two natures not removed by reason of their union, but rather the characteristics of each found united together in one Person and one Hypostasis'; cf. below, p. 138.

[4] *Observer* diplomatic correspondent, 27 October 1946. The *Round Table* article previously quoted contained the following apology for Sidqi: 'an old, sick and exhausted man . . . made an incautious and probably misrepresented statement . . . as he stumbled from his aircraft late at night. . . . As this writer well knows, had Sidqi Pasha been asked to modify his alleged statement before official notice was taken of it, he would have done so and all might have been well' (March 1951, p. 115). Sidqi's autobiography is not revealing on the point.

[5] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 428, cols. 295–6.

ment at an early date, were sharply divided among themselves (by historical and sectarian traditions) on the question whether this goal was best to be achieved by collaboration with the present British-directed Sudan Government or by collaboration with Egypt.[1] As a protest against Sidqi's statement, the anti-Egyptian Umma Party announced on 27 October that it would henceforward boycott the advisory and consultative institutions which the pro-Egyptian parties had boycotted from their inception, and there were demonstrations and clashes between the two factions in the twin towns of Khartoum and Omdurman. The Governor-General, Major-General Sir Hubert Huddleston, who had spent most of his military career in the Sudan and had been appointed Governor-General in 1940 when an Italian invasion from East Africa seemed imminent, was summoned to London and acquainted the Foreign Secretary with the 'serious consequences'[2] that might arise from this tense situation.

It was now no secret that seven out of the twelve members of the Egyptian delegation were opposed to all three of the main clauses—evacuation, joint defence, and the Sudan—in the draft which Sidqi had brought back from London. On 26 November, accordingly, King Faruq (who, it was reported, had made no secret of his conviction that the conclusion of a treaty acceptable to both countries was in the interest of both)[3] dissolved the delegation. Sidqi obtained a vote of confidence from 159 of the 264 deputies who made up the Chamber, the remainder absenting themselves or not voting; but he was immediately confronted by a new outbreak of street demonstrations instigated by the

[1] The great divide in modern Sudanese history was the claim of Muhammad Ahmad of Dongola in 1881 to be the long-expected Mahdi whose appearance, according to popular Muslim tradition, was to herald in the millennium, and his consequent revolt against the oppressive and corrupt misgovernment of the agents of the Khedive of Egypt. While the tribesmen of the western Sudan rallied to his banner, those of the eastern provinces who belonged to the already existing Khatmiya sect opposed him, and their leaders found refuge in Egypt from his conquering hordes.

Those Sudanese who since 1920 had been rising to positions of administrative responsibility under the British ægis now aspired to self-government independently of Egypt, and thus had a common interest with the religious followers of the Mahdi's posthumous son, Saiyid 'Abd ur-Rahman al-Mahdi, who had made his peace with the British and become rich by developing his estate as a cotton plantation. On the other hand, the offspring of the fairly numerous mixed marriages of Egyptians and Sudanese were naturally attracted to the Egyptian cause; so were the adherents of the Khatmiya sect under its head, Saiyid 'Ali al-Mirghani, the rival 'grand old man' of the Sudan; and so also was a stratum of second-class intellectuals who, failing to achieve satisfactory advancement in the public service were attracted by Cairo in the hope of securing by Egyptian favour the preferment which had eluded their own talents.

[2] Obituary of Sir Hubert Huddleston, *The Times*, 3 October 1950; but in some responsible British quarters in Cairo the Sudan Government's attitude was considered unnecessarily alarmist.

[3] *The Times*, leading article, 29 November 1946.

Wafd, which led him to ban a proposed Wafdist political rally and hint that they were receiving material aid from Soviet sources. This the Wafdist *al-Balagh* denied, but only to add: 'We want the friendship of Russia and other Communist countries, so as to have their support when we submit our case to the Security Council.'[1]

When defending his policy to the press on 28 November, Sidqi Pasha was reported[2] to have said that there was little hope of persuading the British to accept the full sovereignty of Egypt over the Sudan which, the Egyptian public now believed, was her right. On 6 December Bevin, after his consultations with the Governor-General of the Sudan, was stated to have sent Sidqi a draft 'letter of interpretation' to be affixed to the Treaty, in which Sidqi was asked to agree that the draft Protocol 'amounts to an affirmation of the existing status' of the Sudan and 'in no way affects the right of the United Kingdom to secure the defence of the Sudan'.[3] This Sidqi could not do; and on the following day the Governor-General, now back in Khartoum, stated that the British Prime Minister had authorized him to give the following assurance to the Sudanese people:

> His Majesty's Government are . . . determined that nothing shall be permitted to deflect the Sudan Government, whose constitution and powers remain unaltered by the recent conversations, from the task to which that Government have applied themselves—the preparation of the Sudanese for self-government and for the task of choosing freely what their future status is to be.[4]

It was officially added in London that

> The Governor-General's statement was necessitated by the situation created in the Sudan itself by earlier and partial disclosures in

[1] Cf. Sidqi, *Mudhakarati*, p. 126. The London *Daily Worker* of 27 November had reported the demonstration against the dissolution of the Treaty delegation under a title in heavy half-inch type, as follows:

'NEAR-EAST FLARE-UP AGAINST BRITAIN

'Three dead and 400 seized by the police was the midday tally from Egypt's "fighting front" yesterday as the people surged into the streets to battle against a "sell out to imperialism",' &c.

[2] *New York Times*, Cairo correspondent, 29 November 1946.

[3] Quoted by Nuqrashi to the Security Council, 11 August 1947 (*Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 73, p. 1871).

[4] *Daily Telegraph*, 9 December 1946. The Sudan Government later ignored an Egyptian request to publish the official text of a speech which the Governor-General made at al-'Ubaiyad [el-Obeid], one of the centres of support for Sudanese independence, on 22 December. The version published in the Cairo press, which the Sudan Government criticized as inaccurate, reported him as expressing his personal dislike of the 'nominal and symbolic' Egyptian sovereignty over the Sudan which the Bevin-Sidqi Protocol had conceded; and as saying: 'The Sudan Government will actively pursue a policy that will allow the Sudan to become independent when she is prepared for it', and that meanwhile Egyptian officials and propaganda in the Sudan would not be allowed to increase.

Egypt of the Sidky-Bevin conversations. . . . Continued silence by the Sudan Government in the face of one-sided interpretation, which aroused the feelings of a large section of the Sudanese people, would have resulted in serious unrest, if not worse.

. . . All the British Government are endeavouring to do is to establish that, when the time is ripe for the Sudanese to choose their future, they shall be free to say if they so desire that they choose the status of an independent state. Clearly this is only one of the choices open to them. For example, they may choose union with Egypt.

But it would be manifestly impossible for any British Government to acquiesce in an interpretation of a treaty with Egypt . . . which denies one of the fundamental rights of free people—a right which Egypt has never ceased to claim for herself. . . .[1]

Sidqi Pasha thereupon issued his communiqué denying that he had agreed in London to recognize the Sudan's right to secede from the Egyptian Crown, and resigned on 9 December, ostensibly on medical advice.

He had, indeed, done as much as any Egyptian could to reconcile the Egyptian and British theses; but the clash of British strategic and Egyptian emotional interests over the three vital issues—evacuation, joint defence, and the Sudan—had been too much for him.[2] It is significant of the Egyptian handling of these problems that their fundamental anxiety with regard to a self-governing Sudan—that it would be in a position to curtail Egypt's vital share of the Nile waters—was rarely ventilated in the press at this stage, but was camouflaged by dubious appeals to history and pseudo-anthropological arguments. Thus in March 1947 *as-Siyasa*, a Government organ, declared that

the people of the Nile Valley are all Hamites. As for language, everyone knows that the Sudanese speak Arabic. Those among them who do not know this language speak a primitive dialect which is not even considered among the human languages. As soon as they become educated they learn Arabic. . . The Sudanese have known a religion other than Islam only since the entry of Christian missionaries patronized by the imperialists . . .

and a correspondent in *al-Ahram* boldly asserted:

The non-Arab tribes are also of Egyptian origin. They are descended, in fact, from the ancient Egyptians, as Egyptologists have established. It is true that among the Sudanese there are some non-

[1] *The Times*, 10 December 1946.

[2] In his autobiography Sidqi asserted that the Bevin-Sidqi plan fully satisfied Egypt's demands for the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and for sovereignty over the Sudan. He attributed his failure to the party-political intrigues of his Egyptian opponents, to Soviet attempts to prevent any agreement, and to the opposition to a compromise solution shown by the British Conservative Party and by some officials of the Foreign Office and of the Sudan Government (*Mudhakarati*, pp. 126, 131).

Muslims; but it is no less true that these non-Muslims are for the most part idolaters, whose worship is that of their ancestors, the ancient Egyptians.[1]

A new government of Sa'dists and Liberals was formed by Nuqrashi Pasha, in whom the undoubted statesmanship of Sidqi Pasha was replaced by a somewhat inflexible stolidity. It was characteristic that in formally stating his Government's policy to the King he should have defined its intentions for the Sudan as 'self-government within a permanent union with Egypt' and should have reasserted to the Chamber of 16 December:

> In affirming the permanent unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown we but expressed the unanimous will and wishes of the inhabitants of this Valley. . . . When I state that the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown is a permanent unity, I hope that the whole world will understand that I am expresing the opinion of all Egyptians and all Sudanese. . . . There is therefore no ground to suspect that we wish to colonize the Sudan, as the desire to dominate cannot exist between brothers.[2]

The decision of the Sudan Government to appoint a Sudanese as Grand Qadi of the Sudan, in place of an Egyptian whose term of appointment was now coming to an end, caused further annoyance in Egypt, where it was contended that the appointment should be made by the King of Egypt on the recommendation of the *'ulama* of al-Azhar. Conversations in the first half of January 1947 between Nuqrashi Pasha and the British Ambassador on the Sudan question failed, in Bevin's words,

> to reach anything in the nature of an agreed interpretation, whether in the form of an exchange of letters, or of agreed statements to be made by the spokesmen of both sides, or even of agreed statements in which the difference separating the parties would be honestly declared in the hope that it could be composed later. . . . I have offered every guarantee for the safeguard of Egyptian interests in the Sudan—for no one realises more clearly than His Majesty's Govern-

[1] Reported by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 13 and 14 March 1947. The eminent authority Professor C. G. Seligman had, however, written: 'Chronological factors forbid us to believe that the Divine Kings of the [southern] Sudan are directly due to Egyptian influence; rather must we regard them as examples of an old and widespread Hamitic belief, although there has become attached to them through [ancient] Egyptian influence a number of specifically Egyptian rites' (*Egypt and Negro Africa, a Study in Divine Kingship* (London, Routledge, 1934), p. 60).

[2] A Cairo periodical that went so far as to admit the existence in the Sudan of an opposition to union with Egypt dismissed it as consisting of 'the comparatively small number of the members of the family of Sir 'Abd ur-Rahman al-Mahdi, the supporters of the idea of Mahdism, mostly in the western provinces, and a group of opportunists who hope to secure material advantages . . .', while the supporters of unity consisted of 'the enlightened classes opposed to reactionary imperialism, and the great number of the religious adherents of Saiyid 'Ali al-Mirghani' (quoted by special correspondent of *The Times* in the Sudan, 24 January 1947).

ment how vital, for instance, is Egyptian interest in the waters of the Nile—I have offered to sign the treaty of mutual assistance and the evacuation protocol . . . and to discuss the Sudan question *de novo* at a conference with ourselves, the Egyptians and the Sudanese. To all these proposals I have received either an uncompromising negative, or proposals which would involve my re-entering negotiations committed to the thesis that the right of the Sudanese to self-determination must be subject to permanent union between Egypt and the Sudan. . . .[1]

On 26 January Nuqrashi Pasha confirmed earlier reports that his Government would take 'the whole question of Egypt and the Sudan' to the United Nations; and on the following day Bevin, after giving the House of Commons his account of the negotiations, stated that the British Government would hold to the 1936 Treaty (implying the maintenance of its forces in the Canal Zone) until it could deal with 'a more fully representative Egyptian Government', with which negotiations would 'avoid being the subject of Egyptian party politics'.

EGYPT'S APPEAL TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Nuqrashi's Government spent the whole of February in vainly trying to broaden the basis of its popular support, and to decide whether to take Egypt's case to the Security Council, the General Assembly, or the International Court of Justice. Sidqi openly, and others privately, urged the resumption of direct negotiations with Britain, and it was confirmed on 24 February that the Syrian and Lebanese Governments had offered themselves as mediators; but on 2 March the Egyptian Government announced that they would dispense with the services of the British Military Mission at the end of the year, and on the following day proclaimed their decision to appeal to the Security Council. The evacuation of British troops from the Delta to the Canal Zone was completed on 31 March. Rumours were still current of attempts at mediation on the part of the United States and other Governments. On 27 January the Tass Agency had denied Egyptian press reports that Molotov had recently told the Egyptian Minister to Moscow that his Government were prepared to support Egypt on the Sudan question at the United Nations. A British Government source was reported to have said that on 24 March, in a review of the Anglo-Soviet alliance of 1942 during the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers, Stalin and Bevin had discussed Egypt's complaints against Britain among other Middle Eastern matters; Stalin had

[1] 27 January 1947, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 432, cols. 619–20.

appeared 'generally to appreciate Britain's position in the Middle East and Egypt' and had assured Bevin that Russia would remain neutral in the Anglo–Egyptian dispute. Tass later denied this report, but admitted that Anglo–Egyptian relations concerned those two countries only, 'and that the U.S.S.R., in conformity with its invariable policy of non-interference, did not intend to interfere in this matter'.[1]

On 16 May Bevin declared that there would be 'no attempt to appease the Egyptian Government at the expense of the Sudanese people. . . . Whether they take this to the Security Council or elsewhere, we cannot go any further [than] the offer we have made',[2] a statement that finally killed the hope of some new British concession. However, inter-party dissension,[3] the misgivings of Egyptian diplomats abroad, and calculations as to which State would hold the presidency of the Security Council from month to month, delayed the presentation of the Egyptian complaint, and it was not finally lodged until 11 July. It declared the presence of British troops on Egyptian territory without Egypt's free consent to be 'an offence to its dignity, a hindrance to its normal development, as well as an infringement of the fundamental principle of sovereign equality, and . . . therefore contrary to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, and to the resolution adopted unanimously by the General Assembly on 14 December 1946'.[4] Their 'unwarranted' military occupation of Egypt, it said, had enabled the British Government since 1899

to force upon Egypt their partnership in the administration of the Sudan and subsequently to assume exclusive authority therein. Taking advantage of this situation, they have adopted a policy designed to sever the Sudan from Egypt; discrediting Egypt and the Egyptians; creating discord between them and the Sudanese, and dissension among the Sudanese themselves; and instigating and encouraging artificial separatist movements. By this policy the Govern-

[1] *Soviet News*, 29 January 1947; *Bourse Égyptienne*, 2 May, reporting *al-Ahram*; *New York Times*, 8 May; *Soviet News*, 15 May. Soviet policy was at this time seeking to conciliate Britain as a means of separating her from the United States who, during 1946 (and especially with the enunciation of the 'Truman Doctrine' in March 1947), had emerged as the principal obstacle to Soviet expansionism.

[2] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 437, col. 1963.

[3] Just as it had done a year before, the Wafd made its participation in the delegation to Lake Success conditional on its having majority representation and the chairmanship, and the guarantee of a general election after the delegation's return to Egypt. Makram and his Kutla Party also could not be reconciled with Nuqrashi on this issue.

[4] This had recommended members to undertake 'the withdrawal without delay of their armed forces stationed in the territories of Members without their consent freely and publicly expressed in treaties or agreements consistent with the Charter and not contradicting international agreements' (*Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly during the second part of the First Session*, No. 41 (i).).

ment of the United Kingdom have endeavoured, and are endeavouring, to impair the unity of the Nile valley, notwithstanding that this unity is urged by the common interest and aspirations of its people. . . .[1]

The exordium of Nuqrashi's appeal to the Security Council on 5 August was well chosen;[2] but he was on weaker ground when he descended to particulars. After taking the Council through a rapid and, as Cadogan later pointed out, an inaccurate survey of Anglo–Egyptian relations since 1882, he went on to argue:

No one can seriously claim that the restrictions on Egyptian sovereignty embodied in the 1936 Treaty were intended to continue after the war. The war was the implicit term to these restrictions, and the 1936 Treaty has now outlived its purpose. . . . Today Egypt's relationship with the United Kingdom can no longer be charted by the provisions of the 1936 Treaty. It must be governed by international law and by the Charter of the United Nations. . . .

In this high forum, I shall not argue the juridical position of the 1936 Treaty, but my country has no hesitation in placing its reliance on the Charter.

He then gave the Council another historical disquisition on conditions in the Sudan after its conquest by Muhammad 'Ali in 1821:

Egyptian rule opened the Sudan to modern civilization. The chaos and anarchy which had existed were replaced by order and prosperity. . . . Such was the picture when the United Kingdom directed its covetous gaze to the valley of the Nile.

. . . A religious revolt, led by a chief who called himself El-Mahdi, supplied it with the needed opportunity. . . . When energetic action could have quelled the budding rebellion, the United Kingdom prevented such action by every conceivable means. It forced the disbandment of the Egyptian army in Egypt, the destruction of its ammunition, and the complete withdrawal of the Egyptians from the Sudan. . . .

After declaring that the British in the Sudan discriminated politically and economically against Egypt, and kept the country 'backward and divided',[3] he complained that

in recent years, a malevolent propaganda has pictured the unity of

[1] Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 59, pp. 1343–5.

[2] 'Against this historic background of Anglo-Egyptian relations, an alliance of this sort is but another form of subordination. It masks a relationship which is both unbalanced and undignified. It ties Egypt to British economy; it subjects Egypt to the vagaries of British diplomacy; and it imprisons Egypt within the orbit of British imperial power', &c.

[3] The sale of an *ad hoc* publication by the Sudan Government, entitled *The Sudan: a Record of Progress, 1898–1947*, had just been banned in Egypt because it gave a 'picture of the Sudan different from that in the minds of the Egyptian public' (*The Times*, Cairo correspondent, 5 August 1947).

the Nile valley as a concept of 'Egyptian imperialism'—as if it were imperialistic for us to desire union with our fellow countrymen, for us to seek to preserve the bonds which nature and history have forged for linking the Sudan with other parts of Egypt as one and the same entity. . . .[1]

For Britain Sir Alexander Cadogan pointed out that the 1936 Treaty could legally be revised before its expiry in 1956 only by the consent of both parties. The Egyptian argument that the removal of the Axis threat to peace had altered the circumstances of the Treaty was an invocation of the *rebus sic stantibus*[2] doctrine which would find no support in any international tribunal. As for the assertion that the presence of British troops in Egypt was contrary to the United Nations Charter, the wording of the resolution of 14 December 1946 which Egypt had invoked had made an exception for the presence of armed forces by consent 'freely and publicly expressed in treaties . . . consistent with the Charter'. He demonstrated by a series of quotations that the Treaty had in 1936 been almost unanimously welcomed in Egypt; and the rule *pacta sunt servanda* was a primary principle of international law. His Government had met 'in the most sympathetic manner' the Egyptian request for a revision of the Treaty and had offered to withdraw the British forces from Egypt on reasonable conditions; the Sidqi-Bevin agreement had failed to come into force 'for only one reason, namely, that Egypt was not prepared to accord in the future to the Sudanese people the right of self-determination which it had claimed for Arabs elsewhere. . . .'[3]

When the Council continued its hearing of the question on the 11th, Cadogan had expected to speak first in reply to Nuqrashi's 'long historical disquisition' which time had prevented him from answering at the first meeting; but the Syrian President of the Council called on Nuqrashi Pasha, who assailed Cadogan's speech as

an unrestrained apology for nineteenth-century imperialism. . . . All roads lead back . . . to the unwarranted and illegal use of force by which the United Kingdom attained its foothold in Egypt. Each step is tainted with the original vice. . . . Surely it must be plain that the imperialist legend must come to an end . . .?

He accused Britain of using the presence of her troops to bring

[1] Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 70, pp. 1745–67.

[2] This is the doctrine that the validity of a treaty is confined to the period during which the circumstances obtain which existed at the time of its signature. The contrary, and generally accepted, principle that treaties must be observed during the period for which they were made is summed up in the formula *pacta sunt servanda*.

[3] Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 70, pp. 1767–84.

about the dismissal of Egyptian Cabinets 'in 1940, in 1942, and again in 1945';[1] but was silent when Cadogan offered to produce documents in support of the first two British actions. He again declared that Britain had kept the Sudanese backward. He asserted: 'We consider the relations between the peoples inhabiting the two parts of the Nile Valley an internal, a domestic matter', and spoke of common traditions 'coming down through hundreds of years.'[2]

In reply, Cadogan defended Britain's intervention in Egypt in 1882: it had been the result of 'conditions of misrule and anarchy' affecting 'the large numbers of Europeans and Christians in Egypt and . . . the international liabilities of the Egyptian Government'; the British authorities, 'inspired by ideas of constructive imperialism which it is now the fashion to decry', had 'found before them an immense task which they felt it their duty to perform'. As for the Sudan, Muhammad 'Ali's invasion had established Egyptian rule south of the great Nile bend between latitudes 18° and 20° north for the first time in history.[3] He then proceeded to deal with Nuqrashi's 'historical disquisition':

> Mohammed Ali and his successors ruled the Sudan for sixty years. The oppressive nature of that rule and of the slave trade which accompanied it is attested by scores of European travellers and officials. The success of the Mahdi's revolt was due in part to the hatred felt by the Sudanese for Egyptian misrule and in part to the financial and administrative chaos into which Egypt itself had fallen. . . .
>
> The political unity of the Nile valley is a myth. . . . A very considerable part of the Nile basin lies neither in Egypt nor in the Sudan, but in Ethiopia, Uganda, and the Belgian Congo. What is more, these latter countries provide almost all the Nile's water: of the total Nile discharge, over 80 per cent comes from Ethiopia alone. . . . If it be asserted that the Sudan must be joined politically to Egypt because it is in a position to interfere with Egypt's water supply, the same holds good for the other three countries that I have just mentioned. . . .[4]

Taking up Nuqrashi Pasha's complaint that relatively few Egyptians had been recruited into the Sudan administration during the Condominium, he remarked that

[1] *Sic*; but the last date seems to refer to Nuqrashi's own fall from power in February 1946, for which see above, p. 85.

[2] ibid. No. 73, pp. 1858–75.

[3] For this fact, of which Egyptians seemed to be ignorant, see *Survey*, 1925, vol. I, pp. 235–6.

[4] Egyptian nationalist journalist-politicians, such as the brothers Fikri and Fu'ad Abaza, had indeed advocated the creation of a political Nile Union, which would include, besides Egypt and the Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda and all other countries whose life was associated with the Nile.

young Egyptians of the requisite educational and other qualifications were reluctant to spend their lives in the loneliness and unpleasant climatic conditions of the Sudan. In spite of this, some progress was made in the first and second decades of the century in enlisting Egyptians for the Sudan service, but the events which culminated in the assassination of the Governor-General in 1924[1] caused an understandable setback . . . which, it was hoped, would be remedied by article 11 of the Treaty of 1936. . . . Even this provision, however, has failed to attract applications from Egyptians endowed with sufficient qualifications for service in the Sudan.[2] To the reluctance to face discomfort . . . has been added a strange conceit that Egyptians have a right to immediate appointment to senior posts over the heads of serving officials. . . .

In all, 115 out of 713 posts in the first division are now held by Sudanese. I feel confident that Nokrashy Pasha would not for a moment maintain that senior Sudan officials, whether Sudanese or British, who started at the bottom, and had been promoted on their merits, should now make way for Egyptians who have preferred to make their careers in Egypt.

He added the cutting observation that Nuqrashi's recent claim that the post of Grand Qadi of the Sudan should continue to be held by an Egyptian 'contrasts strangely' with his assertion that Egyptians and Sudanese were 'one and indivisible, one people and one race'.

Egypt's policy has not been to influence the Sudan Government, but to ignore it. Egypt has sought to set up in the Sudan what are in effect branches of its own departments instead of proceeding by co-operation with the Sudan Government departments; it has offered scholarships at Egyptian universities to students of the Gordon Memorial College without any information to the College authorities, thus tending to disrupt the Government's plan for the recruitment of Sudanese to the higher branches of the civil service; and it has discussed projects and initiated arrangements for works to be carried out in the Sudan without any notification to the Governor-General.

He pointed out that in the last eighteen months the Egyptian press had indulged in a 'campaign of abuse' and 'insult directed not only at the [Sudan] Government and the Governor-General in person', but also at Saiyid 'Abd ur-Rahman al-Mahdi, 'a Sudanese personality venerated by a large portion of the population'; an Egyptian Minister had himself published an article 'accusing the Sudan Government of deliberately closing its eyes to the introduction of harmful narcotics amongst the primitive peoples of the south'. The Sudan Government had thus been

[1] See above, p. 12.

[2] But some Sudan Government officials are reliably reported to have admitted that they discouraged Egyptians from joining the Sudan service.

forced to ban 'a few of the more violent Egyptian papers', and to prevent the appearance (to defend the leader of the pro-Egyptian party charged with libelling the police and administrative officials) of Egyptian lawyers who were not members of the Sudan bar 'and one of them was a notorious political agitator'.[1] In conclusion, repeating that Britain was holding to the 1936 Treaty only because Egypt had rejected the Bevin-Sidqi draft on account of the Sudan Protocol, Cadogan said:

> Nokrashy Pasha replies that the Security Council must not be 'stimied by the legal rights of the parties'. The Council must act in the same way, 'treaty or no treaty'. It must put aside treaty rights whenever the party to a given treaty says that it dislikes its obligations enough to be ready to allow its people to create a menace to the peace rather than accept them. Egyptian politicians have been stirring up feeling against the Treaty with the deliberate intention of gaining their wishes. It is they who are creating the threat to the peace if there is any.[2]

The debate being now thrown open to general discussion, the representative of Communist Poland expressed the view that the Council could not be bound by the legal aspect of the question solely: a treaty which had 'outlived its purpose and exhausted its objectives' stood in the way of 'the justified national aspiration' and sovereignty of a member State. Poland would support Egypt's demand for the 'immediate, complete, and unconditional' withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and the Sudan, but could suggest no solution at the present moment for the problem of the 'development of self-government and free political institutions' which should be the United Nations' primary objective in the Sudan. Gromyko expressed views identical with those of the Soviet Union's Polish satellite. The Brazilian delegate submitted a draft resolution on 20 August, recommending the two parties 'to resume direct negotiations and, should such negotiations fail, to seek a solution of the dispute by other peaceful means of their own choice'. The Chinese (Nationalist) delegate proposed to add to its preamble a paragraph noting that Britain had already partially withdrawn her troops from Egypt and was ready to negotiate on the completion of the evacuation; and he added: 'I cannot see how this Council can be a party to any arrangement which would deprive the Sudanese people of this right of self-determination which is the

[1] This was Ahmad Husain, leader of the extremist Misr al-Fatah Party, whom successive Egyptian Governments had kept in internment for a large part of the war, and whom the Wafd Government was briefly to imprison in 1951, for incitement to revolution.

[2] 13 August 1947, Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 75, pp. 1945–56.

foundation of the Charter of the United Nations.' The United States, French, and Belgian delegates supported the Brazilian proposal, the last-named suggesting that a requirement expressed by Cadogan should be met by referring the question of the 1936 Treaty's validity to the International Court.

Nuqrashi, however, rejected the Brazilian resolution as an 'evasion' of the Council's 'primary responsibility': Egypt could not admit Britain's claim to any special consideration based on the 'initial vice' of her 'invasion' in 1882. He likewise rejected an Australian amendment to provide for consultation with the Sudanese in so far as their future was affected: the Egyptian Government would 'work out the future of the Sudan in consultation, not with the British, not with the Sudanese while they are hampered by the British occupation, but with the Sudanese acting of their own free will. The United Kingdom has no place in the matter, and we shall not discuss it with that country.' His rhetorical assertion, 'We shall not forsake the Sudanese. We shall do everything in our power to protect them from a foreign, alien imperialism, from losing their identity in a vast conglomeration of subject peoples. . . . We shall not barter away the future of the Sudanese people', did nothing to remove the unfavourable impression on the Council that (as Cadogan emphasized) 'the Sudan's full right of self-determination . . . is not, apparently, admitted by the Egyptian Government.' France's relations with Egypt had recently been strained by the latter's sending an auxiliary cruiser to Tunisia, without French authorization, with grain to relieve a famine, and by her giving sanctuary to the Moroccan Muhammad 'Abd ul-Karim [Abdel Krim] who had escaped to Egyptian soil from the ship which was taking him to France after more than twenty years' exile. The French delegate accordingly compared Nuqrashi's repudiation of the 1936 Treaty with the repudiations practised by the Nazis before the war: 'Every Hitlerite aggression was preceded by a declaration announcing that the treaty signed a few years or a few months before . . . was now useless, an anachronism, and contrary to the trend of historic development.' To this Nuqrashi Pasha could reply only with more rhetoric curiously reminiscent of the pre-war speeches of the Axis leaders:

> No legal instrument will hold back the tide of history. Already, in the brief span of eleven years, the Treaty of 1936 has lost its visibility. Events have robbed it of any effective voice. It stalks today as a phantom; it persists only as a relic of bygone buccaneer days, which the world is trying to forget. . . .

When the Brazilian resolution was put to the vote, it unex-

pectedly fell one short of the necessary seven supporters: Poland voted against, and those abstaining (the U.S.S.R., the United Kingdom, and Syria) were joined by Colombia, whose delegate had considered the Brazilian resolution too broad and vague and had announced his intention to submit a new proposal[1] after a vote had been taken. Only five supporters were forthcoming for this Colombian proposal, however; only four for an Australian amendment expressing confidence that the renewal of negotiations would result in an early evacuation 'and also in the settlement of the other issues in dispute'; and only two for a Chinese resolution to which Cadogan objected because it seemed to give evacuation priority over the other questions. There being no other proposal before it, the Council adjourned on 10 September leaving the Egyptian question unsolved on its agenda.

The rejection of the Egyptian Government's basic claim that its signature to an agreement should be binding only *rebus sic stantibus* came as a shock to the Egyptian public, and the reaction in some quarters was highly irresponsible. The Brazilian Legation in Cairo received a letter from 'The Egyptian Terrorist Society' demanding payment of £5 million as reparation for Brazil's 'impertinence' in moving her resolution at the Security Council, and on the night of 28–9 August two small bombs were exploded outside the Legation, but without doing any damage. Chinese and Belgian residents also received threatening letters; and, while the Soviet Union was hailed as Egypt's friend, the Cairo correspondent of *The Times* reported on 5 November 1947 that

> One widely circulated newspaper has said that the British are not unlikely to stage outrages against foreigners here in order to justify a reoccupation of the Egyptian cities. Another publication . . . has accused them of having plotted the communal massacres in India. . . . Forged documents have been published in an attempt to discredit the British authorities here. . . .[2] When cholera broke out near Cairo last month, several leading papers immediately attributed its origin to the British camps in the Canal Zone, although not a single case had occurred there. . . .

[1] It called on the two parties to resume direct negotiations with a view (*a*) to complete at the earliest possible date the evacuation of all British military, naval, and air forces from Egyptian territory, mutual assistance being provided in order to safeguard in time of war or imminent threat of war the liberty and security of navigation of the Suez Canal; and (*b*) to terminate the joint administration of the Sudan with due regard to the principle of self-determination of peoples and their right to self-government.

[2] Investigations in 1951 indicated the existence of a gang which had for some years apparently been producing forged documents, purporting to be foreign diplomatic and military reports and plans, and publishing them for the purpose of damaging Anglo–Egyptian relations of discrediting Egyptian politicians; see *The Times*, Cairo correspondent, 9 and 11 June 1951.

CHAPTER IX

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SUDAN, 1947–8

IT will be recalled that the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan, established in 1944, had been consistently boycotted by the pro-Egyptian parties, but welcomed by the Independence Front which hoped to achieve self-government by collaboration with the present British-controlled Sudan Government. The Independence Front, however, regarded the Advisory Council as only a stepping-stone towards their goal. The Governor-General, acceding to their requests, had set up in 1946 an administration conference with a large Sudanese majority to consider what further constitutional progress was desirable, and on 29 July 1947, only a week before the Egyptian complaint against Britain came before the Security Council, Sir Robert Howe[1] endorsed this conference's recommendations that the Advisory Council should be superseded by a Legislative Assembly representative of the whole country (including the south, still largely pagan and non-Arabic-speaking) and having a large elected majority; from this Assembly six Sudanese Under-Secretaries should be appointed to serve on the Governor-General's Executive Council, which would consist in all of twelve members, the other six being the Civil, Legal, and Financial Secretaries, the Commander-in-Chief, and two nominees of the Governor-General. These recommendations were duly presented to the British and Egyptian Governments. The former accepted them, but the latter 'belatedly', on 25 November, advanced the following counter-proposals: Egypt should be represented on the Executive Council; full electoral rights should be given immediately to the whole population, instead of the limited franchise which had been recommended as more suited to a population which in many parts of the country was still largely illiterate; the wide powers reserved to the Governor-General should be drastically curtailed, and those of the Legislative Assembly extended, although a right of veto should be

[1] Sir Hubert Huddleston had retired on 15 March 1947 on account of his age and prolonged service, and the Egyptian Government had accepted as his successor the British Government's nomination of Sir Robert Howe, who had been for the past two years the Foreign Secretary's principal adviser on Middle Eastern affairs.

reserved for the Egyptian Government.[1] *The Times* commented on 9 January 1948:

These Egyptian proposals seem to represent an attempt to outbid Britain for the support of those Sudanese who are eager to obtain a share of immediate political power, but it is by no means certain that they are conceived in the best interests of the country as a whole; until the tribal areas in the south gain some experience of representative institutions, the men who must speak for them cannot be properly chosen by a purely electoral system and may be best selected by impartial officials. Even so, the suggestions for giving increased power to the proposed legislative assembly deserve examination, provided that the members of the assembly are in fact representative of the country as a whole and not merely of the urban educated classes. Both Britain and the Sudan have to be convinced that Egypt is in earnest in the desire to associate the Sudanese people as a whole with the responsibility of administration.

In January 1948 the British Government proposed to the Egyptian Government the appointment of British and Egyptian non-official authorities on constitutional practice to study the Sudan Government's proposals in consultation with that Government's technical experts, taking into consideration also the opinion of representative Sudanese. The Egyptian press, however, greeted the publication of this proposal with such headlines as 'Plot to Establish Dictatorship in the Sudan', and on 1 March the Egyptian Cabinet unanimously rejected it.[2] A leading article in *The Times* of 4 March commented that:

Egypt has only herself to blame if her proposed emendations are regarded less as a serious contribution to the political progress of the Sudan than as a temporizing device to hinder the Sudanese people from acquiring such influence over their country's affairs as might enable them, if they so desire, to secure their independence of Egypt as well as of Britain. . . . At the root of the criticisms lies the Egyptian fear that the Sudan Government's proposals may perpetuate British control over the Sudan and still further weaken Egyptian influence.

On 9 March it was reported that the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan, having debated the draft ordinance for a Legislative Assembly and an Executive Council, had unanimously[3] recommended that the Government should put the

[1] Text of Egyptian Note in *Cahiers de l'Orient Contemporain*, 1er trimestre 1948, pp. 9–11. The Governor-General's reserved powers were described by *The Times* (4 March 1948) as 'a familiar balancing factor in the transition from colonial rule to self-government'; *al-Ahram*, on the other hand, published a satirical article entitled 'His Majesty Robert Howe I, King of the Northern Sudan, the Southern Sudan, and the Bahr ul-Ghazal'.

[2] Text of Egyptian Note in *Cahiers de l'Orient Contemporain*, 1er trimestre 1948.

[3] While most of the members of the Advisory Council belonged to the Independence Front, on account of the boycott by the pro-Egyptian parties, it was stated

legislation into effect as soon as possible. A correspondent in *La Bourse Égyptienne* commented on the indifference, 'feigned or real', which the members of the Council showed for the principles of the Condominium, and asked his Egyptian readers the pertinent question: 'Whatever may be the desire for independence or autonomy expressed by a certain category of Sudanese, how could it have been foreseen that a Sudanese notable, taking part in the meeting of the Advisory Council, should have wished in the debate to class Egyptians with mere foreigners?'[1]

Early in May the Egyptian Government received new proposals from the British Government which they found satisfactory, and on 10 May an Anglo–Egyptian committee was set up, under the headship of the Egyptian Foreign Minister (Ahmad Muhammad Pasha Khashaba) and the British Ambassador, to examine the question of constitutional reform in the Sudan. In three weeks they reached agreement on the following points:

(1) An Anglo–Egyptian–Sudanese committee to supervise the progress of the Sudanese towards self-government.

(2) An Anglo–Egyptian committee to supervise the elections to the Legislative Assembly.

(3) The nomination to the Executive Council of two Egyptians from among the Egyptian officials serving in the Sudan.

(4) The attendance of the Senior Staff Officer of the Egyptian forces in the Sudan at all meetings of the Executive Council at which defence matters were being discussed.

(5) The continuance of the present administrative system for three years, subject to renewal.[2]

Khashaba Pasha submitted this draft agreement to the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Egyptian Senate on 4 June, explaining somewhat apologetically that the Government had agreed to his taking part in the conversations only in order to give effect to the expressed wish of the Sudanese to have a practical share in the administration of their country; the conversations had not dealt with any of the fundamentals of the Sudan problem. The Foreign Affairs Commission did not accept this submission,

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that at least three of Saiyid 'Ali al-Mirghani's supporters were members of the Council and voted for the reforms ('A Vital Month in the Sudan', *African World*, April 1948, p. 25).

[1] Charles Atallah, *Bourse Égyptienne*, 8 April 1948.

[2] Statement by the British Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 14 June 1948 (H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 452, cols. 19–21); *The Times*, Cairo correspondent, 7 June.

The Egyptian Government had asked for 'representation on the Executive Council on a basis of parity with the British, so that when the transitional period had elapsed the Sudanese would be in a position to assume full control of their own affairs under the common Egyptian Crown and the unity of the Nile Valley' (text in *Bourse Égyptienne*, 6 July 1948).

however, but 'raised numerous objections of principle and detail'. The discussion 'sometimes attained a certain violence', and at length the Commission unanimously rejected the proposed plan for constitutional reform, stating that it would have made Egypt a laughing-stock since it was tantamount to a continuation of the Condominium and ignored the principle 'unanimously approved' by Egyptians—the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown.[1]

On 14 June the British Government announced that despite this Egyptian rejection 'they could no longer stand in the way of the Governor-General doing as he thinks fit' regarding the promulgation of the Ordinance on the constitutional reforms;[2] and the Ordinance was duly promulgated five days later, the Egyptian Prime Minister having meanwhile obtained from the Senate a delay of three weeks before the Foreign Affairs Commission's report was considered.

The Ordinance made the following conditions:

(1) A Legislative Assembly of 65 elected members, not more than 10 nominated members, and a number of ex-officio members, i.e. members of the Executive Council and Under-Secretaries not already members of the Assembly. Of the 65 elected members, 10 would be directly elected in Khartoum, Omdurman, and other towns; 42 would be chosen by indirect election in the less advanced parts of the Northern Sudan; and 13 would be elected by the Provincial Councils of the three southern provinces.

(2) A Leader, elected by the Assembly, would become in effect Prime Minister. His views would be taken into consideration by the Governor-General in appointing other Sudanese Ministers and not more than twelve Sudanese Under-Secretaries.

(3) The Executive Council would have between 12 and 18 members not less than half of them Sudanese, including:

(*a*) The Leader of the Assembly, and other Ministers and Under-Secretaries.

(*b*) Not more than four ex-officio members appointed by the Governor-General from the Civil, Financial, and Legal Secretaries and the Commander-in-Chief.

(*c*) Not more than three persons appointed by the Governor-General at his discretion.

[1] ibid. 5 June 1948. *Le Monde* commented on the 24th: 'This explains why the United Nations in effect nonsuited Egypt when she ventured to submit her complaint to them'. Khashaba Pasha tendered his resignation, but was persuaded to withdraw it.

[2] H C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 452, cols. 19–21.

(4) The following extensive powers were retained by the Governor-General:

(*a*) To dismiss Ministers or Under-Secretaries and appoint others in their place.

(*b*) To veto decisions of the Executive Council, 'should it be necessary . . . for the good government of the Sudan'.

(*c*) To dissolve the Assembly and direct fresh elections to be held.

(*d*) To veto the Assembly's choice of Speaker.

(*e*) To legislate by Ordinance, if a Bill prepared by the Executive Council were rejected by the Assembly.

(*f*) To define what were reserved matters on which the Assembly might not legislate—viz., the Constitution, the Condominium, foreign relations, and Sudanese nationality.

(*g*) To define what were special matters on which the Assembly might not legislate without the consent of the Executive Council—viz., defence, currency, and the status of religious or racial minorities.[1]

The (British) Clerk of the Assembly commented,

The aim of the framers of this constitution was to provide for the gradual development, within the framework of the Anglo–Egyptian Agreement, of all the necessary political machinery of democratic self-government without the necessity for periodic revision of the constitution, with all the concomitant upheavals, and probable disagreement between the Co-domi, which such revision would inevitably entail. It was realized that amendments and additions in the light of experience would be inevitable, but it was hoped that these could be effected piecemeal as and when the need for them arose, without the necessity of throwing the whole thing into the melting pot every few years, and that with these amendments the existing Ordinance would carry the country up to, but not through, the final stage when the Condominium would come to an end and their future status would be decided by the Sudanese themselves. . . .

The inclusion in the Assembly of representatives of the pagan Southern Provinces, so different in race, language, religion and way of life from the Moslem Northern Provinces, and more backward in development, marked a bold step forward in the political unification of the country.[2]

The Egyptian press was now reduced to denouncing the Sudan Government's plan to extend the participation of Sudanese in the Government as an 'imperialistic scheme',[3] and the pro-

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, 28 June 1948; *Oriente Moderno*, April–June 1948, pp. 98–100.

[2] M. F. A. Keen, *An Account of the Constitution of the Sudan* (Khartoum, McCorquodale [1951], pp. 22–3.

[3] *Egyptian Gazette*, 20 August 1948, quoting *Sawt ul-Umma*.

Egyptian parties in the Sudan ordered their followers to boycott the elections for the Legislative Assembly. *al-Ahram*, however, was sceptical about the optimistic prophecies that the boycott campaign would prevent the elections from taking place, and remarked that arguments that elections held in such circumstances would be invalid would have no practical value.[1] Polling day on 15 November 1948 was accompanied by disturbances organized by the pro-Egyptian parties, as a result of which ten people were killed and more than 100 injured.[2] In the ten urban constituencies where polling was by direct election it was estimated that only 18 per cent of the electorate had voted, and most of the seats were won by members of the Independence Front; but how far this low poll was due to the boycott by the pro-Egyptian parties, and how far to the general political immaturity of a large part of the electorate, is not clear since, as Ernest Bevin was afterwards to point out, in the Egyptian general election of 1950 'only some 15 per cent of the Cairo electorate was understood to have used its vote'. Whereas the Egyptian Government claimed two years later that the most important and numerous religious sects in the Sudan, the elections for the Graduates' Congress, and the municipal elections all supported the 'unity of the Nile Valley', the British Government declared that 'the Graduates' Congress did not even represent the majority of the Sudanese intelligentsia, and in recent years . . . had come under the domination of an extremist clique which represented only a very small proportion of the Sudanese people'; the municipal elections were not decisive since 'the Unionists were in the minority in Khartoum and had a majority of only one in Omdurman'; and they were led to believe 'that those Sudanese who professed to favour union with Egypt were not more than about one-fifth of the total population of the country'.[3] It did not follow, however, that the remaining four-

[1] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 28 October 1948.

[2] When officials of the pro-Egyptian parties were charged with fomenting these disorders, seven Egyptian lawyers, including the impetuous Makram, wished to undertake their legal defence in Khartoum but were excluded by the Sudan Government on the grounds that members of the Sudan Bar were perfectly qualified to act for the accused. There was great press indignation in Egypt when the seven lawyers, trying to enter the Sudan by air without permits, were compelled to land at Wadi Halfa and sent back to Cairo.

[3] Egypt No. 2 (1951). Cmd. 8419, pp. 17, 20–1. The 'extremist clique' referred to above was the Ashiqqa Party, nominally led by a Sudanese who had left school-teaching for active politics because his claim for preferential treatment in the matter of official accommodation had been refused (Muhammad Hasanain Haikal, in *Akhir Sa'a*, quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 28 November 1951); but the party was in fact financed and directed from Cairo. According to an Egyptian writer, it claimed to represent 'about 88 per cent' of the Sudanese population (Rashid al-Barawi, 'Egypt and the Sudan', *India Quarterly*, October–December 1951, vol. 7, p. 361).

fifths would be of one mind in expressing their wishes, and the majority of these unlettered villagers and tribesmen would, unless influenced, fall into the 'don't know' category beloved of the professional samplers of 'public opinion'.

CHAPTER X

THE BREAKDOWN OF NEGOTIATIONS, 1947–51

THE PALESTINE WAR, 1948

ALREADY before the Security Council had ended its inconclusive debate on the Egyptian complaint against Britain, the report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine had been published on 1 September 1947. This report, which recommended a partition of Palestine along lines as impracticable as they were advantageous to the proposed Jewish State, went to the General Assembly of the United Nations later in the month; and already the Political Committee of the Arab League, meeting at Sawfar (Lebanon) from 16 to 19 September, had determined to resist the implementation of the Committee's recommendations by all practical and offensive means. The Egyptian senator Amin Yusuf Bey, a former Minister to Washington who claimed to have 'sincerely and often successfully worked for close understanding between Egypt and Britain',[1] now wrote to *The Times* that if Anglo–Egyptian friendship was to be preserved and a satisfactory common policy reached,

> the only sure way is quick action, aimed at solving both the Egyptian and Palestine problems, keeping in sight the fundamental fact that the Arabs must be kept on the side of Britain. First and foremost this entails making a courageous stand against Jewish excesses and exorbitant demands, since Britain's failure to grapple fully with these has caused her to lose face among many of her old Arab friends.

He therefore urged the British Government 'to outline a policy in Palestine which will convince the Arabs that Britain is still their friend', with the added remark that 'partition is contrary even to the interests of the Jews themselves'; British troops should 'immediately' be withdrawn from the Canal Zone, 'thus following a line similar to that now being adopted in Burma'; and 'it should be realized that at least 90 per cent of the Sudanese favour the union between Egypt and the Sudan'. He concluded by warning Britain that

> it is only due to the wise policy of the present Egyptian Government that Egyptian and Arab extremists have so far been prevented from making trouble. My great fear is that unless something is done

[1] He was the author of *Independent Egypt* (London, Murray, 1940).

quickly, it will be impossible to check the outbreak. . . . Should, unhappily, the Arabs be forced to take up arms, the resulting war would prove interminable. . . .[1]

Since Nuqrashi continued to repeat that the 'immediate and unconditional evacuation' of British troops was the basis of his Government's policy, there was no possibility of an improvement in Anglo–Egyptian relations according to the Cairo correspondent of *The Times* on 10 March 1948. Having commented on 'the Egyptian pretence that the "Russian bogy" is a British and American invention designed to scare the Middle East into acceptance of British domination', he remarked that, while Egyptians demanded a show of British good will,

> Egypt continues to treat every British approach with unwarranted suspicion. If there is now a bogy in Egypt it is a locally created bogy of British imperialistic designs in the Middle East, and until it is exorcised by those who have raised it, Anglo–Egyptian political relations seem doomed to drag along in profitless disharmony.

As has already been said above,[2] British efforts to obtain the Egyptian Government's co-operation in guiding the Sudan's early steps in constitutional government broke down in the summer of 1948 because they did not accept as their basis the 'unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown'.

Meanwhile, the British Government had been doing their utmost, both at the United Nations and in the last months of the Palestine Mandate, to secure justice for the Arab case as they saw it, and in so doing had not only incurred the odium of the Zionists, but had also caused a temporary estrangement in Anglo–American relations. The Government of the Arab States led by Egypt, however, had created a Frankenstein monster for themselves in fostering the heady and uncritical nationalism of their urban masses to such an extent that they were unable, when faced with the hard fact, to admit their failure to destroy the infant State of Israel by armed force. They were thus led into reopening hostilities after the expiry of the first truce in Palestine (8 July 1948), with disastrous consequences to themselves.[3] In

[1] *The Times*, 21 November 1947. [2] pp. 110–12.

[3] The Egyptian Secretary-General of the Arab League, 'Abd ur-Rahman 'Azzam, told the United Nations Mediator after a fortnight's fighting that 'the strategic and technical position of the Arab forces was particularly favourable . . . so that they would have no great difficulty in bringing about a military decision to their advantage in a very short time' (Count Folke Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1951), p. 34). The Cairo correspondent of *The Times* afterwards wrote that during this time 'the Arabic press painted glowing, and largely fictitious, pictures of the military situation and, misled by mendacious official *communiqués*, the public expected early and complete victory. . . . The Arab leaders . . . knew . . . that their munition stocks were low and replacements unprocurable, that the Lebanese and Syrian armies had shown grave deficiencies,

this second phase of the Palestine war the acute disagreement between Britain's protégé, King 'Abdullah of Jordan, and other members of the Arab League, led by Egypt, could no longer be concealed; and it was thus a simple step for Egyptian public opinion to blame Britain for 'Abdullah's inactivity when, in two campaigns in October and December 1948, the Israelis drove the Egyptian forces in some disorder from almost the whole of the territory in south Palestine which they had overrun, without meeting with opposition, in the opening days of the war. The Egyptian Government did not invoke the 1936 Anglo–Egyptian Treaty when their frontier was crossed by the victorious Israelis.

This defeat at the hands of Israel was the end of Nuqrashi Pasha; for the discrediting of his Government and the general war-fever of the past six months had evidently encouraged the leader of the extremist and numerous Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun), Hasan al-Banna, to believe that he might now make a bid for political power independently of the main parties. In October and November, when the popular excitement of the Palestine war was waning, the authorities had begun to repress the activities of this and other extremist organizations, who for some time had been conducting a pogrom against real or suspected Jews and other foreigners, and had ordered the dissolution of the Ikhwan on 8 December, after the Chief of Police had been killed by a student of Cairo University. The Ikhwan retaliated by organizing the shooting of the Prime Minister himself on 28 December; and finally on 13 February 1949 Hasan al-Banna was shot dead 'by persons unknown'.[1]

Nuqrashi Pasha was succeeded as Prime Minister and leader of the Sa'dist Party by Ibrahim 'Abd ul-Hadi, who until this change had been Chief of the Royal Cabinet. The extremity of Egypt's military situation compelled the new Government to accept a cease-fire with Israel on 7 January 1949 and to enter into negotiations for an armistice. The Cairo correspondent of *The Times* reported on 25 January:

> The Egyptian desire for settlement of Anglo–Egyptian differences is now growingly apparent. . . . The Palestine futility is restoring the innate sanity of the Egyptian people where Britain is concerned. . . . The extremists have been listened to in the past, and Egypt has paid heavily in men and money. A revulsion is starting, and the wind is setting fair for settlement. The remaining obstacles are what they

that Saudi Arabian and Yemeni aid other than vocal had been negligible. . . . But the Arab public, having had this concealed from them, clamoured for a resumption of hostilities' (*The Times*, 11 February 1949).

[1] See Heyworth-Dunne, pp. 74–6.

have long been. On the Egyptian side much of the press clings Bourbon-like to the thesis that the British are trying to trick the Egyptians in their present hour of need, in order to further imperialistic interests.

. . . The last thing the Communists want is a stable, prosperous Egypt in friendly relations with the west, and they are doing all they can to prevent it, and, in particular, are playing on extreme nationalist sentiment. . . .

It was a sign of this better atmosphere that in the early months of 1949 the Egyptian Government and Parliament approved Egypt's participation in the building of a dam and hydro-electric power station at Owen Falls in Uganda, the outflow of the Nile from Lake Victoria, as part of a twenty-five-year scheme for the regulation of the water of the White Nile,[1] and that a new agreement was reached with the Suez Canal Company which brought tangible benefits to Egypt but mitigated some of the rigours of the Egyptian law dictating the proportion of Egyptians who must be employed in each category of employees.[2]

Meanwhile, although the Egyptian press continued to insist that the Egyptian army's exploits in the Palestine war had been a great victory, the lesson that the Government drew from the reality of their defeat was that there should be a large increase in expenditure on the armed forces, bringing it up to £52 million in a total budget of £193 million for the following year. The veteran Sidqi Pasha, however, criticized this policy in a letter to *al-Ahram* in which he wrote:

A clear and well-defined foreign policy would protect us better than armoured cars, tanks, and heavy and light artillery, which could not compete with what our enemy [Israel] can equip herself with, thanks to her science and wealth. . . . The aim of the Atlantic Pact is the peace and well-being of humanity, without attachment to any idea of nationalism. . . . We ought to think of putting ourselves in touch with the Powers whose interests coincide with ours, and who can help us in the realization of our aspirations. . . .[3]

This bold expression of opinion brought upon him a storm of criticism, the President of the Chamber (an influential member of the Sa'dist Party and therefore presumably representing Government views) declaring that 'the Egyptian forces have shown that they are able to fill any vacuum left behind by the departure of British troops from Egypt'.[4] The British Chief of

[1] For details see below, Appendix IV.
[2] For details see below, Appendix V.
[3] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 28 May 1949.
[4] *al-Assas*, quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 30 May 1949. The London special correspondent of *al-Balagh* afterwards ingeniously pointed out that the replacement of

Imperial General Staff (Field-Marshal Sir William Slim), who had visited Egypt in March 'as the result of an Egyptian approach', and Sir William Strang (Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs) who followed him, sought to dispel this idea; but the Egyptian Government 'lacked sufficient support to commit themselves'[1]; and the talks were suspended at the onset of an Egyptian general election, which was due in January 1950. While the election campaign was under way, the British Secretary of State for War (Emanuel Shinwell), visited the British forces in the Canal Zone. Asked whether measures then being taken to improve accommodation would be affected by a decision to evacuate the Zone, he replied that the question 'had not yet arisen'. The Egyptian press and politicians seized on distorted versions of this innocent remark, Makram's organ *al-Kutla* describing it as 'a stroke of lightning which hit every Egyptian heart';[2] and the Prime Minister of the neutral Government which had been constituted in July 1949 to supervise the elections (the moderate and respected Husain Sirri Pasha) was constrained to ask London for an official explanation.

THE RETURN OF THE WAFD TO POWER, JANUARY 1950

The Cairo correspondent of *The Times*, whose attitude had been generally sympathetic towards the Sa'dist-Liberal coalitions that had governed Egypt for most of the last five years, claimed that they had done 'a much better job than is generally believed ... as much as difficult conditions allowed'. He pointed out, however, that as regards both the Palestine war and their relations with Britain they could not now go to the country with a claim for victories won; and in internal affairs, similarly, success had eluded them.

The high cost of living had resisted all efforts to reduce it. The rich were as selfish, flamboyant, and complacent as ever. The public utility services had deteriorated gravely. Great beneficial schemes like those for the development of the Nile waters were delayed by irrelevant political considerations. Much of the Government machinery had slowed down dangerously.[3]

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the British forces in the Canal Zone by the Egyptian army would contribute to the British economies made necessary by the 'devaluation crisis' (quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 28 October 1949).

[1] Egypt No. 2 (1951). Cmd. 8419, p. 3.

[2] *Bourse Égyptienne* of 10 December 1949 quoted a writer in *Akhir Sa'a* as appealing to the Egyptian public 'pour une réaction—n'importe quelle réaction ...'

[3] *The Times*, 25 February 1950. A good example of official dilatoriness was provided by the plan to build a hydro-electric plant in connexion with the Aswan dam. In 1946 the cost was estimated at £10½ million and it was hoped to complete the work in five years. The foundation-stone was laid by King Faruq in March 1948;

In these circumstances, once the Palace's traditional dislike of the Wafd, and of Nahhas in particular, had been sufficiently allayed[1] to allow that party's electoral campaign to proceed without administrative discrimination against it, a victory for the Wafd was certain because of its country-wide organization among the masses. In the elections of mid-January 1950 the Wafd secured 228 out of the 319 seats in the Chamber,[2] a percentage of 71·5 as compared with that of 60 secured by the British Labour Party in the 'landslide' election of 1945. Some optimists in Britain, recalling 1936 and 1942–4, expressed the hope that the return of the Wafd and Nahhas Pasha would bring about better Anglo–Egyptian relations; but in fact the auguries were not good. All the Egyptian parties to the election campaign had perforce put forward Egypt's maximum demands unmodified, and after the election *al-Ahram* remarked:

> British strategists have come out again with their old theories of the importance of the Middle East in any armed conflict with Russia, and they demand Britain should hold tight to its position in the Middle East. They also plead with the new rulers of Egypt to think likewise and take a more realistic view of the whole situation.
>
> It is paramount to saying that the strategists have been interfering with the treaty talks ever since 1930 and their views have never changed. They claim they are only concerned with the military side and have nothing to do with politics or the national aspirations of nations. Their thoughts are only centred on how to win a new war, forgetting that a friendly nation is a stronger bastion than a strategic position. . . . Britain during the war found out that a friendly and faithful nation which joins the British camp is more valuable than a strategic position surrounded by a hostile people.[3]

These truisms did not, of course, take into account the two outstanding occasions on which, during the war, the 'friendly and faithful' character of Egypt's Governments had had to be reinforced by recourse to Britain's 'strategic position', nor the extent to which that friendship and good faith would have survived one more British military setback in any of the years

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but progress was very slow. In 1951 it was officially stated that the scheme would not be completed before 1957, and the rise in world prices had increased the estimated cost to £24·6 million.

[1] The King had apparently resented certain representations which the Sa'dist-Liberal Government had made on the subject of his private life; see below, p. 130.

[2] But of the votes cast the Wafd polled only some 1·4 million, against 1·9 million by the Opposition candidates; in some towns Wafdist hooligans are said to have prevented non-Wafdists from going to the poll.

[3] Quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 12 January 1950. A few days later, *al-Ahram* was unrealistic enough to ask why the task of organizing the defence of the Canal in the interests of world peace should not be entrusted to the Security Council (quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 21 January).

1940–2. The official British attitude to the reopening of negotiations was reflected by a remark by the diplomatic correspondent of *The Times* two months later, that in the interval since Egypt's rejection of the Sidqi–Bevin Protocol 'the cold war has sharpened, to the extent that countries of the west, including Britain, are not above allowing other countries to station troops in their territories'; moreover, the Sudanese had made further steps in self-government since 1946.[1] The attitude of the more immoderate Egyptian press was well demonstrated by a writer in Makram's organ, *al-Kutla*:

> If we are courted as allies, we must first be shown wherein Egypt's interest in such an alliance lies—unless it is a question of involving her in a war in which Britain would be a combatant and Egypt would have no concern. We have already experienced that sort of alliance in the last war. We were ruined and starved to feed the Allied armies. We are still suffering many setbacks on account of that ally. Lord preserve us from such alliances.[2]

CONVERSATIONS IN CAIRO AND LONDON, 1950

The British Foreign Secretary, who had been attending the Commonwealth Conference at Colombo, had accepted an invitation to meet King Faruq and the new Egyptian Premier and Foreign Minister[3] on 27 and 28 January, during his voyage home; and the last-named repeated the Egyptian argument, with which Bevin must by now have been very familiar, that a written treaty between their two countries was less important than 'mutual confidence and trust'.[4] No decisions could, however, be taken at this stage while the British general election of February 1950 was in the offing. Meanwhile, the Wafdist newspaper *al-Balagh* disclosed on 12 February that Nahhas had 'categorically refused' a request by Bevin that Egypt should allow crude oil to pass through the Suez Canal to the British-owned refinery at Haifa, which had been completely at a standstill (except for a brief period of very limited activity in the autumn of 1949) since the establishment of the state of

[1] *The Times*, 22 March 1950.

[2] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 21 January 1950.

[3] This was Muhammad Salah ud-Din, who had been Under-Secretary in the Foreign Ministry during the last Wafdist Government. He is described as a former student leader whose mentality remained that of the 'campus hero', and is said to have expressed the view that Egypt needed 'purification' through some great upheaval like the abrogation of the Treaty with Britain; once relations with Britain had been thus 'settled', then Egypt could enter upon her renaissance.

[4] Egypt, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Records of Conversations, Notes and Papers exchanged between the Royal Egyptian Government and the United Kingdom Government, March 1950–November 1951* (Cairo, 1951; cited hereafter as *Egyptian Green Book*), p. 4.

Israel;[1] and a few days later another Wafdist paper, *al-Misri*, was outspoken on the subject of the Sudan:

Egypt is not in need of the cotton of the Gezira, to suck the blood of the Sudanese for it as Britain does; nor is Egypt in need of other Sudanese resources to exploit them for its benefit. Egypt is only intent on securing its water resources in the upper reaches of the Nile and forcing a foreign country out of political and military positions which may adversely affect Egypt in the future.[2]

The Egyptian press welcomed the Conservative Party's narrow defeat in the British general election as a defeat for 'imperialism', but without much hope of a softening of British policy. Visits paid to King Faruq by the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Lord Mountbatten, the appointment of King Faruq as an honorary general in the British army, and reports that he might visit London, were symptoms of an attempt to establish better relations. The Egyptian Ambassador, returning to London from Cairo on 21 March, left with the British Foreign Secretary a memorandum which repeated Egypt's basic demands.[3] Meanwhile, although the world situation had deteriorated so much since the period of negotiation in 1946, the Egyptian press was still indulging in the dream of neutrality. A leading article in the government organ *al-Misri* wrote:

We ought to declare the neutrality of the Suez Canal as well as that of Egypt. . . . If the British finally leave Egypt and the various States guarantee the country's neutrality, we shall be, like Switzerland, sheltered from the spectre of the war which threatens the world with ruin. We need peace and quiet, and wish to be isolated from all these influences, which will spare no one and nothing.[4]

A few days later *al-Misri* resumed the complaint which Nuqrashi Pasha had addressed to the Security Council in 1947, namely that Britain's imperial policy in the nineteenth century had caused her

to break up Egypt's force, to deprive her of a breathing space and to obstruct her progress. The Egyptian people cannot forget that

[1] Reported by *Daily Telegraph* and *New York Times*, 13 February 1950. Anthony Eden afterwards complained that the Egyptian embargo was costing Britain the loss of petroleum products worth about $4 million a month (29 November 1950, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 481, col. 1184).

[2] Quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 15 February 1950.

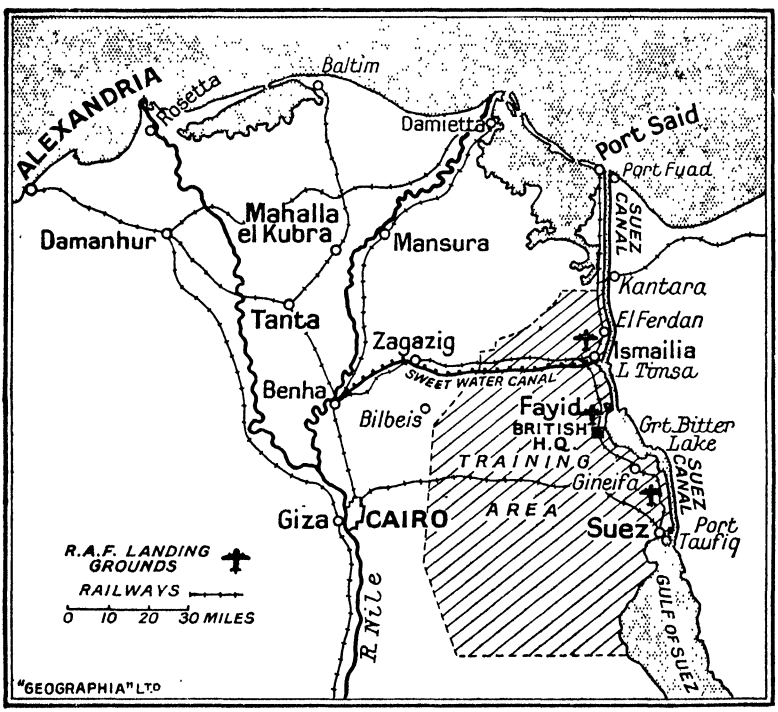
[3] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 3–4.

[4] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 26 April 1950. This understandable attitude of a small country that had been involuntarily involved in two world wars was undoubtedly being stimulated by Soviet propaganda as part of the 'Partisans of Peace' campaign; see the article 'Préparatifs militaires et facteurs de paix' by Maxime Rodinson, editor of the Paris Communist *Moyen-Orient*, April 1950, pp. 4–5, 10.

Britain got the other powers to help her in demolishing the Egyptian empire built up by Mohamed Aly in the Near East and the empire built up by Ismail in Africa, comprising the Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Somaliland, and Eritrea.[1]

Certain extreme nationalists led by Fathi Ridwan [Radwan] were even advocating the conclusion of a non-aggression pact with the U.S.S.R.[2] The Government's *al-Misri* itself went so far as to declare:

The Western Bloc is now in dispute with Russia, and each of the two powers is a tyrant and a coloniser. . . . There seems to be a threat of a third World War on the horizon. England then would be right when it claims that the Russian danger threatened the whole of the East and Egypt. Can Egypt in this case afford not to follow in planning a defensive-offensive policy from Suez to the Dardanelles? And would



THE CANAL ZONE

[1] Quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 30 April 1950.

[2] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 3 and 4 May 1950. This had recently been advocated for all the Arab states by the Syrian Minister of National Economy, the nationalist Ma'ruf ad-Dawalibi, upon which the Secretary-General of the Arab League had remarked: 'Dawalibi's views express the sentiments of every Arab. His utterances have been forced by continued Anglo-American pressure on Arab States' (*Cahiers de l'Orient Contemporain*, 1er semestre 1950, p. 47; *Observer*, 23 April 1950).

not such a plan impel Russia to attack us, with the result that we would be engaged in a war in which we have no interest?[1]

The announcement on 25 May by the United States, British, and French Governments that they had agreed on a common policy with respect to the peace and stability of the Arab States and Israel, and particularly to the supply of war material to those countries, was greeted in Egypt as further evidence of Western interference. A second visit by the British Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir William Slim, to discuss Middle East defence in the course of a Commonwealth tour, made little impression. The C.I.G.S. declared that all attempts to persuade the Soviet Union to adopt a more peaceful policy had failed and it was necessary to plan against the possibility of war; Egypt was the key of the Middle East, and if war broke out air attacks would begin in a few hours and ten to fifteen Russian divisions could reach Egypt in four months. He invited Egypt, since she could not defend herself in such an eventuality, to join in a corporate defence scheme such as the countries of Western Europe were organizing among themselves. To this Nahhas Pasha replied that it would be impossible to persuade the Egyptian people that there was any difference between these new proposals and the British 'occupation':

No power on earth can convince the Egyptian people that Egypt will be meant for itself [*sic*] for attacks or aggression. What will cause this attack is the presence in our land of foreign troops which will be the target for Russian aggression. . . .

. . . You yourselves should furnish modern armaments of all kinds . . . not as you do now, promise to send tanks without carrying it out. If our army completes its military preparedness . . . we will stand on your side to repel any aggression against Egypt. . . . This co-operation will be fruitful and sufficient without any need to maintain foreign troops in Egypt in peace time.

Do not forget the morale of the army. . . . Your evacuation from our land will . . . induce the army to great sacrifices in serving the common cause of peace.

Why do you keep your troops in the Canal and not in Palestine or Gaza,[2] although these same troops . . . can reach us in one week . . . in time of war?

[1] Quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 30 May 1950.

[2] The Egyptian armistice with Israel in 1949 had left under Egyptian military occupation a strip of the south Palestine coast twenty-three miles long and five miles wide, with the town of Gaza as its chief locality. Subsequent British replies to Nahhas's question emphasized that to transfer the British base to Gaza would raise diplomatic complications with Israel and would be most disadvantageous militarily (*Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 38, 40, 62–4; August 1950); cf. the special correspondent of *The Times* in the Canal Zone, 28 December 1951: 'Senior military authorities in the zone insist . . . that quite apart from questions of finance and diplomacy the Suez base is strategically irreplaceable. They point out that it is

To this Field-Marshal Slim replied, after some intermediate discussion:

If the British troops withdraw from Egypt, it will have a disastrous effect on the cold war against Russia. Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, and the Dominions will be horrified. Our Allies in America will think we have deserted them.

We do not think that British troops in Egypt should remain for ever. But . . . without the presence of some British troops, our Allies will not see how Egypt can be defended.

. . . If war comes and . . . if there are no British troops in Egypt, I would be wasting my time if I went to these people and told them: 'Send me some troops', if I myself have left the country.[1]

When the conversations were resumed on the following day, Nahhas observed that the Sidqi–Bevin Protocol of 1946 had provided for the withdrawal of British troops by September 1949, and went on to reject the suggestion that the international situation had changed meanwhile: 'The international circumstances have not changed since the end of the war. The expected Russian danger has been existing since then.' The countries which were directly threatened by Russia, namely Turkey and Persia, were not at present occupied by foreign troops; and British forces in time of war could rapidly be brought to Egypt from their many other strategic bases in the Middle East. The C.I.G.S. again replied that it was imperative to have the means of joint defence already integrated before war broke out. To this Salah ud-Din answered: 'People regard the British occupation as a standing fact; but the other danger is only a mere threat. The people cannot be convinced that occupation should remain to repel that danger.' He added that it would be 'very difficult' to persuade the people that a Russian occupation would be worse than the British occupation.[2]

The opposition newspaper *Akhbar ul-Yawm* declared on 10 June that Field-Marshal Slim had told certain Egyptian authorities that war was certain.[3] This was naturally treated as British

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the only suitable area which has a double line of external communications by sea. It can be approached either through the Mediterranean in the ordinary way, or from the south by way of the Cape and the Red Sea. If, as in the last war, the Mediterranean were made virtually impassable to shipping, a base at Gaza or Cyprus would be as isolated as Malta then was.'

[1] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 13–15.

[2] ibid., p. 21. *al-Muqattam* (quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 7 June 1950) sought to uphold the argument that the defence of the Canal Zone could safely be left to Egypt by reasoning that the war with Israel had not revealed any defects in the Egyptian army: 'it was the leaders who made mistakes . . . it was the Arab Legion and the Iraqi army that failed.' It was not until the autumn of 1950 that the results of an inquiry into the alleged jobbery and corruption of Egyptian senior officers during the Palestine war were made public.

[3] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 12 June 1950.

scare-mongering; and when the Korean war broke out on the 25th, the Egyptian press immediately began to complain that Britain was using the new situation to increase her pressure on Egypt.[1] On the 30th the Egyptian delegate at the Security Council announced his Government's intention to abstain on the motion condemning the North Korean aggression. Their reason was that, when 'other acts of aggression' had been committed against members of the United Nations and their territorial integrity, the United Nations, to whom they had appealed, had given them no remedy.[2] *al-Ahram* inspired a rumour that the United States Government, on the advice of its Ambassador in Cairo, was on the point of readjusting its Middle East policy and would press Britain to make at least some concession to the Egyptian claims.[3] The United States Ambassador, however, was reported to have called on the Egyptian Foreign Minister on 3 July and read to him a cable from the State Department which observed that Egypt's attitude to the Korean war 'would not encourage us to help Egypt if the occasion arises on other matters'.[4] The Government organ *al-Misri* now turned its attacks upon the United States, and recalled that 'Russia and its friends supported the Egyptian case in the Security Council and they have supported the case of every nation fighting for its independence'.[5] Egypt's present attitude was made the occasion for some Labour members in the British House of Commons, to whom Egypt's refusal to allow ships carrying

[1] *al-Misri*, quoted ibid. 29 June 1950.

[2] Text ibid. 1 July 1950. *al-Ahram* commented: 'The attitude of the U.N. General Assembly and Security Council to the Palestine and Egypt cases is still fresh in memory. In the Palestine case they have supported the falsehood of Israel against the right of seven Arab States. This biassed attitude has shaken the confidence of forty million Arabs in the Middle East in the United Nations and induced them to believe that it is an instrument for fomenting trouble and anarchy rather than one of ensuring justice and peace. Similarly the attitude of the Security Council to the Anglo–Egyptian dispute has created a feeling of bitterness and anxiety in Egypt and in all other small nations' (quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 2 July). However, the failure of Egypt to win the support of the other Arab governments over this matter (and perhaps the pro-Russian tone adopted by the left-wing Wafdist press) caused the Foreign Minister, in a press interview on 11 July, to qualify the Egyptian attitude by condemning Communist aggression.

[3] Reported by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 3 July 1950. Three weeks earlier *al-Ahram* had written hopefully: 'Every time that Egypt says, "This is my right; the British are concerned only with their interests", the United States will say, "Right takes precedence over interests and advantage" ' (quoted ibid. 10 June 1950).

[4] *New York Times*, 4 July 1950.

[5] Quoted by *Egyptian Gazette*, 6 July 1950. The Opposition politician Amin Yusuf, who was one of twenty-eight senators who had been recently unseated by the Wafd, declared in New York that one reason for the Egyptian decision was that the al-Wakil family, to which Madame Nahhas belonged, had recently been profitably engaged as middlemen in cotton deals between the Egyptian and Soviet Governments at high prices (*New York Herald-Tribune*, 7 July 1950). Large-scale Wafdist speculation in the cotton-market during this summer was confirmed by many sources.

goods for Israel to pass through the Suez Canal was a standing affront, to ask whether Britain should not cease to supply war materials to 'neutral' Egypt; and Anthony Eden was cheered by the Opposition when he remarked that Egypt was 'getting away with too much'.[1]

In conversations with the new British Ambassador, Sir Ralph Stevenson, who had succeeded Sir Ronald Campbell in June, the Egyptian Foreign Minister again argued that the Egyptian army could adequately replace the British in the Canal Zone, with the exception of a few hundred technicians who might remain for a short time to train Egyptians to replace them. The Ambassador replied:

> I would fully agree with the logic of your statement if the base were only an arms depot. It is not that, it is a living organisation which will have to be widely expanded on the outbreak of war. . . .
>
> A base needs constant attention. It is not a matter of a key just being turned in a door and everything being kept tidy and in good condition. The material that is there rapidly becomes out-of-date and must continually be turned over and changed.[2]

He pointed out that, contrary to an assertion by Salah ud-Din, the removal of an air base when war threatened was an even slower matter than to remove an army base, and suggested that deficiencies in the trained personnel of the Egyptian air force might be made up by British personnel wearing the same insignia. To this Salah ud-Din replied that the majority of the Egyptian delegation had rejected the Sidqi-Bevin plan because Egypt would find it difficult to accept joint defence in peace time 'in any form whatsoever. . . . We equally reject joint air defence in peace time':

> I do not know why you always assume that co-operation is impossible in war time unless there is joint defence and other traces of occupation in peace time. . . . I trust your military people will collaborate with us in working out . . . a plan for co-operation in war time only. . . . It is the procedure followed in the majority of alliances concluded between independent states.

The Ambassador replied with a reminder of the fate of Belgium and Holland in 1940, but nothing could overcome Salah ud-Din's insistence on the psychological necessity of ending the 'occupation':

> The greatest weapon exploited by communist propaganda in Egypt and in all countries occupied by foreign forces is that same occupation and the economic and social effects resulting from it. This pro-

[1] 10 and 13 July 1950, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 477, cols. 955–6, 2252–3.
[2] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 42–3.

paganda finds fertile soil in the minds of nationalists . . . so much so that it is feared that they might gradually confuse nationalism with communist propaganda. . . .[1]

He later complained that an Egyptian delegation that had by invitation visited the British base in the Canal Zone had reported that British officers had made difficulties about replacing the Mauritian security troops by Egyptians: 'If you on your part take such precautions as regards Egypt and the Egyptian army, it is only right that we should be very cautious as regards expected results if we accept your offer of this tremendous number of British forces remaining in Egypt on the pretext of joint administration of the base.'[2]

The Egyptian Foreign Minister turned on 26 August to the question of the Sudan and asked for Britain's 'immediate recognition of the rights of Egypt and the Sudan and handing them over to their legitimate owners', which laid him open to the Ambassador's retort that the rightful owners of the Sudan were its inhabitants; but there was some justice in Salah ud-Din's complaint that

> when conditions in Egypt were favourable to you and there was no serious resistance to your authority, you found no need to claim obligations vis-à-vis the Sudanese. But when . . . Egypt . . . started to demand her rights . . . you began this new tune for no other purpose but to separate the Sudan from Egypt, despite the fact that you had always regarded it as a trust for Egypt in your hands. . . . The whole question is one of considered and premeditated imperialistic policy and not the will of the Sudanese or your obligations towards them.

He argued that the Sudan was better fitted for self-government than Libya which, the United Nations had decided, should become independent by the end of 1952; and therefore proposed that the Condominium and the British occupation of the Sudan should be likewise ended within two years, 'after which the Sudan will have its own government in unity with Egypt represented by the Egyptian Crown, foreign policy, currency, army, and other questions that may be agreed upon between the Egyptians and their compatriots the Sudanese. . . .'[3]

> Moreover I am confident that this is not the will of Egyptians only but it is the will of the overwhelming majority of . . . the Sudanese. Proofs of that are not lacking . . . in the results of municipal elections, in the results of the election for the graduates Congress who

[1] ibid. pp. 48, 60.
[2] ibid. p. 67. The British view was that if Egyptians took over security duties they must also be responsible for the stores. For figures of the British garrison in August 1950, see ibid. pp. 34–6.
[3] ibid. pp. 69–71.

are the cream of the cultured class in the Sudan, and in the sympathies of religious bodies. I would like to ask you in this connection whether you would agree to a plebiscite to be carried out now in the Sudan . . . under neutral supervision . . . foremost among these conditions is of course the immediate withdrawal of British forces and British administration. . . .[1]

The Ambassador replied that he would not dismiss the possibility of a plebiscite, and would consult his Government; he presumed that the Egyptian forces would be withdrawn at the same time as the British; but it was not practicable to dispense with the British administration. There were only 120 British civil servants, and they could not influence the population or compel them to take one line or another. Seeing that only 3 per cent of the people were literate, he thought that a ten years' transitional period to self-government was, if anything, an underestimate. Salah ud-Din repeated Egypt's demands: union in respect of foreign policy, the army, currency, and other matters that Egyptians and Sudanese might agree upon:

I mean this solution to be final without having recourse to a plebiscite or the like. As to the plebiscite, I only wanted to prove to you how certain we are of the sentiments of our compatriots the Sudanese and of their real aspirations. Also to know how far you are ready to abide by the wishes of the Sudanese and whether you would go to the extent of agreeing to the withdrawal of the British forces and administration. . . .[2]

On 12 September the British Ambassador informed the Egyptian Government that owing to the increasing demands on Britain for certain types of scarce armaments, such as jet aircraft and Centurion tanks for which Egypt had been on the privileged list, the Government had decided that the North Atlantic Powers and the British Commonwealth should receive priority, and delivery of these arms to Egypt must reluctantly be postponed for the time. An Egyptian diplomatic source was reported to have described this measure as 'a plot against Anglo–Egyptian good relations and the negotiations in progress for a treaty', and the Wafdist *al-Balagh* declared that Britain was supplying to Communist Poland the arms of which she was depriving Egypt.[3] *al-Muqattam* observed that 'at the stroke of a pen this decision abolishes the official and obligatory character of the 1936 Treaty' by which Britain had undertaken to supply Egypt with armaments, and asked what confidence Egypt could place in British promises in the future.[4] It was reported that

[1] *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 72. [2] ibid. pp. 73–4.
[3] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 16 and 17 September 1950.
[4] Quoted ibid. 18 and 19 September 1950.

when the British and Egyptian Foreign Ministers met at the United Nations on 28 September, the latter complained that the British suspension of arms deliveries was 'unjust' and had political motives.[1] He applied to the United States Secretary of State for arms for Egypt under the military aid programme, but in vain. Early in November, however, on the eve of the opening of a new session of the Egyptian parliament, the delivery of the high-priority arms was resumed by Britain.

Nevertheless, the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Egyptian Parliament declared on 16 November:

> My Government considers that the 1936 Treaty has lost its validity as a basis for Anglo–Egyptian relations, and it deems it inevitable that it should be abrogated. It is also necessary that future relations should be founded upon new principles which you should approve—immediate and complete evacuation and the unification of the Nile Valley under the Egyptian crown. . . .
>
> My Government is therefore proceeding without hesitation or undue delay with the task of realizing these national objectives . . . the proclamation of the termination of the 1936 treaty . . . with the further proclamation of the abrogation of the two agreements concluded on 16 January and 10 July 1899, establishing a dual Government in Sudan.[2]

The *New York Times* commented in a leading article (17 November):

> The violence that accompanied yesterday's opening session of Parliament is indicative of a precarious internal situation. The Wafd Government has been a great disappointment to those who hoped for social progress and economic reconstruction in Egypt after the fiasco of the Palestinian war. There has been no less inefficiency and corruption than usual; the arbitrary expulsion of twenty-nine opposition Senators in June was contrary to all democratic practice:[3] the activities of King Faruq have brought him world-wide criticism;[4] economic distress, already acute, has been increasing steadily. . . .
>
> Outsiders will find it difficult to believe that the present agitation . . . is not a tactic to divert popular feeling from grave internal abuses and neglect.

Answering questions in the House of Commons on 20 November, Ernest Bevin said that the British Government would rest on the

[1] ibid. 3 October 1950; but cf. *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 75–6.
[2] *The Times*, 17 November 1950; cf. *Bourse Égyptienne*, 16 November.
[3] But see above, p. 67.
[4] King Faruq had divorced Queen Farida, who had borne him three daughters, in 1948, and it was reported that at the end of 1949 he had intervened to prevent the marriage of a young girl, Nariman Sadiq, with a young Egyptian diplomat. He married her himself on 6 May 1951. The king's holiday at French summer resorts in 1950 had already attracted adverse press attention (e.g. in *Le Monde*, 13 September 1950).

1936 Treaty until it was changed by mutual consent; and when asked about the continued supply of high-priority arms to Egypt, he left it to the Minister of Defence to answer with other questions on the following day. The matter was raised by the Conservatives at question-time on the 22nd, and one of them gave notice that he would again raise it on the Adjournment; when that time came, however, the leaders on both sides were absent at a banquet being given by the Queen of the Netherlands who was visiting London. The matter was in fact again raised this time by Labour members, and discussion continued until the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs gave an undertaking that sixteen Centurion tanks now ready for shipment would not sail for Egypt until Bevin had reported to the House on the talks which he was to have with the Egyptian Foreign Minister in London in the following week.[1] The Cairo *az-Zaman* was quick to observe that Bevin's complaint in January 1947, that the Anglo–Egyptian negotiations had been 'made the subject of Egyptian party politics', had now rebounded on the British Labour Government, whose survival from day to day depended on so small a margin of votes.

It was reported at this stage that the Egyptian Government had received a Soviet proposal arguing that it would be futile to rely on Britain to defend the Suez Canal owing to her world-wide commitments, and that

> even if the United States could be brought in to assume primary responsibility in that area, she could no more defend the Canal than the 38th parallel . . . [*sic*]. Genuine Egyptian neutrality . . . would be fully respected by the countries of the Russian bloc. . . . Russia would be willing to help Egypt train and equip an army of two million men to defend the neutrality of the Canal against all comers. . . . German military advisers and Skoda armaments could be arranged.[2]

Whatever may be thought of the accuracy of this report, it had already been learnt that the Egyptian Foreign Minister had spoken, when at Lake Success two months earlier, of Egypt's readiness to contribute an army of 1 to 2 million men to an international force, if the United Nations would equip them; *Pravda* had recently renewed its support of the Egyptian demands; and on 28 November, as the Egyptian Foreign Minister arrived in London, 2,000 students demonstrated in Cairo against the 'Anglo–American attitude to Egyptian national aspirations'.[3]

[1] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 481, cols. 340–7, 423–67.
[2] *Scotsman*, London letter, 29 November 1950.
[3] See *Daily Telegraph*, 6 October and 27 November 1950; *The Times*, 29 November.

In the two Foreign Ministers' four official conversations between 4 and 15 December[1] Salah ud-Din's arguments were largely a repetition of what he and Nahhas had said to the C.I.G.S. and the British Ambassador in the summer. He also observed, however, that Article 16 of the 1936 Treaty, which had provided that 'any revision of this Treaty' even after 1956 would 'provide for the continuation of the Alliance', gave the repugnant impression of its perpetuation by force. The possibility of Egypt's sharing in the defence of Egypt and the Middle East with 'a restricted group of countries' under a supreme commander might be considered, as he had told Bevin at New York during the autumn meeting of the United Nations Assembly; but this must be on the basis of Egypt's complete sovereign equality, and provide for the withdrawal of foreign troops within a year and the satisfying of Egypt's armament needs on the same basis as those of Turkey and Greece. To all this Bevin replied that it was all very well to speak of mutual confidence, but could His Majesty's Government be confident that the Egyptian Government might not deny Great Britain her rights under a new agreement at a critical moment?—an oblique reference to the reinsurance policy attempted by 'Ali Mahir's Government when Italy entered the war in June 1940, and anticipated by the British in February 1942. Salah ud-Din replied

> in all frankness that the confidence crisis between us is not the outcome of the present day so that we can be accused of going back on her obligations in times of danger and stress. This crisis is the result of decades of British occupation and the deplorable turn which our relations had taken since the last World War. I do not wish to enter into details as I do not want to waste your valuable time.[2]

The burden of Bevin's argument was an appeal to leave the theoretical, political aspects of the problem and concentrate on the hard facts. The international situation was 'very threatening', in fact 'we were already in a sense at war'; and to withdraw the British land forces and the R.A.F. within a year, as the Egyptian Government asked, 'would mean that Great Britain would be expected to undertake the defence of the Middle East in war-time without having been able to make adequate preparations'. The continual Egyptian talk about evacuation sounded like an ultimatum, and he would prefer the two Governments to consider something like a gradual transfer of authority and responsibility by consultation between their respective service experts; 'he would also like to have an agreed definition (recorded perhaps in an exchange of letters) of the

[1] The following summary is taken from Cmd. 8419, pp. 7–23, and *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 77–104.

[2] *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 82.

circumstances in which British troops would be entitled to re-enter Egypt'; this 'did not imply any lack of confidence in the Egyptian Government, but the point was clearly one of vital importance'.

Their last two conversations were devoted in the main to the Sudan. The Egyptian 'slogan' (as Bevin called it) of the 'natural' and 'historical' union of the Sudan with Egypt 'in word and in practice' was not categorically opposed by the British Government, but was subordinated by them to the right of the Sudanese to self-determination. The Egyptian Government held that Britain's position in the Sudan rested solely on her past use of force, ostensibly on behalf of Egypt, and that she was now acting for 'purely selfish motives' to separate the Sudan from Egypt and put off the day of Sudanese independence. Salah ud-Din even revived the old complaint of Britain's exclusion[1] of Northern Sudanese from the Southern Sudan, which Nuqrashi Pasha had voiced at the Security Council in 1947 only to have it demolished by Cadogan,[2] but was now reminded that

> the representatives of the Southern Sudanese debate in the Sudan Legislative Assembly on equal terms with their fellow members from the North; Southern Sudanese civil servants, like Northern Sudanese, serve in any part of the Sudan; and . . . the Sudan Government's education plan . . . contained . . . provisions for the increased use of Arabic in all schools in the South, including those directed by Christian missionaries.[3]

A second Egyptian complaint was that there was an inconsist-

[1] The phrase he used was 'ringing down an Iron Curtain', according to the *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 93. For another example of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's resort to similar phrases in its official transactions, cf. its complaint to the Secretary-General of the United Nations published on 27 November 1951 that British action in the Canal Zone 'came within the scope of the international convention for the prevention of genocide' (*Mideast Mirror*, 1 December 1951, p. 6; cf. *Bourse Égyptienne*, 22 November 1951).

[2] 'The peoples of the south are Negro or negroid and for the most part extremely primitive. They are not and never were Moslems; they do not and never did speak Arabic; and they have no racial affinities whatsoever with the north. Until the coming of the British to the Sudan, they were constantly being raided by the northerners and carried off as slaves. Such distinctions as the Sudan Government has drawn in the past between the southern part of the Sudan and the rest of the country have been dictated by the imperative need, in the interests of common humanity, to protect a group of primitive and almost defenceless peoples from exploitation by their more advanced neighbours until such time as they are able to stand on their own feet' (Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, no. 73, 11 August 1947, p. 1889; cf. below, p. 139).

[3] The secretary of the Church Missionary Society in the Sudan had, indeed, written: 'All those who have the interests of the pagan and primitive peoples of the South at heart feel that to hand them over to the administration of the Northerners would be a gross breach of our trusteeship. . . . If the South becomes fully integrated into the Sudan constitution Southern Christians fear domination by Muslims. . . .' (J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Christian Church in Post-War Sudan* (London, World Dominion Press [1949]), p. 32).

ency in Britain's arguing that the achievement of Sudanese independence should be spread over ten to fifteen years, when she had supported the United Nations decision to confer independence on Libya by 1 January 1952. This last was not, however, as Bevin pointed out, an ideal solution in British eyes; invidious comparisons apart, the standard of administration and the development of the Sudan compared well with those of Egypt; and it would be tragic if anything were done to disturb that political and material progress. More pertinent than these debating points was that, after abortive discussions between the Sudanese Independence Front and the pro-Egyptian parties with a view to the holding of a plebiscite, the Independence Front had seized the occasion of the Bevin–Salah ud-Din conversations to table in the Legislative Assembly a motion asking the Governor-General to approach the British and Egyptian Governments with a request to grant the Sudan self-government at the same time as Libya achieved her independence. The Egyptian Government requested that the Governor-General should not allow the debate to proceed; the Civil Secretary did attempt to persuade the Assembly to defer it to the spring session, but it was carried on 14 December by a majority of one, against the votes of representatives of the tribal areas and the non-Muslim south. Bevin explained to Salah ud-Din that

> had the debate been postponed, it would have given rise to undesirable misunderstanding in the Sudan and to unjustified suspicion of the conversations then in progress [in London]. . . . Nevertheless, he personally agreed that the holding of a debate of this nature at the present juncture was unfortunate. He had accordingly asked the Governor-General to do all in his power to ensure that no action was taken in Khartoum which was in any way likely to cause controversy between the Egyptian Government and His Majesty's Government. . . .

The incident had, indeed, demonstrated how the pro-Egyptian case was going by default in the Sudan Legislature because of the pro-Egyptian parties' obstinate boycott of it, at Egypt's instigation; and Bevin now appealed to Salah ud-Din to use his influence to secure their participation in the next elections for the Legislature so that, now that the Executive Council had a Sudanese majority, the Sudanese people might for the first time be represented 'by a body not only democratically elected, but one whose members would be drawn from all classes and creeds'.

Bevin told Salah ud-Din at their last meeting that he hoped to be able to give the Egyptian Government the considered view of the British Government and experts on a settlement of the defence question, which would both provide for mutual

respect and equality and guarantee the defence of the Middle East, by the middle of January 1951 or as soon afterwards as possible. This communication was, however, delayed, partly on account of the final breakdown of Bevin's health and the need of his successor, Herbert Morrison, to call home the British Ambassador for consultation,[1] and partly no doubt because of the growing complexities of the wider international situation. Meanwhile, the Treasury announced on 15 March 1951 that agreement had been reached in principle on the release of £150 million of Egypt's outstanding sterling balances (now amounting to approximately £230 million) over a period of ten to thirteen and a half years, while the balance—an amount which Egypt might normally expect to hold as credit in London—would be discussed at some later date.[2] This agreement was immediately attacked by the British Conservative Opposition, and debated on the motion for the adjournment on 20 March,[3] when the Government secured a majority of only three after they had also been under attack from a small group of their own back-benchers, who urged them to 'reshape British Middle Eastern policy'.[4] Egypt had not indeed been amenable to protests which the British, United States, Swedish, French, Netherlands, and Norwegian Governments had made in the second half of 1950 against the interference with their shipping arising from Egypt's embargo on goods bound for Israel passing through the Suez Canal; and Nahhas Pasha was coupling his resentment at pressure on this matter of Egyptian prestige with annoyance at some home thrusts by the Cairo correspondent of *The Times*,[5]

[1] See the interchange of personal messages between Morrison and Salah ud-Din, *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 106–7.

[2] Treaty Series No. 67 (1951). Cmd. 8336.

[3] The Conservative member Fitzroy Maclean had recently inquired about the sovereignty over southern Sinai, with the suggestion that 'this area was taken away by us from Turkey . . . has never been given to Egypt, and, therefore, belongs to us as much as to anybody else.' The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, however, stated: 'The grant of the right to administer this territory was confirmed by a firman issued by the Sultan of Turkey to the Khedive Abbas of Egypt on 8 May 1892, and was later enshrined in Notes exchanged between His Majesty's Government and the Turkish Government in May 1906. The eastern frontier of Egypt was never explicitly defined after the First World War. . . . Egypt has, however, been in continuous occupation and possession of South Sinai ever since 1922. No Government has ever contested the fact that Egypt exercises effective sovereignty over this area' (21 February 1951, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 484, cols. 1263–4).

[4] See above, pp. 126, 131. The British Labour Government's position vis-à-vis Egypt was weakened during their second term of office by opposition not only from a group of right-wing Conservative members of Parliament, but also from a small group of Labour members who, in their desire to give support to the young State of Israel, appeared indifferent to the effect this might have on Anglo–Egyptian relations.

[5] 'By making demands that must now be rejected, Wafdists secure, first, their immediate object; the continued protection of Egypt and the Middle East by the British until the period of international danger and internal uneasiness has passed;

when he complained of 'this cold war waged against us. . . . We cannot be expected to remain patient indefinitely.'[1]

BRITISH PROPOSALS AND EGYPTIAN REJECTION APRIL 1951

The British Ambassador took back with him proposals which were communicated to the Egyptian Government on 11 April. They were based on the principle that the British Government, 'in view of their commitments to their other allies in the North Atlantic and in the Middle East', could not

> accept the responsibility of making any arrangements which prejudice their ability to contribute to a successful defence of this region against an aggressor. Such a defence will only be possible if in the future the Egypt base continues to function in such a manner as to be immediately available in war and if the air defence of Egypt is assured.

They expressed awareness of the Egyptian Government's 'great difficulties in the matter', and sought to sweeten them by guaranteeing to provide Egypt with 'whatever further arms and equipment may be necessary' beyond bringing her army's equipment up to training scale, 'in equal priority with other nations with whom Great Britain has working defence agreements'; but the remaining proposals were so many bitter pills for Egyptian susceptibilities. The withdrawal of British troops would begin within one year of an agreement and be ended by 1956; but the Canal Zone base would continue to be controlled by an Anglo–Egyptian Control Board 'in accordance with British military policy' and with British civilians performing essential duties; air defence would be similarly co-ordinated; British troops would be readmitted with all necessary facilities 'in the event of war, imminent menace of war or apprehended international emergency'; and, worst of all perhaps, the British Government 'cannot accept the validity of the view that the question of the Sudan is inseparable from that of defence', but 'would be prepared to discuss the question of the Sudan' after a preliminary exchange of views on defence and without interfering with the objective of Sudanese self-government 'at the earliest practicable opportunity'.[2]

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and secondly their ultimate object: to be able to say that they have never "betrayed the people of the Valley" by surrendering any of "Egypt's sacred rights" ' (*The Times*, 27 March 1951).

[1] Interview with *al-Balagh*, reported by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 29 March 1951; *The Times*, 30 March.

[2] Text in Egypt No. 2 (1951), Cmd. 8419, pp. 24–5; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 108–10.

It was perhaps scarcely surprising that the Egyptian reply, delivered on 24 April, was a categorical rejection '*in toto* and in detail'.[1] It rejected Britain's claim to share in the defence of the Middle East on the grounds of her obligations to other allies, and made the familiar counter-proposals which Salah ud-Din had rehearsed to Bevin: evacuation of the Canal Zone to be completed within one year, and of the Sudan within two years in favour of 'unity under the Egyptian Crown and self-government for the Sudanese'; 'special priority' for equipment for the Egyptian army, 'considering that Egypt is situated in a sensitive strategic area'—a contention which contrasted oddly with Salah ud-Din's complacency on this score four months earlier;[2] British forces to be readmitted

> to those places to which, in the agreed opinion of the two Governments, it is necessary that they should return for the purpose of assisting in the defence of Egypt in the event of an armed aggression upon her or in the event of the United Kingdom being involved in war as the result of an armed aggression on the Arab countries adjacent to Egypt.[3]

A period of pause and recollection followed, in which the 'Minister in charge of Sudanese Affairs', Ibrahim Farag, declared: 'Either a speedy evacuation, or eternal enmity with the British';[4] and on 8 June a new British communication was made, in which the Government noted 'with disappointment that whereas their own proposals represented a very considerable modification of the position laid down by the Anglo–Egyptian Treaty of 1936, the Egyptian proposals do not appear to differ in essence from the claims put forward by the Egyptian Government . . . some eighteen months ago'. Before this chronological *non sequitur*, however, they had suggested the setting up of an Anglo–Egyptian–Sudanese commission to assist the people of the Sudan (among whom there were 'wide differences of culture, race, religion, and political development') 'to attain full self-government as soon as practicable and thereafter to choose freely for themselves their form of government and the relationship with Egypt that will best meet their needs. It is essen-

[1] Cf. the nationalist Fikri Abaza: 'Britain has lost her prestige in the world in general, and in Europe in particular. Her star has faded in the Far East. She has been forced to withdraw from India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and Palestine. She is today a third-class Power, behind the United States and Russia. She is a charge upon Washington for her economy, her military interests, her present, and her future' (*al-Musawwar*, quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 13 April 1951).

[2] See above, p. 127.

[3] Text in Cmd. 8419, pp. 25–6; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 111–13.

[4] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 19 May 1951. It is reliably stated that Farag had never visited the Sudan and knew nothing about it except what he read from the ill-informed Wafdist press.

tial that the friendliest relations should link the two peoples.'[1]

The Egyptian reply of 6 July described as 'unwarrantable' the comparison which the British Note had drawn between the British and Egyptian attitudes: 'for, whereas the Royal Egyptian Government claim inviolable national rights which cannot be bartered away', the British Government were pursuing 'exaggerated interests, and when right and interest are at variance, right should be made to prevail'. The Egyptian Note went on to speak of the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown as an 'established fact'.

> There is the community of race, language, religion, culture, customs and interests as well as the geographical unity, the economic unity, etc. In the presence of all these strong and inseverable ties it is gross injustice . . . to speak of two countries and two peoples instead of speaking of one country and one people indivisible, inseparable.[2]

It went on to repeat the charge that the Sudan Government had deliberately sought to exaggerate the differences between the south and the north of the country, 'thereby standing in the way of natural penetration and spreading of the Arabic language and the Moslem religion into the south'; and it again asked for the withdrawal of British forces and officials from the Sudan within two years. All this was prefaced by an admonition to the British Government on 'the impossibility of going on indefinitely', on the need to put a stop to the 'aggression' against Egypt's sovereignty: 'it has become extremely difficult for the Royal Egyptian Government and Egyptian public opinion to contemplate any further prolongation of this state of affairs'.[3]

After Salah ud-Din had read this aide-mémoire to him, the British Ambassador remarked that the Egyptian Government had to choose between co-operating in a 'valid and efficient scheme of defence which might prevent Egypt being invaded at all' and 'having two invasions, one by the north-east to occupy the country and the other from the west by the Western Powers to expel the aggressor. That is an absolute certainty'. The British Government were trying to find 'some common approach' to the defence problem, but were much preoccupied

[1] Text in Cmd. 8419, pp. 27–8; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 116–18.

[2] One is again irresistibly reminded of this new manifestation of Egyptian 'monophysitism', even to the phraseology used, in this year that was the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of the Council of Chalcedon: see above, p. 94.

[3] Text in Cmd. 8419, pp. 28–9; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 119–21. Salah ud-Din had said on 7 December 1950, in reply to Bevin's request for an assurance that the Egyptian Government would not denounce the 1936 Treaty, 'I have no power to give Your Excellency such an assurance and I believe the Egyptian Government could not accede to this' (*Egyptian Green Book*, p. 84; Cmd. 8419, p. 13). On all occasions, indeed, Salah ud-Din appears to have used his personal influence, whether in the Cabinet or upon the press, in favour of abrogation.

at present with other problems. To this Salah ud-Din replied:

> I am aware that the British Government are preoccupied to a great extent with the problems confronting them in Iran but the troubles of the British Government are endless . . . and if we delay the settlement of questions pending between us on account of the troubles confronting Britain in other parts of the world, we shall never finish. . . .[1]

He complained that the Ambassador's remarks on the question of evacuation were 'couched in the language of war, force, and invasion while as Members of the United Nations Organization we should talk the language of peace, security, recognition of right and justice and respect of the sovereignty of nations and the integrity of their territories'; and he gave warning that unless the talks reached a satisfactory conclusion in the next few weeks, his Government would break them off in order to report to Parliament before the end of the present session. He insisted that

> several anthropologists, including a number of eminent British scientists, admit that the Sudanese are all one race and that the inhabitants of the Southern Sudan are not negroes. Actually, if we gradually go up the Nile from the Delta to Upper-Egypt to the Northern Sudan then to the Southern Sudan we will find that the gradation of the Hamitic race inhabiting all these lands is the natural and reasonable gradation and that the difference of colour or dialects [*sic*] does not mean in this case a difference of race but it is the result of the difference of climate and environment owing to the remote distances separating the Mediterranean from the Equator. . . . The Sudan Administration should have been duty-bound, since four-fifths of the people of the Sudan are Arabs and Moslems speaking the Arabic language, to remove all barriers in the way of the natural spreading of the Arabic language and the Moslem religion among the primitive people of the South, not to do the reverse by the promulgation of laws and measures preventing the people of the north from contacting those of the south and at the same time encouraging Christian Missions to practise their activities there.[2]

To this the Ambassador asked whether the Egyptian Government 'seriously consider the primitive inhabitants of the Southern Sudan to be one people with the inhabitants of the Delta'.

When they continued the conversation on 13 July, the Ambassador went on:

> Whatever your Ashigga correspondents may tell you, Egyptian control is not acceptable to the vast majority of the Sudanese. The Ashigga Party is losing its influence and a more important Party in the Sudan is now the National Front. They do desire some link with

[1] Cmd. 8419, p. 31; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 123.
[2] Cmd. 8419, pp. 33–4; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 126.

Egypt as a potentially useful neighbour and as a deterrent to the creation of a new Mahdia. They have taken a considerable part in the recently established commission for the amendment of the Executive Council and Assembly Ordinance. . . . In fact the Sudanese seek real self-government and if Egypt would only show a little flexibility there is no doubt that geographical and economic considerations in general and mutual dependence on the Nile Waters in particular will inevitably draw Egypt and the Sudan together. But if Egypt insists on imposing her will I am afraid this policy will seriously prejudice her future relations with the Sudan. . . . The way it looks from outside is that Egypt is dictating to the Sudanese the form of self-government whereas Britain refuses to impose anything on the Sudanese and insists on consulting them.[1]

Salah ud-Din retorted that the British conception of Sudanese self-government was that it should be 'subservient to the Governor-General . . . in other words to the British Government'; and he asked, as he had already done on 26 August 1950, whether they would agree to a free plebiscite in the Sudan, to be preceded by the withdrawal of the British administration, troops, and officials. The Ambassador replied that a premature withdrawal 'would be fraught with the gravest consequences for Egypt, not least in the matter of Nile Waters'.[2] There might be a plebiscite under neutral supervision, or if Egypt would cooperate in ensuring that the Legislative Assembly were based on a wider popular vote, the opinion of the elected representatives of the people might suffice. The British Government would consider a plebiscite if it were a definite proposal of the Egyptian Government; but was it? To this Salah ud-Din could only answer:

You were perfectly right when you said that I did not mean it to be a proposal from the Egyptian Government, since it is impossible for Egypt to propose a plebiscite in a part of the Fatherland[3] but I only want . . . to know how serious you are [in] insisting on the consultation of the Sudanese. Indeed were you really serious in this respect you would have declared that you are prepared to withdraw from the Sudan in order that a free plebiscite may be carried out there.[4]

By this time the Foreign Office had learnt that on 1 July the merchant ship *Empire Roach*, carrying armaments for the Jordan Arab Legion, had been stopped outside the narrow entrance to

[1] Cmd. 8419, pp. 35–6; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 129–30.

[2] Sudanese members of the Legislative Assembly had recently complained that under the Nile Waters agreement of 1929 the Sudan was not receiving her fair share (see *Mideast Mirror* (Cairo), 19 May 1951, p. 13; 26 May, pp. 5–6).

[3] 'The Egypto–Sudanese Fatherland', as he had called it earlier in the conversation (Cmd. 8419, p. 35; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 128).

[4] Cmd. 8419, p. 38; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 132.

the Gulf of Aqaba, in the neighbourhood of what the Egyptians had indicated to be a prohibited zone, by an Egyptian corvette which had placed aboard an armed guard; these, according to the statement of the ship's master, looted the boatswain's store and wrecked the ship's radio before releasing her. The British Ambassador delivered a strong protest to the Egyptian Government with the remark that a claim for substantial damages would be made, and the Foreign Secretary expressed his 'strong indignation' to the Egyptian Ambassador in London.[1] The incident gave the Israel Government the opening which it had long been seeking, and on 12 July it called on the Security Council to give urgent consideration to the Egyptian embargo on the passage of goods for Israel through the Suez Canal.[2] On the 18th, when no satisfactory answer had been received from Egypt on the *Empire Roach* incident,[3] it was announced that the British Government had themselves decided to complain to the Security Council of Egypt's interference with shipping in the Canal.

[1] Statements to the House of Commons, 11 and 16 July 1951 (H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 490, cols, 424–7, 836–7), according to which preliminary details were received in London on 4 July and full details on the 9th; text of the British protest ibid. col. 1409.

The Egyptian authorities awaited the arrival of their corvette at Alexandria before opening an inquiry on the 14th. Their eventual Note (text in *Bourse Égyptienne*, 24 July) stated that the *Empire Roach* had been sighted within what was claimed as the prohibited zone, and had put on speed when called upon, first to signal her destination and cargo and then to stop. Her action had caused the corvette commander to suspect her of trying to run contraband to the Israeli port of Elath at the head of the Gulf, especially as a number of Bofors guns were visible on the *Empire Roach's* deck. While upholding the commander's action in general, the Egyptian authorities reprimanded him for detaining the *Empire Roach* nearly twenty-four hours after he had ascertained her destination, conduct which had perhaps been occasioned by the initial refusal of the *Empire Roach's* master to produce his bill of lading. The Egyptian Note rejected the British charges of looting and damaging the ship's stores, with the counter-complaint that these charges had been made discourteously and aggressively 'with the obvious intention of damaging Egypt's prestige and interests'.

An agreement to obviate any repetition of this incident was subsequently reached, whereby British merchant-ships bound for Aqaba would be inspected by the Egyptian authorities at Suez or the adjacent port of Adabiya and their clearance signalled to the Egyptian naval authorities at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba (*The Times* and *Bourse Égyptienne*, 2 August 1951).

[2] The United Nations Chief of Staff in Palestine had ruled that the Egyptian embargo was beyond the legal competence of the Mixed Armistice Commission, but was in itself 'an aggressive and hostile action' which should be referred to some higher competent authority such as the Security Council if Egypt did not desist (United Nations document S/2194, 13 June 1951; cf. Eden's questions of 19 June, H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 489, cols. 243–4).

[3] The tone of the Egyptian press remained aggressive. Thus the Wafdist *al-Balagh*: 'We know that we shall have to face a much more violent campaign than the present one. But we shall not withdraw, such is our supremacy over the British bluff. The Persians have succeeded in compelling London and Washington to recognize their nationalization of the oil company. Their nerves have withstood the cold war waged against them. We have been galvanized in the same alembic' (quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 20 July 1951).

In these strained circumstances the Egyptian Government rejected on the 19th an invitation to attend the conference on African defence which was to be held at Nairobi in the following month. Announcing this, the Foreign Minister said that he had told the British, as well as United States politicians on several occasions 'that Egypt will not stand on their side at any time so long as they insist on occupying our territory and on separating the Sudan from Egypt'.[1] Meeting the British Ambassador again on the 26th, he complained strongly of the action of the Governor-General of the Sudan in setting up on 31 March, at the request of the Legislative Assembly, a commission representative of Sudanese political opinion (except for the extreme pro-Egyptian Ashiqqa Party which persisted in its boycott) to consider further constitutional reform. Salah ud-Din insisted that the Egyptian Government's consent should have been sought in advance; that the forthcoming visit of some Sudanese members of the commission to London to seek British legal advice showed that the whole thing was 'a British policy supervised by the British Government';[2] and that the Governor-General's action was a violation of the assurances which he had received from Ernest Bevin in the previous December.[3] The British Ambassador replied that Egypt's wish to be kept informed of constitutional developments in the Sudan was not consistent with her refusal to recognize the Legislative Assembly;[4] there was surely no objection to members of the Commission visiting 'Paris, New York, Cairo or any other place in search of the desired legal advice'; and the assurances Bevin had given were 'no kind of a promise to halt the Sudan's progress towards self-government'. The Ambassador continued:

You must obviously see for yourself that if a burning desire for unity with Egypt exists as you maintain among the vast majority of the 8 million inhabitants of the Sudan, it would be utterly impossible

[1] *The Times*, 23 July 1951.

[2] Cmd. 8419, p. 40; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 135. *Bourse Égyptienne*, 22 October 1951, was to render the phrase: 'montée par les Britanniques de bout en bout'.

[3] See above, p. 134.

[4] Salah ud-Din's attempt at justification did not explain why they still encouraged their Ashiqqa supporters to boycott the Commission: 'The Egyptian Government's objection was made on the grounds of the trivial and insufficient powers given to the Legislative Assembly. If the Governor-General has finally come to recognize the soundness of the Egyptian Government's objection as evidenced by the fact that he formed a commission for amending the Legislative Assembly Ordinance and giving it wider powers, he should have realized that the matter requires consultation with the Egyptian Government more than with the British Government, since the Egyptian Government was the party who called attention to the insufficient powers . . . and to the necessity of expanding them' (Cmd. 8419, p. 41; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 136).

for 150 British political officials and one battalion[1] of British infantry to stand against it.

Remarking that the Egyptian Government had never seriously proposed a plebiscite,[2] he concluded: 'If Egypt really wants to find out what the views of the Sudanese are she will co-operate in ensuring the broadening of the electoral basis of the Legislative Assembly'. Salah ud-Din retorted that the British forces and officials in the Sudan were backed by their armed forces elsewhere and by the base they occupied in the Canal Zone 'to which we strongly object. . . . Now do you expect any answer about evacuation?' The Ambassador could hold out no hope of a speedy reply, for reasons already explained; 'in the meantime', he added, 'it seems to me that we have reached a deadlock and I can only express the hope that you will not say anything irrevocable in Parliament which will make it difficult to resume negotiations.'[3]

DEADLOCK, JULY–SEPTEMBER 1951

This was the position when the British Foreign Secretary spoke in a Middle East debate on 30 July before the British Parliament rose for the summer recess. Referring to the North Atlantic alliance and the current plans to extend it to include Greece and Turkey, Herbert Morrison said:

> The problem of the presence of British troops in Egypt is not now a purely Anglo–Egyptian problem. We are a Power bearing responsibilities in the Middle East on behalf of the rest of the Commonwealth and the Western Allies as a whole. Egypt is in some respects the key to the Middle East. As history bears out, it is mere delusion to pretend that Egypt can stand aside in any major conflict. Situated as she is on the bridge between two continents and upon a vital link in the sea communications between the Eastern and Western hemispheres, she is an objective of first importance for any aggressive Power in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant. . . . She can no more stand alone in the defence of her own territory than we can in the defence of our country. . . .
>
> In common with our North Atlantic and Commonwealth Allies, our own people have assumed a great burden in time of peace in order to make the world safe for those countries with whom we share a common heritage and civilisation. We invite Egypt's partnership as an equal in this common effort to make the world safe. We want to plan our relationship on an entirely new basis. If Egypt rejects that invitation, we cannot allow that to prejudice the fulfilment of our international responsibilities, but we shall not give

[1] *Sic*, *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 137; but rendered as 'une division' by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 22 October 1951.

[2] Salah ud-Din admitted this his Government 'excluded' it.

[3] Cmd. 8419, p. 42; *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 137–8.

up hope of persuading her to offer the spontaneous co-operation which will make our task immeasurably easier.

. . . We are now discussing with the Egyptian Government the future of the Sudan. Here again, we are faced with certain prejudices which prevent the Egyptian Government from approaching the problem in a realistic frame of mind. . . . We are only too anxious that Egypt should play her full and proper part with us in guiding the Sudanese along the path of political evolution. To insist, however, as certain Egyptians do, that there is no distinction between the Sudanese and Egyptian peoples is simply to ignore the facts. . . .[1]

In reply the Egyptian Foreign Minister declared to the Chamber of Deputies on 6 August that the ever present possibility that great-Power rivalries might flare up into a world war was no justification for asking Egypt to

tolerate indefinitely an occupation violating our sovereignty and independence. . . . British occupation of Egyptian territory is a standing reality, a stark violation of our independence, a wound to our national dignity and a vestige of hateful British imperialism which must be effaced. As to the threat of war against which we are warned from time to time, it is no more than a possibility which, pray God, would never materialise. Indeed it will never materialise if sovereign equality between nations prevailed and if each Major Power respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of smaller and weaker nations thus setting a good example of international conduct regardless of actions taken by others.[2]

He declared that the Government would, God willing, fulfil their promise to abrogate the Treaty before the next Speech from the Throne, and concluded with the remark that the British Foreign Secretary's recent statement had 'closed the door on current talks between the two Governments'.[3]

The British Ambassador called on Nahhas on 8 August to deny this, but apparently received no encouragement, and an Embassy communiqué to the Egyptian press on the 16th was no more successful. On the 17th the Egyptian Government received from the British Foreign Secretary a personal message, in which he said that his Government were considering new proposals to relieve the present deadlock. The Egyptian Government were said to have given London until 15 September to avert the threatened denunciation of the Treaty by a new offer;[4] but on 20 August the Egyptian Embassy in London issued (on instructions from Cairo) a communiqué in retaliation for the British Embassy's communiqué of the 16th, reiterating that Morrison's speech of 30 July had made it clear that Britain was

[1] H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 491, cols. 973–5.
[2] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 140–1. [3] ibid. p. 148.
[4] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 27 and 28 August 1951; cf. *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 161–2.

continuing to insist on maintaining forces in Egypt and on her taking part in joint defence measures in time of peace, as well as opposing the 'natural and historic' union of the Sudan with Egypt.[1] On 26 August, the anniversary of the signing of the 1936 Treaty, Nahhas Pasha told crowds while he was travelling from Alexandria to Cairo that their 'magnificent support' gave him the strength to 'face the imperialists and pursue the realization of our demands'. Extremist demonstrations in Cairo on the same day were prevented from assaulting the British Embassy only by the use of tear-gas.

Since the beginning of the month, indeed, the British representative at the Security Council had been giving active support to Israel's complaint against the Egyptian embargo on the passage of goods to Israel through the Suez Canal. For some time the United States Government, hoping for some conciliatory move from Egypt, were unwilling to press the matter, but on 6 August they joined with Britain and France in a draft resolution calling upon Egypt to cease her interference with shipping passing through the Canal. On 27 August the Egyptian delegate countered by saying that his country's actions were nothing in comparison with Britain's violation of the neutrality of the Canal (as provided for by the Constantinople Convention of 1888): had she not constructed fortifications of all kinds along its banks, disembarked and embarked troops, munitions, and war materials, and revictualled her ships in its ports in two world wars? He continued:

> The United Kingdom wrote into the 1936 Treaty provisions which cannot be reconciled with those established by the Constantinople Convention of 1888 and, worse still, which have been so exploited and abused by the United Kingdom as to constitute, in contravention of the 1888 Convention and of the 1936 Treaty itself, a continued and sustained series of violations. A reading of this now decrepit and moribund treaty, which was imposed on Egypt while British armed forces roamed all over the country and around it, will make this quite clear.

Mahmud Fawzi followed this attack by reading a lesson to the United States on her duty to uphold 'the unfaltering and untendentious upholding of truth, justice, and the resolutions of the United Nations, including those on the Arab refugees', instead of 'the spreading of a cloak of forgiveness on Israeli wrongs, or the ogling of votes to support these wrongs against the rights of the Arabs'.[2]

During these six weeks of debate the Soviet delegate to the

[1] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 159–60.
[2] Security Council, *Official Records*, 6th year, 555th meeting, pp. 9–11.

Security Council had hitherto remained silent; but it had been noticed that, whereas in January the Egyptian Foreign Minister, on his return to Cairo from London, had replied vigorously to a demonstration of several hundred university and secondary-school students who had shouted pro-Soviet slogans at him,[1] more recently the Egyptian Government, persisting in its resistance to the British proposals for joint defence, had tolerated the appearance of a number of new left-wing weeklies which campaigned vigorously against any association with the Western democracies for the defence of the Middle East. One of these weeklies, *al-Katib*, was the official organ of the 'Egyptian Committee of the Partisans of Peace'.[2] More recently still, the Government had shown some concern at the spread of this propaganda, which found ready fuel in the general discontent caused by the continuous rise in the cost of living while the riches of the plutocratic minority were ever more extravagantly displayed. But when on 29 August, as the Egyptian case at the Security Council seemed to be facing defeat, the Soviet delegate broke his long silence to call for an adjournment and hinted at his use of the veto, the Egyptian Foreign Minister greeted this intervention as a 'turning point toward the path of right and justice and real stability in the Middle East'; the Government newspaper *al-Balagh* hastened to 'assure the Russian Government that Egypt's gratitude would be multiplied should this support be continued at other council sessions'; and the left-wing Egyptian press prepared special articles glorifying the Soviet Union as 'Egypt's only great friend' and 'noble ally in the common struggle against Western imperialism'.[3] The Egyptian delegate to the Security Council had three interviews with the Soviet delegate, but unconfirmed reports stated that the Soviet price of her support was that Egyptian 'Partisans of Peace' and other fellow-travellers should no longer be harassed by the police, and that Egypt should support Russia at the forthcoming conference on the Japanese peace treaty. On the other hand, the Israel Government took action: the Foreign

[1] One of their demands was that Egypt should support the decisions of the Warsaw Communist 'Peace Congress', according to the Communist *Moyen-Orient*, January 1951; see pp. 6–7, articles entitled 'L'opinion égyptienne est hostile aux négociations avec l'Angleterre' and 'Dialogue avec le peuple'.

[2] *Christian Science Monitor*, Cairo correspondent, 18 August 1951. The Government had also raised, on 2 May, the ban under which the Muslim Brotherhood had been placed since December 1948, and this popular organization of militant Islam immediately resumed its activities. When the Treaty was abolished in October 1951, it was to demand a declaration of war on Britain, the right for all Egyptians to carry arms without licence, and legal immunity for attacks on individual British subjects.

[3] *Manchester Guardian*, 31 August 1951; *New York Times*, 1 September; *Christian Science Monitor*, Cairo correspondent, 18 September.

Minister summoned the Soviet Minister in Tel Aviv; the Israel Ambassador to Russia hurried back to his post from the World Zionist Conference in Jerusalem and had a long talk with Gromyko; and the chief Israeli delegate to the United Nations talked with the Soviet delegate. The Egyptian Minister to Moscow, however, could not make contact with the Kremlin; and when the Security Council on 1 September voted on the resolution calling on Egypt to end the Canal embargo against Israel, the Soviet delegate abstained. The pro-Government *Journal d'Égypte* wrote that whereas Russia had deceived Roosevelt and Churchill for three years, 'with us the devil's farce lasted only three days'—this in a front-page editorial entitled 'The Devil is always a Devil.'[1]

During the fortnight which followed, of waiting for some new British proposal to supersede the Treaty of which the Egyptian Government and the politically indoctrinated public were now determined to be rid, the festival of 'Id al-Adha occurred on 12 September; and on this occasion Nahhas, addressing a crowd of several thousand at Alexandria, was reported to have bitterly criticized those who stood aside from the common enterprise and helped the 'imperialists': 'the destruction caused by the last war ought to be a lesson for those who were not thinking of true democracy, but were leading the world into a third conflict'.[2] On the 14th, the anniversary of the British entry into Cairo in 1882, seventeen 'Partisans of Peace' and the leader of the 'Socialist Party of the Fallah' (a Cairo lawyer) were arrested for endangering public security. Meanwhile, at Ottawa the North Atlantic Council was coming at last to the consideration of admitting Turkey and Greece to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which Turkey (supported in this by the United States) had postulated as a necessary preliminary to the working out of an international defence pact for the Eastern Mediterranean. On 20 September the *Bourse Égyptienne* published, on the authority of the London correspondent of the Agence Française de Presse, an intelligent forecast of the proposals that were in fact to be presented to the Egyptian Government on 13 October. As now outlined, these were that Egypt should become an equal partner in an Allied organization for Middle East defence whose other members would be France, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and probably Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, together with 'other interested countries'; on this condition Britain would agree to the supersession of the 1936 Treaty and would withdraw from Egypt

[1] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 8 September 1951; *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 September 1951. [2] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 14 September 1951.

such British forces as were not allocated to the Allied Middle East Command by agreement between Egypt and the other founder members of the Organization; the Organization would help Egypt to train and equip her own forces;[1] and proposals for the future of the Sudan would be made separately. At the same time, the Soviet Minister was reported to have handed to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry on 18 September a Note warning her that his Government would regard Egypt's participation in such an organization as 'an unfriendly if not hostile act'.[2] On the 21st the British Ambassador delivered to Nahhas a new personal message from Herbert Morrison, in which the latter asked the Egyptian Government not to act in respect of the Treaty until they received the new proposals which were now in an advanced state of preparation.[3] Nahhas was reported to have told the Cabinet on the 23rd that Anglo–Egyptian relations had taken a turn for the better; but meanwhile a Cabinet committee was at work drafting a Bill for the unilateral denunciation of the Treaty in case the awaited proposals did not satisfy Egypt's two unvarying demands. On 29 September the *Bourse Égyptienne* reported official circles as saying that the Government would unquestionably resort to denunciation if they did not soon hear from London: this would not prevent them from subsequently entering into negotiations to place Anglo–Egyptian relations on a new footing; but once the Treaty had been denounced, the British occupying forces would lose their exemption from Egyptian customs duties, legal process, and taxation, and the many thousands of Egyptians now engaged in employment or contractual services with the British forces would be forbidden to continue in these functions.

Everything, however, was against the speedy delivery of a new message from London: Turkey and Greece had been admitted to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on 20 September, but General Bradley and the British and French Chiefs of Staff were now to visit Ankara to discuss Turkey's relationship with the proposed international Middle East Command; the Chiefs of Staff of the British Commonwealth were in London discussing their part in the new command; and the British Labour Government, handicapped by the precariousness of its majority, by the strain imposed on its leaders by six harassing years, and facing the onset of the grimmest of Britain's series of post-war financial crises, had obtained the royal assent to a dissolution of Parliament for a general election. The British

[1] Text of the four-Power proposals of 13 October in Cmd. 8419, pp. 43–5.

[2] *Manchester Guardian*, Alexandria correspondent, 20 September 1951. This was, however, officially denied in Alexandria, according to *Bourse Égyptienne*, 21 September.

[3] *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 165.

decision, announced on 1 October, to withdraw the remaining staff of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company from its great Abadan refinery marked the climax of the Persian Government's six months' successful defiance of Britain and was a blow to British prestige in the Middle East even more severe than that it had suffered at the hands of the Zionist terrorists four years before. A writer in the Egyptian Government organ *al-Balagh* commented: 'This is the example that we must follow in our struggle with the British. It is only the weak whom they oppress. Their prestige in the East is finished. . . .'[1] The United States Ambassador to Egypt was reported to have assured the Egyptian Foreign Minister on 27 September that if Egypt would take part in the proposed defence organization, his Government would press Britain to adjust her position to the Egyptian requirements. This was attractive to the Egyptian Government, especially in view of the repeated American interventions which appeared to have distracted the British Foreign Office in its recent handling of the Persian problem. Egyptian newspapers at this time expressed hopes that United States support might be diverted from Israel to Egypt and that the United States might become a more generous supplier of armaments than Britain, who in recent years had made them dependent on political considerations.

However, the Wafd Government had now virtually deprived themselves of any possibility of manœuvre or bargaining. They had antagonized the conservative parties of the Opposition by using their powers to manage the elections and appointments to the Senate with such partiality[2] that no single leader of any of the Opposition parties was now left in either House of Parliament. There was widespread discontent at the uncontrolled rise in the cost of living, now higher than at any time during the war, and at the abundant evidence of corruption and nepotism which had already resulted in the resignation of two Ministers[3] and the Prosecutor-General and the transfer of the Minister of Justice. The Opposition, supported by the King, were pressing for the enactment of a law to inquire into the origins of recently acquired fortunes that threatened to ruin the Wakil and Sirag ud-Din families and other Wafdist *nouveaux-riches*.[4] By September Nahhas appears to have decided that the

[1] Quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 4 October 1951.

[2] The parties now in opposition had in their time used this stratagem with equal effect against the Wafd; see above, p. 21.

[3] They were the respected Finance Minister Zaki 'Abd ul-Muta'al and the would-be reformer Dr Ahmad Husain at the Ministry of Social Affairs.

[4] Fu'ad Sirag ud-Din had been secretary-general of the Wafd Party since 1947. Appointed Minister of the Interior on the formation of the Government in 1950, he had added to it the portfolio of Finance on the resignation of 'Abd ul-Muta'al, and thus had a virtual monopoly of power and patronage. Four of his brothers

King had decided to dismiss him, and that the only course left to him was the patriotic appeal of abrogating the British alliance. Egypt's allies and associates would have to bear the consequences of the intransigence that had become for the Wafd no longer an indulgence but a vital necessity. It was thus that in response to a mediating approach made by the United States Ambassador on 27 September Salah ud-Din was reported to have replied that Egypt would always adhere to her thesis, that she would undertake to study the new proposals to be made to her only if they were based on the principles of the complete evacuation and unification of the Nile Valley.[1] On 6 October Herbert Morrison sent Nahhas a message that his Government confidently hoped to be able to make a communication to the Egyptian Government by the 10th.[2] It is stated to be doubtful whether Nahhas informed the King of this communication before drafting the decrees for the abrogation of the 1936 Treaty and the Sudan Conventions of 1899, but to be certain that he threatened to resign and denounce the King as unpatriotic if he refused his signature to them. Thus on 8 October, five days before the delivery of the British proposals for Egypt's participation as an equal in an international Middle East Command and for the setting-up of an international commission to supervise the constitutional development of the Sudan,[3] Nahhas recited to the Chamber of Deputies eighteen examples of the unilateral denunciation of treaties—among them Nazi Germany's denunciations of Part V of the Versailles Treaty, of the Locarno Treaty, of the German–Polish declaration of non-aggression of 1934, and of the Anglo–German Naval Treaty —and tabled the abrogation decrees.[4] These were passed by the Egyptian Parliament on 15 October, two days after the delivery of the four-Power proposals for a Middle East Command, and were officially communicated to the British Government on the 27th, in a Note which claimed that this double denunciation 're-establishes in the Sudan the State which existed before the British occupation'; King Faruq had, in fact, been proclaimed in Cairo 'King of Egypt and the Sudan'.

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had become millionaires. (See Alvin Rosenfeld, 'Egypt's Reckless Gamble', *The Reporter* (New York), 13 November 1951, p. 7).

[1] *Bourse Égyptienne*, 4 October 1951.

[2] Cmd. 8419, p. 5; *Egyptian Green Book*, p. 166, and cf. p. vii. The Wafdist *al-Balagh* had remarked: 'No one waits for far-reaching proposals from a weak Cabinet on the eve of an election campaign in which it is doomed to defeat. Such a Cabinet cannot be expected to resolve the Egyptian question in so short and critical a time. . . . There is no chance of the British proposals being made before the election, unless this new proposal is worse than its predecessors' (quoted by *Bourse Égyptienne*, 5 October 1951).

[3] Cmd. 8419, pp. 43–6. [4] *Egyptian Green Book*, pp. 171–6.

The new British Conservative Government returned by the general election replied on 6 November that the 1936 Treaty had contained no provision for its unilateral denunciation at any time, but they were willing to open negotiations for its revision.

Meanwhile they regard the Treaty, and the Condominium Agreements of 1899, as remaining in force, and intend fully to maintain their rights under those instruments. In addition, they hold the Egyptian Government responsible for any breach of the peace and any damage to life or property that may result from their purported abrogation of those instruments.[1]

[1] Texts in Cmd. 8419, pp. 46–7. The United States Secretary of State on 17 October expressed 'genuine regret' that the Egyptian Government had rejected the four-Power proposals, and stated that his Government considered their action in abrogating the Treaty and the Sudan Conventions to be without validity; Britain was fully justified in maintaining her treaty rights (*New York Times*, 18 October 1951).

CHAPTER XI

ANGLO-EGYPTIAN FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS

EGYPTIAN FINANCIAL AND MONETARY POLICY

UP to 1885, Egyptian currency was in a chaotic state. The earlier reports of the Caisse de la Dette Publique more than once refer to the multiplicity of currencies and coins which it was forced to accept in payment of taxes. In 1885, however, a monetary reform law was passed by which Egyptian currency was placed on a gold basis. The unit was a gold coin, the Egyptian pound, of 8·5 grams weight, ·875 fine. This was subdivided into 100 piastres and 1,000 millièmes.

The Sterling Exchange System

The same law enacted that the British sovereign should have the privilege of legal tender at the rate £1 equal to 975 millièmes. On the basis of their respective gold content, the mint exchange value of the sovereign was 984·53 millièmes, so that the legal tender value given to the sovereign was 1·0 per cent below its value when in mint condition. The reason was that a sovereign of full weight was rarely found, for there existed a fraternity ready to earn the small profit that sweating could obtain. The 20-franc gold piece of the Latin Union and the Turkish pound were 'admitted to circulation' at prescribed rates. They were not legal tender and a creditor could refuse to accept them in settlement of his claim, but if he agreed to accept them, the value at which this was to be done was laid down.

In point of fact the main currency of the country was the British gold sovereign and half-sovereign. The Egyptian pound was found and the optional 20-franc pieces and—very rarely—the Turkish pound, but the British coin did most of the heavy monetary work of the country. Every autumn an outflow of gold from London took place, directed to Egypt for the purpose of moving the cotton crop. Bank-notes were not introduced until after the foundation of the National Bank of Egypt, but as the bank-notes had to be covered at least to the extent of 50 per cent in gold, their introduction did not stop the seasonal outflow of gold from London. In 1906, when there was a serious financial crisis in Egypt, it amounted to as much as £9 million and con-

tributed to the rise in the London bank-rate that year to 6 per cent.

The National Bank of Egypt was founded in 1898 on the initiative of the late Sir Ernest Cassel, who took up half the capital, the other half being taken by two Alexandrian bankers. The National Bank was established as an Egyptian bank with its head office in Cairo, by Khedival decree, and it was given a monopoly of the issue of bank-notes. The notes were to be covered as to at least half by gold and as to the balance by securities approved by the Egyptian Government.

Since the notes were freely convertible into gold coin, Egypt was on the gold standard until 2 August 1914. On that date, owing to the threat of war, a Khedival decree was issued suspending the convertibility of the notes and making them legal tender until otherwise ordered. The requirement, however, as to the gold cover remained in force, and the notes issued were covered by gold as to at least 50 per cent up to September 1916, though after November 1914 it was provided that the gold might be deposited in the Bank of England, earmarked for the National Bank. In September 1916, however, the Bank of England informed the National Bank that no further earmarking of gold could take place without the approval of H.M. Treasury. Faced by the need of an expanded paper currency to finance the cotton crop, the National Bank obtained from the Financial Adviser, Lord Edward Cecil, authority to issue notes according to requirements, providing as a guarantee British Treasury bills in lieu of gold. This measure was to be 'temporary until further notice', and the authorization indemnified the National Bank, the Governor and the Directors 'against any consequences of the action taken'. Egypt thus entered on the monetary regime of a sterling exchange standard, which lasted till 14 July 1948.

A few days subsequently, the Governor of the Bank was notified by the Ministry of Finance that this new measure would place it in a more favourable exchange position than the other commercial banks and that it would be necessary to take such steps as would equalize the advantages. Accordingly an undertaking, of the nature of a gentleman's agreement, was made by the Governor of the National Bank that he would transfer money between London and Cairo for banks in amounts of £100,000 at the uniform rate of 975 millièmes per £1 sterling with no other charge than the cost of the cable making the transfer. Thus was evolved an economical, elastic, and efficient monetary system which proved to be of the greatest service to the country. As the commercial banks required Egyptian currency for buying cotton, their London offices or representatives pro-

vided sterling with which the London agency of the National Bank bought British Treasury bills which were placed in the Bank of England as cover, and notes to a corresponding value, calculated at the fixed rate of exchange, 975 millièmes for £1 sterling, were issued in Cairo. The crop once sold, and Egypt having thus acquired a stock of sterling, the commercial banks were in a position to provide their clients with foreign exchange to meet financial or commercial obligations either in London or elsewhere against payment in Egyptian currency, and the additional notes which had been issued in Egypt during the cotton season flowed back to the banks and were withdrawn from circulation.

The system was economical, for whereas gold earns no interest and its transport to Cairo involved substantial costs for freight, insurance, and loss from wear and tear, not to mention the risks and delays of war-time, the transfer of the Treasury bills (which were deposited with the Bank of England to the credit of the Issue Department of the National Bank) was immediate, required a minimum of expense and insurance, and moreover the bills earned interest (which was paid to the Egyptian Government) during their service as cover. In practice the Banking Department of the National Bank maintained a reserve of Treasury bills in the keeping of the Bank of England, the transfer of which to the credit of the Issue Department was a matter of a code cable and a book-keeping entry in London. Nothing could be simpler.

The system, however, was open to possible abuse. Although the National Bank had been authorized to accept British Treasury bills in lieu of gold, sterling, in fact, depreciated against gold and the link established between the Egyptian pound and sterling meant that this depreciation automatically extended to the Egyptian currency. Moreover, while the depreciation of sterling was due to the British Government's war inflation, the system by which any payments in sterling could be transferred into Egyptian currency created, under the conditions of war, an inflationary strain on Egypt, despite her prudent financial policy. Any person or institution in possession of £100,000 in London could get his bankers to exchange that for £E97,500 in Cairo, with which he could buy Egyptian property or exportable produce, or simply operate on the Alexandria Cotton Futures Market or the two Stock Exchanges. The extra currency thus brought into circulation inevitably tended to raise prices.

The extensive use of this mechanism by the British Government for meeting its war expenditure created considerable

difficulties for Egypt. It forced money into circulation and created a wave of inflation, with the result that the cost-of-living index rose in 1920 to 237 as compared with 100 in 1913–14. Of course, Egypt acquired, in return, sterling assets which were estimated at £151 million by 1919, but these were rapidly utilized and created no problem. It is estimated that some £50 million was spent on repatriating Egyptian securities; another £50 million was employed in replenishing stocks of commodities or reconditioning capital goods deteriorated from wear and tear during the war; the third £50 million was stated to have been lost in speculation on foreign exchange.[1] The rapid utilization of the sterling balances helped to draw off the surplus purchasing power in Egypt and the inflation was not of long duration. It culminated in the boom of 1920, after which there was, first, a heavy fall in prices and then, a slow further decline during the next ten years.

Egypt maintained her sterling exchange policy after the First World War, retaining British Treasury bills in the note cover and not attempting to convert them into gold, as she might have done after 1925, when Britain re-established the gold bullion standard. On 21 September 1931, Britain was again forced to abandon gold, and on 28 September Isma'il Sidqi Pasha called a meeting of banking and financial interests to Alexandria to consider the question whether Egypt should remain on the gold standard or follow sterling. Opinion was nearly unanimous in favour of the latter policy, which was adopted. There was really no alternative, as most of Egypt's reserves were held in sterling and had depreciated with sterling. But even if this had not been the case, the decision was probably sound in the case of an agricultural country like Egypt whose customers were for the most part in the sterling area. South Africa, on the contrary, tried to adhere to gold, but in the end was obliged to rejoin sterling, and even the United States found itself compelled in April 1933 to abandon the recognized gold parity of the dollar.

By this decision, Egypt tied her currency and her economy to that of Great Britain. This gave her the advantage of partnership in the sterling area but also meant that she was bound to follow its vicissitudes. The alternative would have been a sharp deflation, which would have created much distress and might not have been effective. As the result of following sterling, Egypt escaped the need for deflation; she never suffered so deep a depression as the dollar countries, and her economic

[1] This statement depends on an estimate made by Sir Bertram Hornsby, then Governor of the National Bank of Egypt. When challenged with the remark that the amount appeared to be very high, Sir Bertram replied that 'he did not think it over high: speculation was very heavy'.

recovery was more rapid than theirs. The commercial community in Egypt enjoyed the undeniable benefits of a fixed rate of exchange with the sterling area countries which were their chief customers, whether as buyers or sellers. Until 1939, therefore, the sterling link was on the whole beneficial to Egypt and gave rise to no particular stresses. But after the outbreak of the Second World War, the situation changed. The automatic acceptance of sterling, as cover for the issue of notes in Egypt, led to the accumulation of the sterling balances, which will be dealt with more fully later, to a serious inflation of internal prices and cost of living, and ultimately to the devaluation of the Egyptian pound, together with sterling, in 1949. In the meantime, however, Egypt, like the other countries of the sterling area, had to set up an exchange control system and to surrender all foreign exchange earnings to the sterling area pool in London, though in return she received from London the foreign exchange required for her essential needs. The arrangement was worked as fairly as possible between the Bank of England and the National Bank: and holders of foreign currency in Egypt were treated more favourably than elsewhere as, although they were required to report their holdings of foreign exchange, on the establishment of the control, they were not required to surrender anything beyond their subsequent earnings. However, the estimate of 'essential needs' naturally gave rise to some differences of opinion between the two Governments, and in 1944 the system was tightened up under the 'Hard Currency Agreement' which provided Egypt with a definite quota of hard currencies from time to time. Under this agreement, which remained in force until July 1947 (when Egypt left the sterling area), according to Egyptian statistics, Egypt received hard currencies to the equivalent of £E32·5 million and sold to the London pool the equivalent of £E26·7 million. It is understood, however, that during this period any amounts by which the hard currencies received by the Suez Canal Company in respect of shipping dues exceeded the Company's hard currency disbursements, were banked direct in London and not credited to Egypt: and if these receipts were taken into account, they would have made a considerable difference to the position of Egypt.

The Sterling Balances

As a result of the link established between the Egyptian currency and sterling, the process by which Egypt had accumulated sterling during the First World War was repeated, but with much greater intensity, during the Second World War. To

maintain and support the large armies concentrated in Egypt and the Levant, Britain required to obtain supplies and services from Egypt or the Sudan on the largest scale possible. These had to be paid for in Egyptian currency, and this currency was obtained through the mechanism already explained. The British Treasury invited the banks in Egypt, and particularly the National Bank, to tender supplies of local currency against payment in sterling: this sterling was then invested in British Treasury bills which could be used by the National Bank as cover for the notes it was required to issue in Egypt. With these notes the British Government paid for any goods and service they required.

In peace-time the procedure did not disturb the balance of payments between the two countries. Britain regularly bought, for example, cotton from Egypt with sterling and Egypt used the sterling to buy manufactured goods from Britain. But during the war Britain's expenditure in Egypt greatly increased, while, on the other hand, her exports to Egypt for civilian needs declined. Thus, during the war trade tended to become a one-way traffic; and as Egypt could not obtain sufficient goods from Britain, much of the sterling she received accumulated and became the so-called 'sterling balances'.

There has been considerable misunderstanding about these balances in both countries. In Egypt, in 1947, a Cairo newspaper hired sandwich-men to parade carrying boards with the inscription 'Great Britain owes every man, woman, and child in Egypt £E28'. This was a travesty of the facts. All claims on Britain had been paid off in Egyptian currency by the British authorities, and the corresponding sterling was held by the Egyptian banks. But when this sterling began to be used to purchase British goods, there was an outcry in the United Kingdom against sending Egypt so many 'unrequited exports'. This expression is also a travesty of the facts. Exports they undoubtedly were, but not unrequited: they were the counterpart of the goods and services obtained by Britain from Egypt during the war. The suggestion, to which some British Ministers at times gave countenance, that the sterling balances accumulated by the Egyptian banks could somehow be written down or dishonoured, on the ground that the money had been spent on the defence of Egypt, gave rise to strong resentment in Egypt. Any 'counter-claim' by the British Government ought evidently to have been made to the Egyptian Government before the sterling transactions took place and could not legitimately be raised against the banks in Egypt, which had supplied Egyptian currency against sterling, in good faith. Happily, the suggestion that these balances could be scaled down unilaterally was formally

renounced by the British Government in the agreement of 1951.

The British Government required the Egyptian currency to purchase supplies and services. The supplies included raw cotton (to a total value estimated at some £E65 million), meat and other foodstuffs for the troops, cotton cloth for uniforms and equipment, cement and other materials for defence works, oil from the Suez refineries, etc. The services covered use of railways, ports, and houses, but in the main represented manpower. Porters were required to unload supply ships: additional staff were needed to work the railways: labour was required for making roads and airfields. Servants of all kinds were required for camp duties, and many Egyptians were recruited and trained as mechanics in repair shops. There is a large redundant population in Egypt, not fully employed on the land, and it was from this reservoir that the British armies drew the man-power they needed: and it was their augmented wages, coming on a market where the supplies were limited and, indeed, reduced by the requirements of the armies, that led to the rapid increase of prices.

Thus, at the end of the war Egypt was left rich in sterling but impoverished in regard to all types of supplies. Her equipment —railways, power plants, pumping stations—had been overworked during the war and starved of proper maintenance and renewals: her people, while more or less adequately fed, had been denuded of manufactured goods: the fellahin had received for years no clothing except a few yards of cotton cloth and many were in rags. Altogether, there was an immense deficiency of stocks to make good, and though the supply of consumer goods came forward fairly quickly, the deficiency in capital goods continued for many years after the war.

Above all, Egypt was left with a problem of internal inflation. The increased volume of purchasing power had enabled the Government revenues to expand and the budget was balanced without difficulty, until the Palestine war. But the level of prices and cost of living had increased to three times the pre-war level and the discontent thereby engendered was diverted by the Egyptian authorities against the British Government, on the ground that their failure to supply goods had caused the rise of prices. Thus the question of the sterling balances added an additional faggot to the flames of political controversy between the two countries.

The Sterling Assets

In January 1946 the Minister of Finance caused a census to be made of sterling assets in the hands of banks, insurance com-

panies, and similar financial institutions and also of private individuals. The grand total elicited approached £E450 millions.[1] This figure, however, includes private investments and other holdings that do not come under the definition of 'sterling assets' of 30 June 1947, viz. sterling balances of banks in Egypt. The first precise figure of these balances was that obtained from the London Head Offices or Agents of banks operating in Egypt, arising from the application of the regulations of 30 June 1947. They amounted to a total of £356 million net.[2]

Not all, however, of those sterling assets arose from the British expenditure during the war. The National Bank held £22 million of securities in its note cover in 1939 and it is estimated that banks in Egypt held an aggregate of some £60 million in London before the war.

According to estimates given by A. R. Prest, British military expenditure in Egypt was as follows:[3]

Year	*Expenditure £ million*
1939	5·0
1940	15·2
1941	47·7
1942	75·2
1943	76·8
1944	56·7
TOTAL	£276·6

There were, however, expenditures other than military. The purchase of the cotton crop cost at least £27 million in the 1940–1 season and some £14 million in 1941–2, together £43 million. And there were other expenses, not necessarily paid out of the military war chest—diplomatic, secret service, etc. The piling up of sterling did not cease with 1944. In 1945 there were still strong contingents in Egypt, Cairo continued to be an important base and, above all, the manufacture of munitions did not cease. It would be futile to attempt an estimate of expenditure to the middle of June 1947. On the other hand, there was a great increase of civilian imports, mostly paid for in sterling, so that the net inward flow of sterling was diminished. Even when the imports came from dollar countries, the requisite dollars were bought with sterling, so lessening the total sterling

[1] Statement by the Minister of Finance in the Chamber of Deputies in December 1947.

[2] This figure given in the *Economic Bulletin* of the National Bank of Egypt represents net 'spot assets' at 15 July 1947 when the agreement came into force. If sterling set aside to meet outstanding confirmed credits at that date is included, the total gross figure is believed to have been about £378 million.

[3] *War Economies of Primary Producing Countries* (Cambridge University Press, 1948), p. 128.

holding. The one factor of which we are certain is that the sterling assets amounted to £356 million at the close of business on 12 July 1947.

Negotiations for Settlement of Sterling Balances, 1947–51

The settlement of these balances was the subject of protracted financial negotiations, commencing in 1947.

In June of that year the British Government announced that they intended to allow a part of the balances to be made freely convertible into any currency (No. 1 sterling) but to freeze the rest (No. 2 sterling) so that it could not be drawn upon at all. The Egyptian Government were invited to send a delegation to London to negotiate an agreement on this basis.

A financial agreement[1] was signed in London on 30 June which provided:

(1) that the total sterling assets of banks in Egypt on 12 July 1947 should be ascertained and agreed;

(2) that an amount equal to the cover for confirmed credits outstanding on 30 June together with sums of £8 million (the release for the year 1947) and £12 million (as a working balance), as well as some additional amounts in respect of past transactions and all future sterling earnings in respect of current transactions, should be credited to the No. 1 account and be freely available for payments in any currency area;

(3) that the remainder of the balances should be credited to the No. 2 account; these could be invested or reinvested but could not otherwise be drawn upon;

(4) the balances of accounts of private residents in Egypt should remain free, unless they were requisitioned by the Egyptian Government.

In so far as the sterling not frozen was to be freely convertible into any currency, there was no longer any meaning in belonging to the 'sterling area' and the chairman of the Egyptian delegation announced that Egypt would no longer be a member of the sterling area.

Within six weeks, however, the position radically changed, as the United Kingdom found itself compelled to abrogate the free convertibility of No. 1 sterling and to limit its use to the sterling area (including the transferable sterling area). This decision, which the United Kingdom was forced to take owing to heavy losses of gold and dollars to other creditor countries, altered the whole basis on which the Egyptian delegation had agreed to the 'freezing' of the bulk of their sterling assets and aroused strong criticism in the Egyptian press as being a breach

[1] Cmd. 7163 of 1947.

of faith, particularly as Egypt had not converted her No. 1 sterling into dollars to any abnormal extent during the six weeks when sterling was convertible. The Egyptian Government's protestations, however, met with a 'non possumus' attitude in London.

The first agreement expired on 31 December 1947 and a new agreement[1] was signed on 5 January 1948 under which the main provisions of the first agreement were maintained in force for a further year, subject to the following modifications:

(*a*) £21 million sterling was released from No. 2 to No. 1 account for the year 1948—this sterling to be available for payments to the sterling area and transferable sterling account of any other country: and a further £11 million was released for the working balance;

(*b*) dollars to the equivalent of £6,250,000 were made available to the Egyptian Government against payment in transferable sterling;

(*c*) the United Kingdom Government also agreed to sell approximately $4-million worth of gold against payment in transferable sterling, so as to enable the Egyptian Government to meet their additional gold subscriptions to the International Monetary Fund and Bank.

The Egyptian Government reserved their rights on a number of points, in particular to claim a share of the British gold reserves accumulated while Egypt was in the sterling area and to claim that their sterling balances should have the benefit of the gold guarantees granted to some other countries.

These agreements operated, on the whole, smoothly. The sums 'released' to Egypt were not necessarily spent: they were available for spending. The extent to which the balances of Egypt were actually drawn upon depended largely on the extent to which these balances were simultaneously being augmented by fresh sterling receipts derived from current sales of, for example, cotton to the United Kingdom. The total sterling assets of Egypt were reduced by about £6 million in the period of the first agreement (15 July–31 December 1947): in 1948 they were reduced by £8 million. This reduction was only made possible by a change in the Egyptian exchange control procedure. When Egypt left the sterling area in 1947, imports from the United Kingdom were made subject to a licensing system: in the earlier part of 1948, the sterling balances were actually increasing and the Egyptian Government decided in March 1948 to grant an open general licence for all imports

[1] Cmd. 7305 of 1948.

from the sterling area. The same facility was subsequently extended to 'soft currency' countries.

There was, however, one point of controversy which excited some feeling in Egypt. Under these agreements, Egypt was free to use her sterling as a means of payment to any country which would accept transferable sterling in settlement of 'current transactions'. Egypt had found it possible to import substantial amounts of grain from Canada against payment of sterling through various Continental intermediaries, who were prepared to accept sterling at a certain discount. These transactions were objected to in London, and Egypt was accused of having contravened the agreement. The Egyptians denied this and claimed that, on the text of the agreement, such transactions were justified. What the British authorities wanted was to tighten up the agreement and this was done when the next negotiations took place, resulting in the signature of the third agreement[1] on 31 March 1949.

This agreement—applicable for the calendar year 1949—again followed the main lines of the previous agreements, subject to the modification mentioned above by which the use of transferable sterling was limited to '*direct* current transactions'. Dollars to the value of £5 million were supplied to the Egyptian Government against payment in transferable sterling, and £12 million was released from the frozen balances to the No. 1 account. It was also provided that if the total balances in No. 1 account fell below £45 million, further releases, in blocks of £3 million, would be authorized up to a maximum of £18 million. Apart from these adjustments of releases and dollar payments, the main innovations in this agreement were:

(*a*) the British Government undertook to use their best endeavours to secure the supply to Egypt during the year of a list of essential goods to the value of £47,430,000;

(*b*) the British Government expressed their readiness to supply a list of petroleum products to a total value of £5 million, as well as essential equipment for the oil companies operating in Egypt, against payment in sterling.

During the currency of this agreement, the Egyptian sterling balances were drawn down more heavily—by some £26 million—but it is hard to say whether this was due to increased exports from the United Kingdom to Egypt or to reduced purchases by the United Kingdom from Egypt.

The third agreement, though made for the year 1949, was, after lengthy discussion, renewed, by an exchange of letters

[1] Cmd. 7675 of 1949.

dated 10 September 1950,[1] for the year 1950 except that no dollars were to be provided by the United Kingdom in 1950 but the value of petroleum products to be supplied was increased to £7½ million. This was accepted by the Egyptian Government as a working arrangement, pending the resumption of negotiations in November 1950 with a view to 'a permanent or at least a long-term settlement' of the question. The desire of Egypt for such a settlement was stimulated by the devaluation of sterling in September 1949, which reduced the value of the frozen sterling balances in terms of hard currencies by some 40 per cent. The Egyptian Government lost no time in announcing a similar devaluation of the Egyptian pound—which illustrates the strong influence of sterling on the Egyptian economy, even though Egypt was no longer in the sterling area. But the Egyptian negotiators were blamed for not having insisted on a gold guarantee of the frozen balances, and considerable criticism was directed against Sir Stafford Cripps for his sudden volte-face on the question of devaluation.

The negotiations for a new agreement accordingly began in November 1950 but it was not signed until 1 July 1951. This agreement was in two parts. The first part—the Sterling Releases Agreement[2]—provided:

(*a*) that dollars to the value of £14 million should be made available to the Egyptian Government, against sterling, as a final settlement of their claims to payments in gold or dollars;

(*b*) that petroleum products to the value of £11 million a year should be made available to the Egyptian Government against payment in sterling during each of the ten years 1951–60;

(*c*) that £25 million should be released at once from the frozen balances to the No. 1 account: that a further £10 million a year should be similarly released in each of the nine years 1952–60: and that further releases in blocks of £5 million up to a maximum of £35 million should be released whenever the working balance fell below £45 million (the annual payments at the rate of £10 million a year being extended if this facility was not used);

(*d*) discussion on the disposal of the remainder of the balances was to take place before the releases under (*c*) were completed;

(*e*) in a separate letter, the British Government gave an assurance that they 'had no intention of scaling down unilaterally the total amount of Egypt's sterling balances'.

The second part—the Sterling Payments Agreement[3]—resumed in a simpler form the provisions of the earlier agreements

[1] Cmd. 8335 of 1951. [2] Cmd. 8336 of 1951. [3] Cmd. 8337 of 1951.

in regard to the availability of sterling, but was subject to renewal or revision after 31 December 1951.

The net sterling balances of Egypt, which had been £356 million on 12 July 1947, had been reduced to approximately £285 million at 31 December 1950—an average reduction of about £20 million a year during the three and a half years since the first agreement of 30 June 1947. Of this £285 million, just over £45 million was available in the No. 1 account: £240 million was frozen. Of these balances £150 million—reduced in value by devaluation—were to be released by instalments over a period of not less than ten years: the remaining £90 million were to remain frozen until after the end of that period.

The acceptance by the Egyptians of an arrangement which gave them so little satisfaction was facilitated by the generally favourable development of their financial position, thanks to the high prices realized for their cotton exports. During 1949 and 1950 they had made every effort to sell their cotton against dollars while purchasing as much as possible with their sterling. In 1950 their sterling balances had been reduced by £32 million but their total foreign assets fell by only £7 million. In fact, during the two years 1949–50, they had been able to accumulate dollars to the value of over £40 million. This fact made it more difficult for them to press their claim to gold.

There was a desire on both sides to arrive at a settlement which would obviate the prolonged and controversial negotiations which had taken place each year since 1947 and which had frequently embittered feeling between the two countries. But the better atmosphere which it was hoped would result from the signature of the final agreement was clouded by the vehement attacks made in the House of Commons not only against the terms of the agreement but against Egypt. However, these attacks helped to silence the critics of the agreement in Egypt as it appeared clear that no better terms were likely to be forthcoming, and after the agreement had been accepted by the House of Commons, it was ratified by the Egyptian Parliament without much discussion. In the absence of any new restrictions on the use of 'released' sterling, therefore, it may be hoped that this particular stumbling block in the way of good relations between the two countries may be regarded as finally disposed of.

Egyptian Monetary Policy since 1947

The preceding section has covered the history of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations in regard to the sterling balances between 1947 and 1951. It is now necessary to summarize the

alterations in Egyptian currency and monetary policy which were made during this period.

As already mentioned, the increase of prices and in the cost of living in Egypt, which continued after the end of the war, was attributed by the press to the difficulties in obtaining supplies against payment in sterling and accordingly tended to accentuate controversy with the United Kingdom. There was, of course, a general shortage of supplies after the war but the Egyptians, who have no coal mines on their territory, could not understand why for some years after the war they could obtain no coal from Britain and had to import it from South Africa or India, at a cost of some £20 a ton, as against the price of £4 or £5 a ton at which coal was being retailed in England. The criticisms against United Kingdom policy crystallized in the Egyptian Parliament, after the failure of the agreement of 30 June 1947, into demands that Egypt should establish a currency and monetary system independent of sterling.

As a result, the Government announced their intention of 'nationalizing' the National Bank and converting it into a purely Egyptian State Bank. Though this objective figured for two successive years in the programme of the Nuqrashi Government, no Bill was presented to Parliament, nor was any authoritative explanation given of the procedure that was contemplated. After the assassination of Nuqrashi Pasha, negotiations were undertaken with the National Bank of Egypt, first by the Sidqi Government in 1949 and later by the Wafd Government in 1950, and an agreement was finally reached which was confirmed by a Central Bank Law passed in February 1951. Under this law, the National Bank of Egypt was confirmed in its Charter as an independent bank, with private shareholders, and given the legal status of the Central Bank of Egypt, but various provisions were made for its Egyptianization. The principal changes made were:

(*a*) The policy of the Bank in regard to currency credit and exchange matters was to be settled by a joint committee, comprising an equal number of representatives of the Government and of the Bank, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Finance, who would have a casting vote. This gave the Government the final right of decision, as it had the responsibility already, in regard to the higher policy of the Bank.

(*b*) The Directors of the Bank were to be all Egyptian nationals, after the expiry of the mandates of the existing foreign Directors. The National Bank had had a British Governor since its inception and he was replaced by an Egyptian Governor in

1951. There had also been provision for two British Directors resident in London: these posts were abolished.

(*c*) The Government obtained an increased share in the profits of the Bank. But the Bank remained free of Government control in the day-to-day administration of its business and provision was made for the recruitment of foreign personnel for the service of the Bank, subject to the agreement of the Ministry of Finance.

The new Law, which was only ratified by Parliament after a delay of some eight months, therefore fell considerably short of the original proposal for converting the National Bank into a State Bank and the changes made were not more than could be said to represent the adaptation of the Bank's charter to present-day conditions.

The Government, however, went further than this in their monetary policy. By Law 118 of 1948, they provided that while sterling Treasury bills might be kept in the cover to the extent to which they were held in July 1948, the sterling bills should be withdrawn if and when the note issue was reduced and that any subsequent increase of the issue must be covered either by gold or by Egyptian Treasury bills. For this purpose Parliament authorized the issue of £50 million Egyptian Treasury bills, which could be placed in the note cover, nominally to facilitate the financing of the cotton crop, but effectively to enable additional currency to be issued for any purpose. The provisions of the Bill were not directly inflationary, as it was stipulated that the Government should place the bills with the National Bank of Egypt but should not utilize the proceeds of the bills. So the placing of the bills was a legal fiction, but it enabled the National Bank to issue currency without other cover. To the Egyptians, an Egyptian Treasury bill seemed a better cover than a blocked or frozen British Treasury bill.

The subsequent working of this arrangement has been facilitated by the very favourable market enjoyed by Egyptian cotton. The note issue has had to be expanded each year, to meet commercial demands, and although comparatively few sterling bills were withdrawn (except, as explained below, against gold), the expansion was provided for by the issue of the £50 million Treasury bills authorized by the Law of 1948 (and subsequently increased to permit the purchase by the Government of the cotton crop unsold in the summer of 1951). The note issue, which was £E142 million in June 1948, increased to £E164 million in December 1948, £E174 million in December 1949, £E191 million in December 1950, and £E211 million in December 1951.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian Government had succeeded in accumulating dollars—chiefly from the sale of cotton, but also from the Anglo–Egyptian financial agreements—to the value of over £E40 million. These were converted into gold and the gold had been placed in the note cover in place of British Treasury bills. The position as at 31 December 1951 showed: notes issued £E211 million, covered by gold to the value of £E60 million and the balance by Egyptian and British Government Treasury bills and securities. On 26 March 1952 the National Bank gave the figures for the cover for the note issue at 31 December 1951 as: gold £E60 million; Egyptian securities, £E84 million; British securities, £E78 million.

As already mentioned, the Egyptian pound was forced off the legal gold parity in 1931 and was further devalued, along with sterling, in 1949. The legal gold parity established in 1885 and confirmed by the Monetary Law of 1916 was not, however, revived until 22 October 1951, when a new Monetary Law was published. By this law the gold content of the Egyptian pound was fixed at 2.55187 grammes of fine gold, which represented the value of the Egyptian pound as notified to the International Monetary Fund after the devaluation of 1949. The law further empowered the Government to modify the content of gold or silver coins in future, by decree, provided that any such decree was submitted to Parliament within a specified period. This provision was, no doubt, inserted in the Law in order to avoid the possibility of a legal anomaly such as had existed between 1931 and 1951.

Government Finances and Investment Market

This résumé of Egyptian monetary policy needs to be supplemented by a brief account of the Government finances and investment market.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Governments of Sa'id Pasha (1854–63) and the Khedive Isma'il (1863–79) raised a series of public loans from foreign bankers on very onerous terms, for development schemes or the embellishment of the towns: and the finances of the country became so much embarrassed that foreign control was instituted through the creation of the 'Caisse de la Dette Publique' in May 1876. The Caisse collected practically all the revenues of the country and established the system of a 'model' budget after 1885. Under this system expenditure was divided into two categories, one for the service of the public debt managed by the Caisse, and the other for the 'authorized' expenditure of the general administration. If there was any surplus, half was retained by the Caisse

and the other half handed back to the Ministry of Finance. Similarly, if the Government wished to undertake any new public works, they had to budget for *twice* the estimated cost of the works, as an equivalent amount had to be provided for the Caisse. The system was extremely rigid and retarded new development schemes, but it effectively curbed extravagance and restored the public finances to a sound condition, establishing a tradition which has survived until the last few years. By 1894 budget surpluses began to appear and were maintained despite an expenditure of £1,700,000 on the reconquest of the Sudan in the years 1895–8.

During the following forty years Egypt was in the happy position of having little to record about its budget. Thanks very largely to the wise guidance of Lord Cromer (British Agent and Consul-General, 1883–1907), the financial position improved so rapidly that after 1904 the powers of the Caisse were reduced and the Egyptian Government regained full control over the reserve funds. The British Financial Adviser was the effective authority at the Ministry of Finance until 1923 and continued to exercise considerable power until the post was abolished in 1936. But the State revenues were very inelastic being derived mainly from the land tax and a fixed customs tariff. So long as the Capitulations were in force, the Egyptian Government could not impose any direct taxes without the consent of all the foreign communities—which was exceedingly difficult to obtain; nor could it impose a protective tariff on imports until it had succeeded in terminating a number of commercial treaties guaranteeing the 'open door'. The last of these treaties was not terminated until 1930. The budget gradually expanded, however, with the growing prosperity of the country, and the national expenditure increased from £10 million in 1895 to £35 million (including over £5 million for new works) in 1935–6. But this was not sufficient to provide resources for the development of the country which depended on the capital made available by private foreign investors. From 1874 onwards a number of foreign banks established branches in Egypt—particularly French and Italian banks—and in 1898, as already mentioned, the National Bank of Egypt was founded and given the exclusive right of issuing notes. In the same year, and also as the result of Sir Ernest Cassel's support, the Aswan Dam and the Asyut Barrage were built. The foreign trade of the country developed rapidly and the expansion of business, together with a speculative boom, led to a severe internal financial crisis in 1906. There was a sudden collapse of the land and share markets, but the

storm was weathered with only one casualty among the more important banks, and the country's economy soon made fresh progress. The expenditure of the British forces during the First World War also helped the economy, and after the war there was again a boom due to the high price of cotton, followed by the inevitable collapse in 1921. The price of cotton fell from 87·81 tallaris in 1920 to 34·5 tallaris per cantar in 1921, and during the next decade the Government on several occasions took measures to support the market. In 1920 the first purely Egyptian Commercial bank was founded—the Bank Misr—with no foreign capital and with only Egyptian Directors. This Bank has played a very important part in developing Egyptian industry, and although just before the Second World War it got into serious difficulties through over-investment, it has now established itself strongly as the largest deposit bank in Egypt, as well as having some twenty enterprises, from cotton spinning and weaving mills to cinema studios and airlines, under its control. There had been a number of Agricultural Mortgage and similar banks operating in Egypt, particularly the Crédit Foncier Égyptien established in 1880 and the Agricultural Bank, established as a subsidiary of the National Bank in 1902. After 1912, however, when the Government passed a law exempting properties of less than 5 feddans from seizure, the smaller proprietors could not offer security for loans and the operations of the Agricultural Bank fell away. In 1931 the world slump in agricultural prices caused great difficulties to the landowners, and to ease their problems the Government established a new organization, the Crédit Agricole d'Égypte, as a semi-Governmental institution to make advances to small cultivators and to act as agent for the sale of seed and fertilizers and for the collection of requisitioned crops. This and another Government-sponsored institution, the Crédit Hypothécaire d'Égypte, took over the functions which the Agricultural Bank had been set up to fulfil, and the Agricultural Bank was eventually liquidated.

In 1931 the Government, for the first time since the end of the last century, floated a new loan. Capital was accumulating in Egypt, and although the wealthy Egyptian prefers to invest in land or fixed property, there was a steady repatriation of Egyptian securities from abroad during and after the First World War.

In 1937 the Capitulations were abolished by the Montreux Convention and the Mixed Courts were gradually 'Egyptianized' and abolished in 1949. The Egyptian Government were

now free to impose both direct and indirect taxes as they thought fit. The Customs tariff was raised without delay, and is now a fairly high protective tariff. The collection of direct taxes is more difficult to organize and only since 1946 has the income-tax become a serious burden. There is now a flat charge of 16 per cent on dividends and rents, a progressive income-tax on salaries and personal incomes, and a surtax on incomes exceeding £1,500 with a maximum bracket of 70 per cent for incomes of £50,000 a year or more. The administration of the income-tax is still far from fully effective: but the increases of revenue have enabled the budget to be rapidly expanded—from £40 million in 1939 to £97 million in 1946, £169 million in 1949–50 and an estimated £231 million in 1951–2. The increased expenditure has been due mainly to military costs (£E50 million in each of the years 1949, 1950, and 1951, as against £E8 million in 1939) and to the expansion of education and other social services and improved salaries of civil servants; only a comparatively small proportion has been allotted to development schemes.

These schemes have in the past been financed out of the 'Reserve funds', instituted under the old regime of the Caisse de la Dette out of any surplus receipts. In fact, however, these schemes could rarely be executed as promptly as estimated, with the result that the expenditure generally proved less than anticipated. Until the Palestine War (1949), therefore, the budget almost invariably ended with a surplus instead of the deficit anticipated, averaging about £E10 million a year during the decade following 1940. The Palestine War necessitated recourse to a loan, which was raised internally, and since then the revenues have proved buoyant, owing to the high price of cotton. But the Government have had to rely on exceptional receipts (for example, the export tax on cotton) and if there were a general recession of prices, the revenue would probably fall away far more quickly than the expenditure could be reduced.

The public debt position, however, remains very satisfactory. During the Second World War, as during the First, a large amount of Egyptian securities were repatriated to Egypt: and in 1943 the Egyptian Government repaid in cash the old 3 per cent Guaranteed Loan and the 3½ per cent and 4 per cent Ottoman Loans (totalling £E5½ million) and carried through successfully the conversion of the old Preference and Unified Loans as well as the war-time Cotton Loans (totalling altogether £E92 million). At the end of 1951 the public debt, excluding Treasury bills, amounted to only £E109 million

or less than £E6 a head of the population. The Treasury bills amounted to £111 million, but of these more than half are bills created as backing for the currency, which cannot be drawn upon.

The prosperity of the country in recent years has not been without some drawbacks. The nationalist feeling engendered by the war and post-war strains has led to the passage of a number of laws directed to secure for Egyptian nationals a greater share in the country's industry and trade. For example, the Companies law requires 51 per cent of the share capital of every public company to be held by Egyptian nationals. As the Egyptians still are reluctant to invest in new ventures—unless there is a prospect of high and rapid returns—the flotation of new companies has become very difficult and the development of industry has been correspondingly handicapped. The same law provided that certain percentages of the staff of any company must be Egyptian nationals—thus restricting the employment of foreign technicians. The Egyptian authorities have power to make exceptions but this legislation has impaired the confidence of foreign investors, particularly as the Greek residents in Egypt, who for centuries have done much of the business of this country, are not accepted as Egyptian nationals. Moreover, the abolition of the Mixed Courts, involving recourse to the Egyptian Courts in disputes about contracts, has not helped. The satisfaction of national *amour propre* in Egypt, as elsewhere, may prove costly to the development of the country, unless local capital and enterprise can be stimulated.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Egypt and the United Kingdom have largely complementary economies: Egypt has always been a predominantly agricultural country and its raw cotton is an essential raw material for the Lancashire textile industry; while British coal and manufactures are equally needed in Egypt, which has no coal deposits and even today few manufacturing industries. Thus an exchange of goods was a natural development which has been encouraged by the long political and monetary connexion between the two countries and by the substantial investments made by British capital in Egypt. British firms have also been entrusted with the principal public works undertaken by the Egyptian Government, in particular for the construction of dams and barrages and irrigation schemes on the Nile. Finally, the occupation of Egypt by British forces, while it has at times excited much political controversy, has given Egypt the economic advantage

of a regular influx of foreign exchange—estimated at £15 to £20 million a year in recent years.

Anglo–Egyptian Trade

From about 1830, soon after Egypt began to export cotton, the United Kingdom started to hold the leading place in Egypt's foreign trade, both as a buyer and supplier. Over the years 1885–9 the United Kingdom took on average 63 per cent of Egypt's exports and supplied 37·5 per cent of her imports. By 1913 the respective shares had fallen to 43 per cent and 30·5 per cent. None the less, the bulk of Egyptian cotton still went to Liverpool and accounted for 80·6 per cent of total British imports from Egypt. But by 1913 other countries, notably the United States, Germany, France, and Russia, had come into the Egyptian cotton market as substantial buyers and the proportion of cotton exports taken by the United Kingdom amounted to only 43·1 per cent. Apart from cotton, the main commodities exported to the United Kingdom were cotton seed, cotton-seed cake, eggs, and onions. As regards imports by Egypt from the United Kingdom, although preference was given to British firms in Government contracts, the Egyptian market was not reserved for British goods. The chief items supplied by the United Kingdom were cotton textiles, coal, iron and steel products, and machines and parts; in 1913 she supplied 81·8 per cent of Egypt's imports of textiles, of coal 89·2 per cent, of iron and steel products 44·6 per cent, and of machines and parts 51·7 per cent. In the case of cereals, France was the main supplier followed by British overseas possessions.

When war broke out in 1914 on the eve of the cotton season the cotton market suffered an acute crisis, but by 1915 the export demand had recovered, and during the course of the war cotton prices rose steeply. In 1918 the British Government, in order to safeguard supplies, purchased the entire crop at well above the current market prices; before the end of the 1918–19 season prices had again risen so steeply that a large profit was made which was eventually handed over to the Egyptian Government. While the importance of the United Kingdom in Egypt's foreign trade increased and she continued to be both the main customer and supplier, imports from British overseas territories also increased and in the years 1915–19 accounted for 14 per cent of Egypt's total imports as compared with 5 to 6 per cent in the period 1904–13. Supplies for Egypt's civilian consumption had necessarily to be limited during the war years 1914–18, but the United Kingdom continued to provide coal

and other essentials. With the limitation of her imports, the increase in the value of her exports, and the large British military expenditure in the country, Egypt gained during the years 1914–19 much additional wealth. But with the increase in currency circulation and the rise in internal prices the country at the same time had to face the problem of inflation, which happily proved short-lived.[1]

In the inter-war years, the United Kingdom continued to take the largest proportion of Egypt's exports but this fell from 48·6 per cent in 1923–4 to an average of 34·0 per cent in the years 1935–8. Exports to other parts of the British Empire were, however, well maintained and in 1935–8 the Empire as a whole accounted for 40 per cent of Egypt's total exports. For raw cotton the United Kingdom remained the principal market and she also took by far the largest share of other commodities of which she had formerly been the main buyer. The United Kingdom also continued to hold the leading place in Egypt's import trade, but the proportion of imports from Britain fell from 34·0 per cent of the total in 1922 to 22·9 per cent in the years 1935–8. A notable feature of Egypt's import trade in the years preceding the outbreak of war in 1939 was the increase in supplies from Germany, Italy, the United States, Belgium and, up to 1935, from Japan. After the introduction in Egypt of new protective tariffs following the abrogation in 1930 of the last of the commercial treaties previously in force, the trend was to shut out foodstuffs and to substitute raw materials for finished goods.[2] In the years 1937 and 1938 textiles still held first place in Egyptian imports, chemicals and fertilizers were next in importance, followed closely by minerals, pulses, machines and vehicles, metals and manufactures, wood and paper.

When Italy entered the recent world war in 1940 and Egypt became the main base for British naval and military operations in the Middle East, inevitably Egypt's trade suffered serious dislocation. With the shortage of shipping and other difficulties, imports had to be drastically curtailed. In April 1941 when the shipping situation was acute, the British Government set up in Cairo the Middle East Supply Centre. The object of this Centre, though closely linked with strategic problems, was to ensure that, while using the utmost economy in shipping space, the peoples of the Middle East countries should not be denied vital requirements. Imports had to be severely curtailed and controlled but it was hoped that if domestic resources could be

[1] See above, p. 155.

[2] Charles Issawi, *Egypt: an Economic and Social Analysis* (Oxford University Press for R.I.I.A., 1947), Ch. VIII.

developed, the Middle East countries could be made more self-sufficient and render each other mutual aid. From early in 1942 the United States co-operated in all the work of M.E.S.C. It was primarily an advising and co-ordinating body working in co-operation with national Governments of the Middle East countries, but it was on the recommendations of the Centre that allocations of shipping space and supplies were made in London and Washington. Increasing supplies were brought in under allocation programmes and were purchased in bulk by the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation and then redistributed. Imports of individual traders were subject to import licences and in Egypt were issued by the Egyptian Government according to the quotas agreed upon with M.E.S.C. The Centre was organized on a commodity basis: food and agriculture, supply of materials and industrial production, medical supplies and transport. An important feature of the work of M.E.S.C. was the guidance and assistance given to the national Governments in the campaign for greater self-sufficiency. One of the most striking changes in this direction was the law passed by the Egyptian Government in 1942 by which over a million acres of cotton were turned over compulsorily to wheat and barley. That this turnover did not result in any striking increase in the output of cereals was largely due to the decline of imports into Egypt of fertilizers. To meet the fertilizer shortage, imports of nitrates from Chile were eventually arranged for. In the industrial field, with the assistance of M.E.S.C. many pre-war industries were very considerably developed and in addition various new industries were started. M.E.S.C. undertook the provision of basic materials and also studied the possibilities for the development of domestic raw materials. While it is impossible to estimate exactly how far M.E.S.C. was responsible for alleviating shortages and hardships, the Centre undoubtedly played an important part and a positive role in stimulating production of necessities within the Middle East (for example, in ensuring that Syria had an export surplus of wheat for supply to deficit countries) and in ensuring also that as far as possible the available shipping space was allocated to essentials, not the luxuries that would have paid large profits to importers. What M.E.S.C. could not ensure in a self-governing country like Egypt was an equitable distribution of commodities within the country. The stinting of food and clothing to remote Upper Egypt and the general administrative neglect of those provinces were thus factors in aggravating the acute malaria epidemic there in 1942–4.

It is, however, difficult to analyse with any precision the

effect of the war-time shortage of consumption goods. The vast military expenditure of the Allies in Egypt created a financial boom; but this in turn brought all the problems of inflation, and the cost of living almost trebled itself between the end of 1939 and the end of 1945. Estimates of national income show a rise from £E168 million in 1939 up to £E502 million in 1945 with an increase on the expenditure side of £E183 million for 'personal consumption'.[1] These figures, however, give no indication of the very uneven changes in real incomes. Some of the big landowners, industrialists and other business men made large profits and the real incomes of various classes of workers employed by the military authorities improved.[2] On the other hand many others, notably minor officials and some of the poorest classes, had difficulty in obtaining essentials in short supply and in meeting the steep rise in the cost of living.

During the war years the normal pattern of Egypt's trade showed striking fluctuations. In the years 1940–2 the value of her exports was well below the pre-war level but by 1945 had more than fully recovered. In 1940, to assist Egypt in the disposal of her cotton, the British Government purchased the entire crop.[3] The proportion of Egypt's total exports taken by the United Kingdom averaged 35 per cent in 1940–1, reached a maximum in 1942 of 50·5 per cent, but fell again to 35 per cent in 1944 and to 27·4 per cent in 1945. The value of Egyptian imports was below the pre-war level in 1940 and 1941, but then rose steeply owing to the imports for the British forces operating in the country, and in 1942, 1944, and 1945 was far above the pre-war figure. Throughout the war years the United Kingdom remained the chief supplier, except in 1942 when the United States took the leading place. Although the share of the United Kingdom still averaged 26·5 per cent in the years 1940–2, in the following years, 1943–5, it fell to an average of only 16 per cent. A notable feature of the war years was the very substantial increase in the proportion of imports supplied by other parts of the British Empire, notably Canada, India, and South Africa.[4]

Since the war the value of Egypt's exports of merchandise has greatly increased as compared with the pre-war level, and in 1950 amounted to £E172·96 million as against £E29·43 million in 1938.[5] Although the actual quantity of cotton exported in recent years has shown no large expansion—on the contrary,

[1] International Monetary Fund, *International Financial Statistics*, December 1951.
[2] See p. 158. [3] See below, p. 178.
[4] War-time figures from G.B., Board of Trade, *Overseas Economic Survey*, November 1947.
[5] National Bank of Egypt, *Economic Bulletin*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1951.

it has tended to be below the pre-war level—prices have risen so steeply that dependence on exports of cotton has increased. Before the war, cotton accounted for some 72 to 74 per cent of the value of total exports, but in the post-war years the proportion rose to over 80 per cent and in 1950—if cotton yarn is included—reached 88 per cent. The United Kingdom has in general retained the position of Egypt's best customer except in the years 1947 and 1949, when India took the leading place owing to large purchases of Egyptian cotton. In 1949 India's share in Egypt's total exports rose to 20 per cent as against 17 per cent for the United Kingdom; by 1950 the position was reversed. Except in the year 1948 the actual quantity of Egypt's raw cotton purchased by the United Kingdom has not been up to the pre-war 1938 level, and Egypt is no longer exporting cotton seed. In the cotton season 1949–50 the United States took large quantities for stockpiling and followed the United Kingdom and India as a main purchaser. During the season 1950–1, American purchases fell in quantity to about one-third of those of the previous year; other notable features were the increased quantity taken by the United Kingdom and also by Japan and Czechoslovakia.

The value of Egypt's import trade has expanded even more rapidly than in the case of exports, and in 1950 amounted to £E212·86 million as against £E36·95 million in 1938.[1] Although the United Kingdom has remained the leading supplier, her share in total imports has shown a slight decline from the pre-war level. The outstanding change in the composition of United Kingdom supplies has been the decline in the proportion accounted for by cotton textiles and coal and the increase in the proportion of capital equipment such as machinery and vehicles. These changes indicate some notable alterations in Egypt's import requirements. With the development of her own cotton-manufacturing industries, her need to import cotton textiles has declined; on the other hand, industrial development has led to a growing demand for metal manufactures and machinery of all kinds. The increasing use of oil has diminished the necessity for coal imports, but the fall in coal imports from the United Kingdom has also been due to the shortage of available supplies. The pattern of Egypt's imports has also been changed by the need to import cereals (in which the country was more or less self-sufficient before the war) and other foodstuffs. As a result there has been a substantial increase in the proportion of imports obtained from Australia and South Africa. In Egypt's foreign trade in merchandise the sterling area

[1] ibid. no. 1, 1951.

(scheduled territories) as a whole still plays a very important part; in 1949 and 1950 it accounted for 44 per cent and 37 per cent respectively of Egypt's total exports and for 38 per cent and 36 per cent of the country's total imports.[1]

An outstanding feature in Egypt's foreign trade has been the emergence of a large visible adverse trade balance. Prior to 1937 for a considerable number of years her foreign trade was fairly evenly balanced, and in the ten-year period 1927–36 the adverse balance amounted only to just over £E1 million. Subsequently a great change took place, and with the cutting off of a number of principal markets during the war years the adverse visible balance for the next ten years 1937–46 totalled no less than £E115·8 million; the position in the years 1947–50 showed little improvement. These figures, however, are not a true criterion of Egypt's economic position. The import figures include large amounts of supplies imported—both during and since the war—for the use of the British forces which are no charge on Egypt. There is also some doubt as to the extent to which the gold imports shown in the Egyptian statistics are retained in the country. The true adverse balances are substantially lower than the above figures would suggest and have been covered by invisible receipts or by drawing on the sterling balances.[2]

Cotton

It has been shown how the development of Egypt's trade with the United Kingdom is essentially linked up with the production and export of cotton. No other country in the world produces long-staple cotton of the quality and in the quantity produced by Egypt. This cotton has, since the beginning of the century, been the mainstay of Egyptian exports and the prosperity of the country has depended on the price realized by its cotton. This has been subject to great variations, as is the case with all international commodities. The average price in the season 1920–1 was 34·5 tallaris per cantar,[3] as compared with 87·81 tallaris in the season 1919–20—a drop of nearly two-thirds; in the year 1938–9 the average price fell to 10·68 tallaris. The table overleaf shows the average price range for karnak and ashmouni in recent years.

The prosperity of the country being so dependent on cotton, the Government has frequently intervened to assist the cultivators when prices fell disastrously—first in March 1921, then again in June 1923, and almost continuously between 1926 and 1930. The method of intervention took the form either of mak-

[1] ibid. no. 1, 1951. [2] See pp. 158–64.
[3] 1 tallari (dollar) = 20 piastres (roughly 4*s.*); 1 cantar = 99·05 lb.

TALLARIS PER CANTAR
(ALEXANDRIA)

Year	*Karnak* (long staple)	*Ashmouni* (medium staple)
1946–7	42·78	43·22
1947–8	76·12	62·18
1948–9	81·41	50·49
1949–50	78·34	76·15
1950–1	142·91	115·81
1951 August	175·48	124·80
1951 September	106·41	75·70
1951 October	121·38	89·11
1951 November	168·99	100·81

(SOURCES: *National Bank of Egypt, 1848–1948*; International Cotton Advisory Committee, *Quarterly Bulletins*.)

ing advances to the cultivators on crops or of purchasing crops and taking them off the market. In 1930 the Government held stocks exceeding 3 million cantars, which were not liquidated until 1934, and at a heavy loss.

In 1940 when Italy entered the war difficulties arose as regards the disposal of the 1940 cotton crop, and when the Egyptian Government appealed to the British Government for assistance, the 'British Government Cotton Buying (1940) Commission' was set up for the purpose of purchasing all the 1940 crop on offer. The prices fixed were even higher than those ruling for the three or four previous years, and it is understood that the British Government undertook to bear any loss and to share equally with the Egyptian Government any profits that might arise. For the disposal of the next 1941–2 season the Egyptian Government again asked the British Government for assistance, but the British Government thought that in order to reduce the excessive supply of money in Egypt, the Egyptian Government ought to raise the finance required by the issue of a loan on the local market. The Egyptian Government felt considerable doubt whether such a loan would be taken up, but finally arrangements were made for the purchasing of the crop to be undertaken jointly by the two Governments. Accordingly, a joint Anglo–Egyptian Cotton (1941) Commission was set up to buy all the 1941 crop, but the British Government made it a condition that the cultivation of cotton for the 1942 season must be drastically reduced. It was agreed that one-half of the profits accruing to each Government from the operations of the Commission should be set aside for the benefit of the Egyptian cultivators. In fact substantial profits accrued from the purchases made both by the British Government Commission in 1940 and by the joint Anglo–Egyptian Cotton Commission in 1941; and subsequently it was agreed that the sums set aside out of these profits, together with the interest earned, should be used to

finance the Egyptian Government schemes for the supply of drinking water to villages. The work was begun in 1946, and by July 1951 the British Government had handed over £E1,171,000 out of the accumulated profits as its contribution to the expense of these schemes. By the end of 1950 the supplies and installations of 611 mechanical and 801 small hand-operated pumps had been put out to tender. Sufficient further installations to serve 620 villages were scheduled for 1951 and 1952. It may be said that the operations of the Cotton Commissions in 1940 and 1941 are an example of the successful results of co-operation between the two Governments, first, in financing the cotton crops and encouraging the Egyptian Government to raise loans in its own market, and secondly, in promoting a scheme of rural improvement which had been planned for many years by successive Egyptian Governments but never carried into effect.

The British and Egyptian Governments failed to reach agreement about the prices to be paid for the crops of the 1942–3 and subsequent seasons, but the Egyptian Government had been so successful in raising cotton loans locally that they decided to set up their own Buying Commission and to finance the purchases themselves without further assistance from the British Government. At the end of the 1944–5 season, stocks of all kinds of cotton in Egypt are believed to have amounted approximately to 8,250,000 cantars (as compared with 750,000 cantars at the end of the 1938–9 season), and these were liquidated in the years 1946–50 at a very large profit.

In recent years the high prices ruling in the market made it less necessary for the Government to purchase stocks; but the market has been very erratic and the Government has repeatedly intervened to support prices. In 1950 the Government altered the rules of the Cotton Exchange at Alexandria in support of an attempted corner in Ashmouni. In the following year, to protect speculators who had come in too late, they fixed minimum prices, which were above the free market rates, and, as a result, they were obliged to take up some 1,300,000 cantars at a price of over £E25 million.

The Government in 1944 imposed a very small export tax on cotton, but this was raised progressively from 1948 onwards up to £E8 per 100 kilograms gross in January 1951.[1] On 28 May 1951, however, in order to facilitate the disposal of the crop, the tax was temporarily reduced to £E2 on consignments contracted for, and exported between, 28 May and August 1951. No exception could be taken to the imposition of a cotton export tax which is similar to those imposed by other raw-

[1] Bank of Egypt, *Annual Report*, 1950.

material producing countries; but foreign traders have complained of the sudden changes made by the Government in the rates of the tax without regard to contracts already passed.

The closing of the Liverpool Cotton Exchange and the change-over from the system of trade purchasing to bulk buying by the British and other Governments have also contributed to the erratic movements of the Alexandria markets and made it much more open to speculative attacks. The Egyptian Government's interventions have always been directed at supporting prices, even when these had been carried to unreasonable levels by speculators, and have done considerable damage to the reputation of the Alexandria market. Owing, however, to the special quality of Egyptian cotton and the general shortage of dollars, the demand for Egyptian cotton has not been greatly affected and the prices ruling today continue to be exceptionally high.

Owing to the food requirements of the increasing population, the Egyptian Government controls the acreage under cotton and requires all landowners to plant a minimum percentage with wheat or other food crops. This measure was introduced during the war at the instance of the Middle East Supply Centre.

British Investments and Commercial Interests

The general development of the investment market in Egypt is discussed in the financial section;[1] the following paragraphs give a brief summary of British interests in Egyptian investment. The United Kingdom has contributed more than any other country, except possibly France: although for many years French investments were the heaviest, British investments have been characterized by the wide field of activities covered and the large number of companies involved. It has been estimated that in 1937 total foreign investments of all kinds amounted to £500 million of which the British share was about £200 million.[2]

One item in the United Kingdom's financial interests in Egypt which must be mentioned is the Government's holding in the Suez Canal Company's shares, purchased under such dramatic circumstances in 1876 at an approximate value of £4 million from the Khedive Isma'il; but the British interest in the Suez Canal is strategic rather than financial.[3]

Until recent years the United Kingdom held a considerable part in Egypt's public foreign debt, which up to 1914 constituted

[1] See pp. 167–71.

[2] Elizabeth Monroe, *The Mediterranean in Politics* (London, Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 30.

[3] See Appendix V.

about 90 per cent of her total public debt. After the First World War the proportion of foreign debt was reduced,[1] and by 1936 had fallen to 40 per cent with a consequent decline in British holdings. The value of the United Kingdom's investments in Egypt's Government and Municipal Loans (nominal capital) amounted at the end of 1938 to £5·9 million sterling and had risen to £6·5 million by the end of 1941. From 1942 onwards, however, there was a decrease in the amount, and by the end of 1944 only £0·3 million remained.[2] This decrease was, of course, due to the rapid improvement in Egypt's financial position during the war years, which led to the conversion and repatriation to Egypt of the bulk of her foreign public debt.[3]

Egypt's public debt dates back to loans issued before 1880. During the last twenty years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the present century she depended on obtaining private capital, and a number of loans were raised for the purpose of irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, or similar works. It has been estimated that from 1884 to the end of 1908 rather more than £11 million sterling was sunk in irrigation from loans or other extraordinary sources.[4] The first large irrigation scheme during this period was the reconstruction of the Delta Barrage, which was undertaken and completed in 1891 by British engineers with the aid of foreign capital. This resulted in an increase in cultivated land and an immense expansion of crops including cotton. The building of the Aswan Dam and the Barrage at Asyut a few years later at an ultimate cost of £3·4 million was financed by a loan from a group of British financiers headed by Sir Ernest Cassel; the contractors were the British firm of John Aird & Company, and the consulting engineers Messrs Murdoch Macdonald. As a result of improved irrigation made possible by the Aswan Dam, the agricultural productivity of 1,276,000 feddan was increased to such an extent that the country's economy showed a notable improvement.[5] Other companies founded with the aid of British capital for the drainage and reclamation of land were the Aboukir Company founded in 1887 for the drainage of Lake Aboukir, and 'The New Egyptian Company' founded in 1899.

An important undertaking backed by British capital was the

[1] See p. 155.

[2] Bank of England, *United Kingdom Overseas Investments*, 1938–48 and 1948–9.

[3] See p. 170.

[4] A. E. Crouchley, *The Investment of Foreign Capital in Egyptian Companies and Public Debt* (Cairo, Government Press, 1936), p. 26.

[5] The Aswan Dam has since been raised twice and a hydro-electric power project is now being carried out at Aswan, mainly to facilitate the production of nitrogenous fertilizers. Although no large amount of British capital is involved, the consulting engineers are a British firm, Messrs Kennedy & Donkin.

Daira Sanieh Company which in 1898 took over at a value of £6·5 million the Daira Sanieh estates (part of the Khedive's property) in order that the former Daira Loan could be redeemed. The new company agreed to dispose of the land purchased within seven years, and to divide the profits with the Egyptian Government.[1]

The influential part played by British capital in Egypt's transport and utility services can be seen from the following few examples. In 1896 the Egyptian Delta Light Railway was constructed by a British company, and in 1897 a concession was granted for a British company to take over the Government's fleet of postal packet steamships, on the condition that the company constructed a dock at Alexandria within four years. Another British company, the Alexandria Water Company, was responsible for the development of Alexandria's water supplies.

In spite of an internal financial crisis in 1906–7[2] followed by a period of liquidations, the total paid-up capital of joint stock companies operating in Egypt (exclusive of the Suez Canal Company) amounted in 1914 to £E100 million, of which £E92 million represented companies controlled by foreign interests; British interests amounted to some £E30 million.[3] From 1914 onwards the foreign capital involved was reduced but in spite of a considerable amount of repatriation of Egyptian securities and greater participation of local capital, the value of British interests tended to increase rather than diminish. British investments in joint stock companies often operated with mixed Egyptian and British capital and were spread over a large number of different enterprises. Among Egypt's Banks and Mortgage Companies were several, including the National Bank of Egypt, originally founded with the aid of British capital.

At one time about half the British capital invested in Egypt was in mortgage or land companies, but in the inter-war period these tended to be reduced and there was an increasing trend towards investment in commerce and industry.[4] Even in the nineteenth century British capital had already started to enter into the industrial field. In 1899 the working of the Egyptian monopoly of salt was handed over to a British company, the Port Said Association; in the same year the first of a series of mining concessions was granted to a British firm, the Egyptian Mines Exploration Company, and large sums of British capital were used in exploration for minerals, including oil. Among more recent industrial concerns in which British interests are

[1] *National Bank of Egypt, 1898–1948* (Jubilee publication).
[2] See above, pp. 168–9. [3] Crouchley, p. 72. [4] Monroe, pp. 32, 33.

involved two cotton-spinning companies may be mentioned, also the cotton manufacturing and dying concern opened by Bradford Dyers Ltd in 1937.

A very important development in 1898 was the formation with British capital of the Egyptian Markets Ltd, with a concession to establish organized markets for cattle and other agricultural products in all main centres. The original company then extended its field of operation by acting as general merchants and as the representative of British firms in 120 centres throughout Egypt, all in close touch with local farmers. In July 1949 the Company decided to transfer its control to Egypt. Difficulties that had arisen as the result of Egyptian legislation were intensified by the operation of the exchange control and by the burden of double taxation.

Any account of British interests must include reference to the branches and agencies of British companies which show no separate balance sheets for operations in Egypt: for instance, the investment in mortgage loans and blocks of property by British insurance companies and the credits granted by British merchants to local commercial and other concerns. Mention must also be made of the activities of banks such as Barclays (Dominion, Colonial & Overseas) Bank, and companies such as Messrs Thomas Cook & Company which as early as 1875 started a steamer service on the Nile and in 1880 obtained the exclusive control of passenger services. While it is not possible to enumerate all the British firms that at one time or another have had interests or carried out contracts in Egypt, they include a substantial number of the United Kingdom's leading engineering and industrial concerns. Also, the important part played by British export firms in Egypt must not be forgotten. For many years they helped to develop the country's export trade, in particular the cotton markets. For instance, it has been stated that in the years 1935–6 six big British export firms alone accounted for nearly one-third of the country's cotton exports.[1] The share in the cotton export business of British firms has, however, greatly diminished since the war.

Lastly in any review of the United Kingdom's economic and commercial relations with Egypt brief mention must be made of expenditure within the country by the British forces, the effect of which on the Egyptian economy is not inconsiderable. Since 1945 it is estimated that the British army has spent each year £15 to £20 million on the purchase of supplies and the employment of many thousands of local labourers.

[1] Monroe, p. 32.

EPILOGUE

THE abrogation of the Treaty and the Sudan Conventions was followed by a systematic attempt by the Wafdist Government to make the position of the British forces in the Canal Zone untenable. The Egyptian army observed a marked detachment during the next three months; but the scores of thousands of Egyptian civil employees of the British forces were withdrawn, by means of propaganda or police intimidation; and saboteurs and gunmen recruited from the criminal underworld of the Zone attacked rail and road communications of the British forces. Although the supply of fresh water from the Nile could not be cut off without affecting the Egyptian population of the Zone, there was a ready target in the British water filtration plants. The British meanwhile evacuated women and children exposed to attack in towns like Isma'iliya; the garrison was reinforced, and civilian labour imported from Cyprus, Malta, and East Africa; and when Egyptian guerrillas attacking the Suez water filtration plant used as a strong-point the village of Kafr 'Abdu, it was demolished by British military action, on which a British observer in Cairo afterwards commented: 'If a military necessity, it was an unfortunate political setback; if not a military necessity, it was a psychological blunder and something approaching a political disaster.' The Egyptian Government denounced it as an atrocity. Youthful volunteers for 'liberation battalions' were infiltrated from Cairo, but the more formidable challenge came from the auxiliary police in the Zone, who had been reinforced from 'tough' elements of the population for offensive action. When the British, after much provocation set to work to disarm the police, the Minister of the Interior ordered them to resist, and more than forty were killed in defending the Isma'iliya police headquarters against a major British assault on 25 January 1952. The Wafdist Government, abetted by Soviet opportunism, were contemplating breaking off diplomatic relations with Britain—the Egyptian Ambassador had already been recalled from London, and British employees of the Egyptian Government dismissed—when on 26 January organized incendiary squads, unhindered by the police, carried out a systematic destruction of British and other Western property in Cairo (including the world-famous Shepheard's Hotel), doing millions of pounds' worth of damage and killing ten British subjects.

King Faruq had recently added to his Palace advisers two distinguished non-Wafdists, including the Ambassador recalled from London. Immediately after this rioting he dismissed the Wafdist Government and called on 'Ali Mahir, the central figure in the Anglo–Egyptian crisis of 4 February 1942, to form a Ministry. 'Ali Mahir's immediate aim was to restore order without arousing the hostility of the Wafd-dominated Parliament, to check inflation, and to find some means of overcoming the reluctance of foreign markets to buy Egypt's cotton, her vital export commodity, at the excessive minimum prices imposed by the Wafd Government. Egyptian public opinion expected that the British Government would support this attempt to stabilize the internal situation by conceding Egypt's unmodified 'national demands'. On 1 March, however, 'Ali Mahir resigned in consequence of the restiveness of influential anti-Wafdists (within his Cabinet, and not least in the Palace) at what they considered his excessive conciliation of the Wafd; and the King appointed as Prime Minister Ahmad Nagib al-Hilali, a former Wafdist Minister of Education whose open breach with the party 'bosses' was as recent as the previous autumn, and who might therefore be expected to deal more zealously with their alleged misdeeds.

Exploratory negotiations were reopened on 22 March between the new Prime Minister and the British Ambassador. During the previous months of Anglo-Egyptian tension, however, the process of Constitution-making in the Sudan had followed a virtually independent course, and the publication of a draft Sudan Constitution came as an unpleasant surprise to government and public opinion in Egypt and gave rise to renewed doubts of Britain's good faith. It was while attempts were being made to break the new deadlock that this pamphlet went to press.

April 1952

APPENDIX I

Principal Articles of the Anglo-Egyptian Convention Regarding the Sudan, 19 January 1899[1]

Whereas certain provinces in the Sudan which were in rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive have now been reconquered by the joint military and financial efforts of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive; . . .

And whereas it is desired to give effect to the claims which have accrued to Her Britannic Majesty's Government, by right of conquest, to share in the present settlement and future working and development of the said system of administration and legislation; . . .

Article 1. The word 'Sudan' in this Agreement means all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which—

1. Have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882; or
2. Which, having before the late rebellion in the Sudan been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive, were temporarily lost to Egypt, and have been reconquered by Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government, acting in concert; or
3. Which may hereafter be reconquered by the two Governments acting in concert.

Article 2. The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Sudan, except in the town of Suakin, in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used.

Article 3. The supreme military and civil command in the Sudan shall be vested in one officer, termed the 'Governor-General of the Sudan.' He shall be appointed by Khedivial Decree on the recommendation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and shall be removed only by Khedivial Decree, with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

Article 4. Laws, as also orders and regulations, with the full force of law, for the good government of the Sudan, and for regulating the holding, disposal, and devolution of property of every kind therein situate, may from time to time be made, altered, or abrogated by Proclamation of the Governor-General. Such laws, orders, and regulations may apply to the whole or any named part of the Sudan, and may, either explicitly or by necessary implication, alter or abrogate any existing law or regulation.

All such Proclamations shall be forthwith notified to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Cairo, and to the President of the Council of Ministers of His Highness the Khedive.

[1] *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. xci, p. 19.

ARTICLE 5. No Egyptian Law, Decree, Ministerial Arrêté, or other enactment hereafter to be made or promulgated, shall apply to the Sudan or any part thereof, save in so far as the same shall be applied by Proclamation of the Governor-General in the manner herein before provided.

ARTICLE 6. In the definition by Proclamation of the conditions under which Europeans, of whatever nationality, shall be at liberty to trade with or reside in the Sudan, or to hold property within its limits, no special privileges shall be accorded to the subjects of any one or more Power.

Article 8. The jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals shall not extend, nor be recognised for any purpose whatsoever, in any part of the Sudan (except in the town of Suakin).

ARTICLE 9. Until, and save so far as it shall be otherwise determined by Proclamation, the Sudan (with the exception of the town of Suakin), shall be and remain under martial law.

ARTICLE 10. No consuls, vice-consuls, or consular agents shall be accredited in respect of, nor allowed to reside in the Sudan, without the previous consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

Done in Cairo, the 19th January, 1899.

(Signed) CROMER.
BOUTROS GHALI.

APPENDIX II

NOTE ON THE CONSTITUTIONS OF 1923 AND 1930

The Constitution of 1923 was modelled on that of Belgium. Drafted by a special Government Commission in 1922, it was promulgated on 19 April 1923, abrogated in 1928, and restored in 1936. Its main provisions were:

1. Egypt is declared to be a Sovereign State, free and independent, its monarchy hereditary, and its Government representative. Egyptians have equal legal, civil and political rights, irrespective of race, religion or language. Liberty of the individual and of religious belief is guaranteed.

2. All power emanates from the nation. The King exercises legislative powers concurrently with the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. Each House has the right to initiate laws, but the King and Chamber of Deputies alone can deal with taxes. No measure can become law unless it is voted by Parliament and sanctioned by the King.

3. The throne is hereditary in the family of Mehemet Ali, and the succession is in accordance with the existing rescript.

4. The King can dissolve the Chamber of Deputies, to which Ministers jointly and separately are responsible.

5. All powers shall be exercised through the intermediary of the Ministers. No one who is not an Egyptian, and no member of the reigning dynasty, may become a Minister.

6. The King appoints and dismisses Ministers.

7. The Parliament consists of a Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The King nominates two-fifths of the Senate, and the remaining three-fifths shall be elected by universal suffrage, one senator to 180,000 inhabitants, for a period of ten years.

8. Half of the Senate is to be renewed every five years.

9. The King nominates the President of the Senate.

10. The deputies shall be elected by universal suffrage, one deputy to 60,000 inhabitants, with a mandate for five years.

11. Provincial representative government is confirmed.

12. Taxes can only be imposed, reduced or abolished by law, and no public loan, or undertaking committing the Treasury may be contracted, and no concession or monopoly can be accorded, without the consent of Parliament. The budget must be presented to Parliament three months before the beginning of the financial year and must first be discussed and voted in the Chamber of Deputies. The existing financial obligations and other international obligations cannot be modified.

13. The provisions relative to the representative parliamentary regime and the succession to the throne cannot be revised.

14. The Constitution is applicable to the Kingdom of Egypt without prejudice to the rights which Egypt has in the Sudan. The King's title will be established after the status of the Sudan has been definitely fixed by negotiation.

The Egyptian electoral law was promulgated on 29 April 1923. Its provisions may be summarized as follows:

1. All male Egyptians from 21 years of age and upwards to have the suffrage.

2. Each group of thirty electors to nominate one delegate to participate in the elections.

3. Legislative Assembly candidates must be 30 years of age.

4. Candidates for the Senate must be 40 years of age.

5. The Governor of each district is responsible for the freedom of the suffrage; every 60,000 inhabitants to be represented by a member in the Legislative Assembly, every 180,000 in the Senate.

6. All balloting to be secret.

(NOTE.—This electoral law did not affect the Provincial Councils. These continued to be regulated by the electoral law of 21 July 1913.)

The electoral law provided for a system of balloting by two stages, but Zaghlul Pasha, who was then Prime Minister, altered this in 1924, substituting the direct system; the Law of the Constitution, however, was not changed.

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1930

The 1930 Constitution, drafted by a Commission set up by Sidqi Pasha in October of that year, provided for a return to the electoral system of 1923. Sidqi himself justified the change in a statement[1] in

[1] Issued on 11 September 1930.

which he said: 'If I alter the electoral law, it will be only with the view of obtaining a real representation of the country and the return of deputies who understand the meaning of representation.'[1]

The amendments[2] to the Constitution were published on 21 October 1930, accompanied by a Government statement which pointed out that the Commission of 1922 had based its work on the two-degree electoral system, and went on to say that the action of the Wafd in transforming this into a system of direct election was in itself a violation of the Constitution, and was not demanded by the public. The number of deputies was 'more than good government or the present state of a homogeneous, mainly agricultural country requires, and should not exceed 150. Direct election has been a failure; it is believed that the indirect method will result in the election of the more intelligent and progressive villagers by universal suffrage, and that these secondary electors can be trusted to vote for reputable candidates.'

The statement also contained a retrospective analysis of the working of constitutional Government since 1923, and in it a severe attack was made on the Wafd Party and its 'autocratic incapacity.' The report indicated that the amendments in the Constitution and the electoral laws were necessitated by the conduct of this party, which 'resorts to the intimidation of electors and deputies' and 'when dismissed, exploits the sympathy of the masses.'

The Liberal-Constitutional Party, under Mahmud Pasha, opposed the new Constitution on the ground that 'the authority of Parliament over public finances and legislation as well as ministerial responsibility have been reduced to a shadow.' Against this statement may be set the fact that it was on Mahmud's advice that the Constitution had been suspended by the King for three years on 19 July 1928.

APPENDIX III

Treaty of Alliance between His Majesty, in respect of the United Kingdom, and His Majesty the King of Egypt

London, August 26, 1936

[*Ratifications exchanged at Cairo on December* 22, 1936]

His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British

[1] As between 80 and 90 per cent of the electorate were illiterate, it was not felt that their votes were exercised with the requisite sense of responsibility.

[2] The principal changes were the following (previous figures in brackets): (1) Number of senators to be 100 (132). (2) Number of deputies to be 150 (235). (3) Three-fifths of the senators to be nominated by the King. (4) Age-limit for voters to be 25 (21). (5) Manhood suffrage to remain in force and election to be by the two-degree system. (6) A vote of want of confidence would in future require an absolute majority of the total membership of the Chamber. (7) The right to decide the validity or invalidity of the election of deputies or senators was transferred from Parliament to the Courts. (8) Private members were prevented from introducing financial Bills.

Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the King of Egypt;

Being anxious to consolidate the friendship and the relations of good understanding between them and to co-operate in the execution of their international obligations in preserving the peace of the world;

And considering that these objects will best be achieved by the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and alliance, which in their common interest will provide for effective co-operation in preserving peace and ensuring the defence of their respective territories, and shall govern their mutual relations in the future;

Have agreed to conclude a treaty for this purpose, and have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:—

His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India (hereinafter referred to as His Majesty The King and Emperor):

For Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

The Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden, M.C., M.P., His Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
The Rt. Hon. James Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Lord President of the Council.
The Rt. Hon. Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., O.B.E., K.C., M.P., His Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department.
The Rt. Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Lord Privy Seal.
Sir Miles Wedderburn Lampson, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.V.O., His High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan.

His Majesty the King of Egypt:

Moustapha El Nahas Pacha, President of the Council of Ministers.
Dr. Ahmed Maher, President of the Chamber of Deputies.
Mohamed Mahmoud Pacha, former President of the Council of Ministers.
Ismail Sedky Pacha, former President of the Council of Ministers.
Abdel Fattah Yéhia Pacha, former President of the Council of Ministers.
Wacyf Boutros Ghali Pacha, Minister of Foreign Affairs.
Osman Moharram Pacha, Minister of Public Works.
Makram Ebeid Pacha, Minister of Finance.
Mahmoud Fahmy El-Nokrachi Pacha, Minister of Communications.
Ahmed Hamdi Seif El Nasr Pacha, Minister of Agriculture.
Aly El Chamsi Pacha, former Minister.
Mohamed Helmi Issa Pacha, former Minister.
Hafez Afifi Pacha, former Minister.

Who, having communicated their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed as follows:—

ARTICLE 1

The military occupation of Egypt by the forces of His Majesty The King and Emperor is terminated.

ARTICLE 2

His Majesty The King and Emperor will henceforth be represented at the Court of His Majesty the King of Egypt and His Majesty the King of Egypt will be represented at the Court of St. James's by Ambassadors duly accredited.

ARTICLE 3

Egypt intends to apply for membership to the League of Nations. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, recognising Egypt as a sovereign independent State, will support any request for admission which the Egyptian Government may present in the conditions prescribed by Article 1 of the Covenant.

ARTICLE 4

An alliance is established between the High Contracting Parties with a view to consolidating their friendship, their cordial understanding and their good relations.

ARTICLE 5

Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to adopt in relation to foreign countries an attitude which is inconsistent with the alliance, nor to conclude political treaties inconsistent with the provisions of the present treaty.

ARTICLE 6

Should any dispute with a third State produce a situation which involves a risk of a rupture with that State, the High Contracting Parties will consult each other with a view to the settlement of the said dispute by peaceful means, in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations and of any other international obligations which may be applicable to the case.

ARTICLE 7

Should, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 6 above, either of the High Contracting Parties become engaged in war, the other High Contracting Party will, subject always to the provisions of Article 10 below, immediately come to his aid in the capacity of an ally.

The aid of His Majesty the King of Egypt in the event of war, imminent menace of war or apprehended international emergency will consist in furnishing to His Majesty The King and Emperor on Egyptian territory, in accordance with the Egyptian system of administration and legislation, all the facilities and assistance in his

power, including the use of his ports, aerodromes and means of communication. It will accordingly be for the Egyptian Government to take all the administrative and legislative measures, including the establishment of martial law and an effective censorship, necessary to render these facilities and assistance effective.

ARTICLE 8

In view of the fact that the Suez Canal, whilst being an integral part of Egypt, is a universal means of communication as also an essential means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire, His Majesty the King of Egypt, until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal, authorises His Majesty The King and Emperor to station forces in Egyptian territory in the vicinity of the Canal, in the zone specified in the Annex to this Article, with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal. The detailed arrangements for the carrying into effect of this Article are contained in the Annex hereto. The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt.

It is understood that at the end of the period of twenty years specified in Article 16 the question whether the presence of British forces is no longer necessary owing to the fact that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal may, if the High Contracting Parties do not agree thereon, be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for decision in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant in force at the time of signature of the present treaty or to such other person or body of persons for decision in accordance with such other procedure as the High Contracting Parties may agree.

Annex to Article 8

1. Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 7, the numbers of the forces of His Majesty The King and Emperor to be maintained in the vicinity of the Canal shall not exceed, of the land forces, 10,000, and of the air forces, 400 pilots, together with the necessary ancillary personnel for administrative and technical duties. These numbers do not include civilian personnel, *e.g.*, clerks, artisans and labourers.

2. The British forces to be maintained in the vicinity of the Canal will be distributed (*a*) as regards the land forces, in Moascar and the Geneifa area on the south-west side of the Great Bitter Lake, and (*b*) as regards the air forces, within 5 miles of the Port Said–Suez railway from Kantara in the north, to the junction of the railway Suez–Cairo and Suez–Ismailia in the south, together with an extension along the Ismailia–Cairo railway to include the Royal Air Force Station at Abu Sueir and its satellite landing grounds; together with areas suitable for air firing and bombing ranges, which may have to be placed east of the Canal.

3. In the localities specified above there shall be provided for the British land and air forces of the numbers specified in paragraph 1 above, including 4,000 civilian personnel (but less 2,000 of the land forces, 700 of the air

forces and 450 civilian personnel for whom accommodation already exists), the necessary lands and durable barrack and technical accommodation, including an emergency water supply. The lands, accommodation and water supply shall be suitable according to modern standards. In addition, amenities such as are reasonable, having regard to the character of these localities, will be provided by the planting of trees and the provision of gardens, playing fields, etc., for the troops, and a site for the erection of a convalescent camp on the Mediterranean coast.

4. The Egyptian Government will make available the lands and construct the accommodation, water supplies, amenities and convalescent camp, referred to in the preceding paragraph as being necessary over and above the accommodation already existing in these localities, at its own expense, but His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will contribute (1) the actual sum spent by the Egyptian Government before 1914 on the construction of new barracks as alternative accommodation to the Kasr-el-Nil Barracks in Cairo, and (2) the cost of one-fourth of the barrack and technical accommodation for the land forces. The first of these sums shall be paid at the time specified in paragraph 8 below for the withdrawal of the British forces from Cairo and the second at the time for the withdrawal of the British forces from Alexandria under paragraph 18 below. The Egyptian Government may charge a fair rental for the residential accommodation provided for the civilian personnel. The amount of the rent will be agreed between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Egyptian Government.

5. The two Governments will each appoint, immediately the present treaty comes into force, two or more persons who shall together form a committee to whom all questions relating to the execution of these works from the time of their commencement to the time of their completion shall be entrusted. Proposals for, or outlines of, plans and specifications put forward by the representatives of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be accepted, provided they are reasonable and do not fall outside the scope of the obligations of the Egyptian Government under paragraph 4. The plans and specifications of each of the works to be undertaken by the Egyptian Government shall be approved by the representatives of both Governments on this committee before the work is begun. Any member of this committee, as well as the Commanders of the British forces or their representatives, shall have the right to examine the works at all stages of their construction, and the United Kingdom members of the committee may make suggestions as regards the manner in which the work is carried out. The United Kingdom members shall also have the right to make at any time, while the work is in progress, proposals for modifications or alterations in the plans and specifications. Effect shall be given to suggestions and proposals by the United Kingdom members, subject to the condition that they are reasonable and do not fall outside the scope of the obligations of the Egyptian Government under paragraph 4. In the case of machinery and other stores, where standardization of type is important, it is agreed that stores of the standard type in general use by the British forces will be obtained and installed. It is, of course, understood that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom may, when the barracks and accommodation are being used by the British forces, make at their own expense improvements or alterations thereto and construct new buildings in the areas specified in paragraph 2 above.

6. In pursuance of their programme for the development of road and railway communications in Egypt, and in order to bring the means of communications in Egypt up to modern strategic requirements, the Egyptian

Government will construct and maintain the following roads, bridges and railways.

[*Here follow details of* (*A*) *Roads, and* (*B*) *Railways.*]

The Egyptian Government will complete the work specified in (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) above before the expiry of the period of eight years aforesaid. The roads and railway facilities mentioned above will, of course, be maintained by the Egyptian Government.

19. The British forces in or near Cairo shall, until the time for withdrawal under paragraph 8 above, and the British forces in or near Alexandria until the expiry of the time specified in paragraph 18 above, continue to enjoy the same facilities as at present.

ARTICLE 9

The immunities and privileges in jurisdictional and fiscal matters to be enjoyed by the forces of His Majesty The King and Emperor who are in Egypt in accordance with the provisions of the present treaty will be determined in a separate convention to be concluded between the Egyptian Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

ARTICLE 10

Nothing in the present treaty is intended to or shall in any way prejudice the rights and obligations which devolve, or may devolve, upon either of the High Contracting Parties under the Covenant of the League of Nations or the Treaty for the Renunciation of War signed at Paris on the 27th August, 1928.[1]

ARTICLE 11

1. While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future, modifying the agreements of the 19th January and the 10th July, 1899, the High Contracting Parties agree that the administration of the Sudan shall continue to be that resulting from the said agreements. The Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred upon him by the said agreements.

The High Contracting Parties agree that the primary aim of their administration in the Sudan must be the welfare of the Sudanese.

Nothing in this article prejudices the question of sovereignty over the Sudan.

2. Appointments and promotions of officials in the Sudan will in consequence remain vested in the Governor-General, who, in making new appointments to posts for which qualified Sudanese are not available, will select suitable candidates of British and Egyptian nationality.

3. In addition to Sudanese troops, both British and Egyptian troops shall be placed at the disposal of the Governor-General for the defence of the Sudan.

4. Egyptian immigration into the Sudan shall be unrestricted except for reasons of public order and health.

[1] Treaty Series No. 29 (1929) (Cmd. 3410).

5. There shall be no discrimination in the Sudan between British subjects and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce, immigration or the possession of property.

6. The High Contracting Parties are agreed on the provisions set out in the Annex to this Article as regards the method by which international conventions are to be made applicable to the Sudan.

[*Here follows Annex to Article* 11.]

ARTICLE 12

His Majesty The King and Emperor recognises that the responsibility for the lives and property of foreigners in Egypt devolves exclusively upon the Egyptian Government, who will ensure the fulfilment of their obligations in this respect.

ARTICLE 13

His Majesty The King and Emperor recognises that the capitulatory régime now existing in Egypt is no longer in accordance with the spirit of the times and with the present state of Egypt.

His Majesty the King of Egypt desires the abolition of this régime without delay.

Both High Contracting Parties are agreed upon the arrangements with regard to this matter as set forth in the Annex to this Article.

Annex to Article 13

1. It is the object of the arrangements set out in this Annex:—

(i) To bring about speedily the abolition of the Capitulations in Egypt with the disappearance of the existing restrictions on Egyptian sovereignty in the matter of the application of Egyptian legislation (including financial legislation) to foreigners as its necessary consequence;

(ii) To institute a transitional régime for a reasonable and not unduly prolonged period to be fixed, during which the Mixed Tribunals will remain and will, in addition to their present judicial jurisdiction, exercise the jurisdiction at present vested in the Consular Courts.

At the end of this transitional period the Egyptian Government will be free to dispense with the Mixed Tribunals.

2. As a first step, the Egyptian Government will approach the Capitulatory Powers as soon as possible with a view to (*a*) the removal of all restrictions on the application of Egyptian legislation to foreigners, and (*b*) the institution of a transitional régime for the Mixed Tribunals as provided in paragraph 1 (ii) above.

3. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, as the Government of a Capitulatory Power and as an ally of Egypt, are in no way opposed to the arrangements referred to in the preceding paragraph and will collaborate actively with the Egyptian Government in giving effect to them by using all their influence with the Powers exercising capitulatory rights in Egypt.

4. It is understood that in the event of its being found impossible to bring into effect the arrangements referred to in paragraph 2, the Egyptian Government retains its full rights unimpaired with regard to the capitulatory régime, including the Mixed Tribunals.

5. It is understood that paragraph 2 (*a*) involves not merely that the assent of the Capitulatory Powers will be no longer necessary for the application of any Egyptian legislation to their nationals, but also that the present

legislative functions of the Mixed Tribunals as regards the application of Egyptian legislation to foreigners will terminate. It would follow from this that the Mixed Tribunals in their judicial capacity would no longer have to pronounce upon the validity of the application to foreigners of an Egyptian law or decree which has been applied to foreigners by the Egyptian Parliament or Government, as the case may be.

6. His Majesty the King of Egypt hereby declares that no Egyptian legislation made applicable to foreigners will be inconsistent with the principles generally adopted in modern legislation or, with particular relation to legislation of a fiscal nature, discriminate against foreigners, including foreign corporate bodies.

7. In view of the fact that it is the practice in most countries to apply to foreigners the law of their nationality in matters of 'statut personnel.' consideration will be given to the desirability of excepting from the transfer of jurisdiction, at any rate in the first place, matters relating to 'statut personnel' affecting nationals of those Capitulatory Powers who wish that their Consular authorities should continue to exercise such jurisdiction.

8. The transitional régime for the Mixed Tribunals and the transfer to them of the jurisdiction at present exercised by the Consular Courts (which régime and transfer will, of course, be subject to the provisions of the special convention referred to in Article 9) will necessitate the revision of existing laws relating to the organisation and jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals, including the preparation and promulgation of a new Code of Criminal Procedure. It is understood that this revision will include amongst other matters:—

(i) The definition of the word 'foreigner' for the purpose of the future jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals;

(ii) The increase of the personnel of the Mixed Tribunals and the Mixed Parquet, which will be necessitated by the proposed extension of their jurisdiction;

(iii) The procedure in the case of pardons or remissions of sentences imposed on foreigners and also in connection with the execution of capital sentences passed on foreigners.

ARTICLE 14

The present treaty abrogates any existing agreements or other instruments whose continued existence is inconsistent with its provisions. Should either High Contracting Party so request, a list of the agreements and instruments thus abrogated shall be drawn up in agreement between them within six months of the coming into force of the present treaty.

ARTICLE 15

The High Contracting Parties agree that any difference on the subject of the application or interpretation of the provisions of the present treaty which they are unable to settle by direct negotiation shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

ARTICLE 16

At any time after the expiration of a period of twenty years from the coming into force of the treaty, the High Contracting Parties will, at the request of either of them, enter into negotiations with a view to such revision of its terms by agreement between them as

may be appropriate in the circumstances as they then exist. In case of the High Contracting Parties being unable to agree upon the terms of the revised treaty, the difference will be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for decision in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant in force at the time of signature of the present treaty or to such other person or body of persons for decision in accordance with such procedure as the High Contracting Parties may agree. It is agreed that any revision of this treaty will provide for the continuation of the Alliance between the High Contracting Parties in accordance with the principles contained in Articles 4, 5, 6 and 7. Nevertheless, with the consent of both High Contracting Parties, negotiations may be entered into at any time after the expiration of a period of ten years after the coming into force of the treaty, with a view to such revision as aforesaid.

ARTICLE 17

The present treaty is subject to ratification. Ratifications shall be exchanged in Cairo as soon as possible. The treaty shall come into force on the date of the exchange of ratifications, and shall thereupon be registered with the Secretary-General of the League of Nations.

In witness whereof the above-named plenipotentiaries have signed the present treaty and affixed thereto their seals.

Done at London in duplicate this 26th day of August, 1936.

[*Here follow signatures.*]

AGREED MINUTE

The United Kingdom and Egyptian Delegations desire at the moment of signature to record in a minute certain points of interpretation of the provisions of the Treaty of Alliance upon which they are agreed.

These points are as follows:

(i) It is of course understood that the facilities provided for in Article 7 to be furnished to His Majesty The King and Emperor include the sending of British forces or reinforcements in the eventualities specified in that Article.

(ii) With reference to Article 7, it is understood that as a result of the provisions of Article 6, there will have been mutual consultation between the two Governments in the case of a risk of a rupture. In the case of an apprehended international emergency, the same principle of mutual consultation applies.

(iii) The 'means of communication' referred to in the second sentence of Article 7 include telecommunications (cables, telegraphs, telephones and wireless).

(iv) Amongst the military, administrative and legislative measures referred to in the third sentence of Article 7 are included measures under which the Egyptian Government, in the exercise of their powers as regards radio-electric communications, will take into account the requirements of the W/T stations of the British forces

in Egypt, and will continue to co-operate with the British authorities to prevent any mutual interference between British and Egyptian W/T stations, and measures providing for the effective control of all means of communications referred to in that Article.

(v) The words 'Geneifa area' in paragraph 2 (*a*) of the Annex to Article 8 mean: along the shore of the Great Bitter Lake from a point 3 kilometres North of Geneifa Station to a point 3 kilometres South-East of Fayid Station to a depth of 3 kilometres from the shore of the lake.

(vi) With reference to paragraph 2 (*b*) of the Annex to Article 8, it is understood that the exact sites in the area therein referred to where the air forces will be located will be defined as soon as possible.

The Royal Air Force Depot at present situated at Aboukir will also be transferred to this area not later than the date of the withdrawal of the British forces from Cairo under paragraph 8.

(vii) With reference to paragraph 3 of the Annex to Article 8, it is understood (*a*) that British barrack accommodation includes married quarters for officers and for a proportion of the other ranks, (*b*) that though the site of the convalescent camp cannot be definitely fixed at the moment, El Arish might possibly prove suitable, and (*c*) that the Egyptian Government, in pursuance of the policy which it has already taken in hand for the benefit of the inhabitants of those areas, will take all reasonable sanitary measures for the combating of malaria in the areas adjacent to those where the British forces are situated.

(viii) With reference to paragraph 6 of the Annex to Article 8, it is understood that, with regard to road No. (iii), the Egyptian Government will, unless they are able to make arrangements with the Suez Canal Company for the use of this road by the British and Egyptian forces and for the improvement of those sections which are not already up to this standard so as to satisfy the conditions laid down in paragraph 6, construct an entirely new road connecting these places.

(ix) With reference to paragraph 12 of the Annex to Article 8, it is understood that the number of the detachment referred to shall be limited to the minimum strictly necessary to handle and guard this material.

(x) With reference to paragraph 13 of the Annex to Article 8, it is understood that flying will take place for training purposes mostly over desert areas, and that populated areas will only be flown over where necessity so demands.

(xi) With reference to paragraph 2 of the Egyptian Note relating to military matters, it is of course understood that the cost of the Military Mission will be defrayed by the Egyptian Government, and that the words 'proper training' in this paragraph include training in British military colleges and academies.

(xii) Paragraph 2 of the Egyptian Note relating to military matters only applies to persons who are already at the time members of the Egyptian armed forces.

(xiii) The word 'equipment' in paragraph 3 of the Egyptian

Note relating to military matters, means all such stores as it is desirable for forces acting together to have as a common pattern. It does not include articles of clothing or articles of local production.

(xiv) With reference to paragraph 1 of Article 11, it is agreed that the Governor-General shall furnish to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Egyptian Government an annual report on the administration of the Sudan. Sudan legislation will be notified directly to the President of the Egyptian Council of Ministers.

(xv) With reference to paragraph 2 of Article 11, it is understood that, while the appointment of Egyptian nationals to official posts in the Sudan must necessarily be governed by the number of suitable vacancies, the time of their occurrence and the qualifications of the candidates forthcoming, the provisions of this paragraph will take effect forthwith on the coming into force of the Treaty. The promotion and advancement of members of the Sudan Service shall be irrespective of nationality up to any rank by selection in accordance with individual merits.

It is also understood that these provisions will not prevent the Governor-General occasionally appointing to special posts persons of another nationality when no qualified British subjects, Egyptian nationals or Sudanese are available.

(xvi) With reference to paragraph 3 of Article 11, it is understood that, as the Egyptian Government are willing to send troops to the Sudan, the Governor-General will give immediate consideration to the question of the number of Egyptian troops required for service in the Sudan, the precise places where they will be stationed and the accommodation necessary for them, and that the Egyptian Government will send forthwith, on the coming into force of the Treaty, an Egyptian military officer of high rank whom the Governor-General can consult with regard to these matters.

(xvii) With reference to Article 11, as it has been arranged between the Egyptian Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom that the question of the indebtedness of the Sudan to Egypt and other financial questions affecting the Sudan shall be discussed between the Egyptian Ministry of Finance and the Treasury of the United Kingdom, and as such discussions have already commenced, it has been considered unnecessary to insert in the Treaty any provision in regard to this question.

(xviii) With regard to paragraph 6 of the Annex to Article 13, it is understood that questions relating to this declaration are not subjects for the appreciation of any Courts in Egypt.

Signed in duplicate at London this 26th day of August, 1936.

ANTHONY EDEN,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

MOUSTAPHA EL-NAHAS,
President of the Egyptian Council of Ministers

APPENDIX IV

Note on the Regulation of the Nile Waters

The claim of Egypt to assurances that her supply of water would never be endangered by political or other developments has always been acknowledged by Great Britain, and Lord Milner, in his Report, recognized that although Egypt and the Sudan were in his opinion two different countries and bound to develop on very different lines, Egypt would always have one interest of supreme importance in the Sudan.

> The Nile, upon which the very existence of Egypt depends [he wrote], flows for hundreds of miles through the Sudan, and it is vital to Egypt to prevent any such diversion of water from the Nile as might diminish her present cultivable area or preclude the reclamation of that portion of her soil, some 2,000,000 acres in extent, which is capable of being brought under cultivation, when, by means of storage, the present supply of water available for irrigation has been increased.[1]

He added, however, that it was out of the question for Egyptian interests in Nile water to be safeguarded by means of subjecting the Sudan to Egyptian political domination.

Lord Curzon in 1921 promised that Great Britain would undertake to secure for Egypt her fair share of the waters of the Nile, and that no new irrigation works would be begun on that river or its tributaries south of Wadi Halfa without the concurrence of three conservators representing Egypt, the Sudan, and Uganda respectively. Ramsay MacDonald, in October 1924, reiterated that the British Government was prepared to secure Egypt's interests in the Nile water supply. But in spite of these assurances the assassination of Sir Lee Stack led the British Government, in November 1924, to threaten to increase the Gezira irrigation area in the Sudan from 300,000 *feddans* to an unlimited extent. Zaghlul Pasha protested that this threat to the water supply of Egypt was out of all proportion to the occasion which led to it, and Sir Austen Chamberlain, in the House of Commons, admitted that the wording of the demand might have been different. Ziwar Pasha, who succeeded Zaghlul Pasha as Prime Minister, secured a written withdrawal of the threat in an exchange of notes on 26 January 1925.

As a result of this exchange of notes, a mixed commission was appointed to examine the whole question of the Nile water supply and to propose a basis on which irrigation could be carried out with full consideration for the interests of Egypt 'and without detriment to her natural and historic rights'. The commission reported in March 1926 and its findings were adopted substantially as they stood in a subsequent exchange of Notes between Mahmud Pasha and Lord Lloyd on 7 May 1929.[2]

[1] Cmd. 1131 (1920), p. 33.

[2] The commission's report was in fact an integral part of the agreement, and was published, together with the Exchange of Notes, as a White Paper: *Exchange of Notes in regard to the Use of the Waters of the River Nile for Irrigation Purposes*, Cairo 7 May 1929. Treaty Series No. 17 (1929). Cmd. 3348.

A survey of the whole river was completed and the findings published in 1938, after twenty years' work by the Egyptian Ministry of Public Works with the collaboration of British and Egyptian scientists. First among their suggested projects for further irrigation to be undertaken was the construction of a dam and hydro-electric works in Uganda at Owen Falls, the outflow of the Nile from Lake Victoria. Agreement between the British and Egyptian Governments that this work should be begun, at an estimated cost to Egypt and Uganda of £4½ million and £7½ million respectively, was announced in May 1949. As now conceived, it was but part of a much larger scheme, for whose completion twenty-five years were estimated to be necessary, for converting Lakes Victoria and Albert into storage reservoirs and cutting a by-pass canal through the Sudd swamps of the Southern Sudan, and so allowing the flow of water to the lower Nile to be equalized, not merely between seasons, but between years of abundance and years of deficiency.[1]

APPENDIX V

Note on the Suez Canal Company

The Suez Canal Company (*Société Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez*) functions by virtue of two concessions granted by the Viceroy of Egypt, dated 30 November 1854 and 5 January 1856 and finally confirmed by the Sultan in 1866. It is a *société anonyme* and is governed by the provisions of the French code respecting such companies, with the Court of Appeal in Paris as the ultimate resort. The Company is registered under Egyptian law as an Egyptian company, the executive work is done in Egypt, and jurisdiction over cases of a local character lies with the Egyptian Courts. Paris, on the other hand, is the administrative headquarters of the Company. Its Board now consists of 32 directors, of whom 19 are French, 10 British, 4 Egyptian, 1 Dutch, and 1 American. Of a total of 400,000 shares issued, 176,602, or about 44 per cent, are in British hands.[2]

The Concession was to run for 99 years from the opening of the Canal in 1869, and is therefore due to terminate in 1968.[3] At that date, if the Egyptian Government decides not to renew it, the question of compensation to be paid to the Company is to be decided by negotiation. The international status of the Canal is governed by the Convention of 29 October 1888, signed between Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia,

[1] Bevin in the House of Commons, 19 May 1949: H. C. Deb., 5th ser., vol. 465, cols. 617–21. Cf. the diplomatic correspondent of *The Times*, 11 February 1949; ibid. Cairo correspondent, 'Nile Water Supply', 11 August 1949; Feliks Bochenski and William Diamond, 'TVA's in the Middle East', *Middle East Journal*, January 1950, iv. 57–61.

[2] Purchased from the Khedive in 1875.

[3] A request in 1909 by the Company for an extension of the Concession beyond this date was refused by the Egyptian Government.

Spain, and Turkey, respecting 'the Free Navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal'. The essence of the Convention is contained in the first of its seventeen articles, which lays down that:

> The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to all merchant or war vessels, without flag discrimination.
>
> Consequently, the High Contracting Parties agree in no way to prevent the free use of the Canal in time of war as in time of peace.
>
> The Canal shall never be used for the exercise of the right of blockade.

Under the terms of the Convention, however, Great Britain is by virtue of special rights entitled to close the Canal (Article 10), but only if Egypt is involved in war or if such action becomes necessary for the defence of Egyptian territory and of the Canal itself.

An agreement between the Company and the Egyptian Government was signed on 7 March 1949, under the terms of which Egypt will be progressively associated with the direction of the Company and will gain increased benefits from its operations. The number of Egyptian directors on the Board (now 4) will be increased to 12, foreign employees will be replaced by Egyptians, and 50 Egyptians will be appointed as senior officials. The Egyptian royalties have now been increased to 7 per cent of all profits, and Egyptian products are exempt from transit dues. Transit dues were reduced[1] in September 1951 for one year as against the rate effective since 1941. The new bye-pass canal, seven miles long and the same width and depth as the main waterway, has now been completed to permit a two-way traffic and thus increase the speed with which ships can pass through.

APPENDIX VI

A. A Summary of the Egyptian Case against Great Britain

1. The British have frequently and notoriously violated the spirit of the Treaty, as, for example, by their military interventions in internal affairs and by their prosecution of Egypt before the Security Council. It is therefore tyrannical to hold Egypt to the letter of the Treaty, especially since the British Government has itself disregarded the letter of the Treaty in regard to the garrisons in the Suez Canal Zone ever since the end of the war.

2. The Treaty was concluded at a time when the British Government was still regarded as the most friendly of the Western Powers towards the Arabs. The establishment of Israel with British support has entirely reversed this situation; it has made the existence of any special arrangement with the British Government a matter of acute embarrassment to any Arab Government and of violent dissatis-

[1] By a little over 6 per cent per ton for loaded ships and 13 per cent per ton for ships in ballast.

faction among their populations, thereby exposing the Arab Governments themselves to subversive movements.

3. The Treaty was concluded at a time when Great Britain was a Great Power, with complete control over its own military policy, and when the international circumstances were such that the Treaty gave a reasonable guarantee that Egypt would not be involved in major military operations. Today, Great Britain is no longer a Great Power, its resources are limited, and its military policy is subject to the control of others. A British garrison on Egyptian soil is therefore no longer a guarantee of security, but a relatively weak outpost which in time of war will invite the attack of a stronger Power.

4. The British occupation of the Sudan was explicitly undertaken in the name of the Khedive of Egypt, in order to bring the main valley of the Nile under unified control, and was largely paid for by the Egyptian Treasury. The Anglo-Egyptian Condominium implied that unified control would be maintained. In fact, since 1924 the Sudan has been controlled exclusively by Great Britain, except that the waters of the White Nile are controlled by Egypt under the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929. The British Government, by encouraging Sudanese separatism, has not only violated its contract with Egypt and the moral and physical bases of its own occupation of the Sudan, but is exposing Egypt to the possibility of serious interference with the water supply upon which the lives of its rapidly expanding population depend.

B. Extracts from the Explanatory Statement by Nokrashy Pasha Before the Security Council of the United Nations on 5 August 1947[1]

We have spared no effort to settle this dispute before appealing to the Security Council.

Throughout the recent war, from the first day until the victory of democracy over nazism and fascism was finally achieved, Egypt stood side by side with the United Kingdom and gave every possible aid to the cause of the Allies. In doing so, it was inspired by the great democratic ideals confirmed in the Atlantic Charter, and cherished the high hopes held out in that noble Instrument. When the war was over, it confidently expected the prompt removal of the limitations on its rights as a free and sovereign State.

To this end, Egypt endeavoured to settle its differences with the United Kingdom in friendly talks. In taking this course, it was animated no less by its traditions as a peace-loving nation than by the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, to which it was solemnly pledged.

With public feeling in Egypt on the point of eruption, with the entire nation clamouring for the complete and unconditional evacuation of the foreign forces on its soil, the Egyptian Government approached the Government of the United Kingdom with a request

[1] Security Council, *Official Records*, 2nd year, No. 70, pp. 1745–67.

that negotiations be opened with a view to re-orienting Anglo-Egyptian relations in the light of the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter. . . .

From the first phase of the negotiations which ensued, the United Kingdom Government insisted on the maintenance of its military bases in Egypt under one form or another. This demand was rejected. Not only did it impinge upon our sovereignty and independence; it also conflicted with the United Nations Charter and the principle of collective defence. . . .

[*Here follows the British statement of 7 May 1946.*]

The intention of the United Kingdom was made clear beyond cavil when, on 21 May 1946, they presented to us a draft of a treaty of alliance, together with a draft of a military treaty which incorporated in substance the burdensome and objectionable military conditions imposed in the 1936 Treaty.

Proposals and counter-proposals ensued, but throughout the negotiations the United Kingdom, while endeavouring to create an appearance of accommodation, maintained its initial position.

In a desperate attempt to arrive at a friendly settlement, Sidky Pasha, then Egyptian Prime Minister, accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, finally journeyed to London to establish personal contact with Mr Bevin. The Sidky-Bevin proposals were initialed on a personal basis as *ad referendum* drafts. They did not commit either Government. Upon the Prime Minister's return to Egypt, public comment both in Cairo and in London revealed fundamental divergence between the Egyptian and United Kingdom views, particularly with regard to the Sudan.

From the very beginning of the negotiations, the United Kingdom had tried—as a price upon Egypt's natural right to evacuation—not only to force it into an onerous alliance but also to secure the maintenance in the Sudan of the administrative regime started in 1899, under cover of which the United Kingdom holds all authority, in violation of Egypt's sovereign rights.

At long last Mr Bevin yielded on the point which the Egyptian negotiators deemed to be essential to the conclusion of any treaty. He consented to recognize the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown. Yet it became evident at once that this recognition could not be taken at its face value. The insistence of the Government of the United Kingdom that the Sudan should be granted the right to secede from Egypt at some future date meant that it would be left for the United Kingdom to decide how long that unity should last, and when and under what conditions it might be broken, although this is an internal matter between Egypt and the Sudan.

Concurrently, United Kingdom officials in the Sudan endeavoured to stir up bad feeling between the Sudanese and the Egyptians. At a time when the two Governments were negotiating a treaty based on mutual good faith and friendship, this action on the part of the United Kingdom officials clearly showed intentions which were

far from friendly, and it definitively undermined the confidence essential to the conclusion of a treaty. This hostile attitude became another stumbling block in the negotiations.

In all frankness, we are here to challenge the basic assumptions of nineteenth century imperialism. We ask the Security Council to affirm that in the twentieth century the world has moved on.

We ask the Security Council to direct the evacuation of all United Kingdom forces from the valley of the Nile—from the Sudan as from all other parts of Egyptian territory. We ask the Council to say that this evacuation must be immediate, that it must be complete, and that it must be unconditional.

We further ask the Security Council to direct the termination of the administrative regime which has been maintained by the United Kingdom in the Sudan since 1899, in order that our fellow-countrymen, the Sudanese, may share the welfare and the aspirations of the people of Egypt.

Our demand for the evacuation of the United Kingdom forces may prompt the question as to how these forces come to be in Egypt. A brief reference to history may therefore not be inappropriate.

The British occupation did not begin yesterday. It dates back sixty-five years—back to 1882. Even then, it was but a stage in the realization of imperialistic designs long entertained.

It was Bonaparte's Egyptian venture that led the United Kingdom to appreciate the advantages of Egypt's geographical position and to set its compass for the domination of the valley of the Nile. From then on, it was a fixed policy of the United Kingdom that no strong Government should be allowed to exist along the Nile.

Early in the nineteenth century the founder of our reigning dynasty, the great Mohamed Ali, made Egypt the outstanding Power in the Eastern Mediterranean, and laid a solid basis for its autonomy and independence. But for obstruction on the part of the United Kingdom, his goal would have been fully achieved. Ostensibly to protect the Ottoman Empire, the United Kingdom mobilized the Concert of Europe against Egyptian independence.

When, against its opposition, the Suez Canal became a reality, the United Kingdom intensified its policy, with the ultimate aim of complete control. When later the Khedive was faced with financial difficulties, the United Kingdom undertook the high mission of protecting the foreign bond-holders, disregarding the welfare and aspirations of the Egyptian people.

In 1882, using the pretext that the Egyptian coast was being fortified, a United Kingdom fleet bombarded Alexandria. Thus was inaugurated the occupation of Egypt by force.

That occupation had not a semblance of justification. It was in itself a flagrant lack of respect for public international law. It was furthermore a direct violation of the London Convention of 1840 and later agreements by which the Powers had sanctioned the status of Egypt and the integrity of its territory. Yet the occupation became

the springboard of the subsequent developments, and to it can be traced the origin of the present dispute.

Of course the presence of the troops was represented as being only temporary. Time and again, responsible United Kingdom statesmen solemnly declared that the occupation was not to be permanent, that it would be ended as soon as possible, that it was intended to serve only the moral needs of the moment.

As one example of many such declarations, let me quote the statement made in the House of Commons by the British Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, on 10 August 1882:

> I can go so far as to answer the honorable gentleman when he asked me whether we contemplate an indefinite occupation of Egypt. Undoubtedly of all things in the world that is a thing which we are not going to do. It would be absolutely at variance with all the principles and views of Her Majesty's Government, and the pledges they have given to Europe, and with the views, I may say, of Europe itself.

These were the words of Mr Gladstone in August 1882.

Sixty-five years have passed. Sixty-five years almost to a day. Yet the United Kingdom forces still remain on Egyptian soil. . . .

At the outbreak of the war in 1914, the United Kingdom threw off its mask and proclaimed a protectorate over Egypt. The Egyptians were not consulted, but they were cajoled into believing that their status would be reconsidered at the end of hostilities.

After 1918, however, the United Kingdom made no move in this direction. Instead it opposed Egypt's petition to be heard at the peace conferences of that period, and exiled its leaders to Malta and the Seychelles Islands.

Only under pressure of the national revolution in Egypt did the United Kingdom bring itself to see the writing on the wall. In 1922 by a unilateral declaration, the United Kingdom proclaimed the end of the protectorate and the so-called independence of Egypt . . .

[*Here follow the four reserved points.*]

I shall not dwell on the measures by which the Government of the United Kingdom has kept us on tenterhooks during the past quarter of a century. . . .

Whatever the party in power in England, whatever its pre-election promises, whether the Conservative Party or the Labour Party was dominant, United Kingdom's policy toward Egypt continued immutable, and it was always Tory. It remained as it was summed up in an official report by Lord Milner in 1920:

> It is therefore necessary that any treaty entered into between us and the Egyptians should secure the special position of the British representative in Egypt, enable us to maintain a force within Egyptian territory for the protection of our imperial communications, and take adequate security that Egyptian policy shall be in line with that of the British Empire.

Let us come down to the year 1936. Egypt then found itself faced

with the serious consequences of international confusion. Denied any voice at Geneva, Egypt was not responsible for the perils of that situation. Fascist aggression proceeded unchecked in Ethiopia, on Egypt's eastern frontier. . . .

Dominated by the fear of nazism and fascism, Egypt was at that time somewhat less disposed to push its resistance to encroachment by the United Kingdom. Under the special circumstances of the then existing emergency, Egypt yielded to the onerous conditions set by the United Kingdom. Those conditions were embodied in the Treaty of 1936, which provided for:

1. The stationing of United Kingdom armed forces of specified size on Egyptian territory for a period of at least ten years;
2. An alliance which was to continue indefinitely, even though other parts of the Treaty were reconsidered.

The implicit term of these restrictions was manifest in the specific objects which they were to serve. Despite the time limits provided for, the Treaty was a temporary expedient. . . .

No one can seriously claim that the restrictions on Egyptian sovereignty embodied in the 1936 Treaty were intended to continue after the war. The war was the implicit term to these restrictions, and the 1936 Treaty has now outlived its purpose.

Today, Egypt is entitled to its rights of full sovereignty. Today, Egypt's relationship with the United Kingdom can no longer be charted by the provisions of the 1936 Treaty. It must be governed by international law and by the Charter of the United Nations, which is now the cornerstone of international relations. . . .

Whatever may have been the situation in the past, Egypt is here today as the sovereign equal of the other party to this dispute.

Claiming the full benefit of this equality, we cannot yield one iota of sovereignty to any of our equals. Yet we shall not allow it to stand in the way of our co-operation for the benefit of the community of nations, and we shall live at all times within the framework of the Charter.

What could be more contrary to the principle of sovereign equality than the occupation in time of peace of the territory of a Member of the United Nations, without its consent, by the armed forces of another Member?

Egypt does not consent to the occupation of its territory by United Kingdom forces. . . .

Let me trace the situation specifically. Let me demonstrate that the Treaty of 1936 does not express our free consent, that it contradicts international agreements, and that it is not consistent with the Charter.

Egypt was not a free party in concluding the Treaty of 1936. First of all, its territory was occupied at the time by United Kingdom troops. Secondly, the Government of the United Kingdom left no doubt in the minds of the Egyptian plenipotentiaries as to the consequences of their failure to agree to the United Kingdom demands. . . .

A mere glance at the map suffices to show that Egypt and the Sudan are physically one and the same country. The line which was made to separate them along the twenty-second parallel was a United Kingdom invention. It is a completely artificial line, with no topographical or geographical justification. . . .

From the economic point of view also, the two parts of the Nile valley form one unit. They are so closely interdependent that any policy pursued separately to further local interests may stifle the progress of the whole valley. This economic unity, based on agricultural, industrial and commercial interests, is further enhanced by the complete dependence of both sections of the valley on the waters of the Nile. . . .

Not only is the Nile the common source of life for those who exist upon its bounty; it is also the avenue by which, since the most ancient times, civilization has been extended into the heart of Africa. It was the channel by which Islamic culture reached the Sudan hundreds of years ago.

The process of Egyptian penetration in the Sudan was accomplished by peaceful means, through fusion and intermarriage, there being no racial or social discrimination in the Islamic conception. It was not planned. It was not due to government intervention. It was simply the outcome of natural forces making for unity. . . .

The occupation of Egypt in 1882 gave the United Kingdom the means to further its designs on the Sudan. At the same time, a religious revolt led by a chief who called himself El-Mahdi, supplied it with the needed opportunity. It moved to realize its ends by successive stages. . . .

Then came the second stage—what the United Kingdom called the 'reconquest' of the Sudan. It was in the name of the Khedive that, in 1896, Kitchener led an Egyptian army into the Sudan. To the Sudanese people, Kitchener invoked the authority of the Khedive, asking them to submit to him again as their legitimate sovereign. . . .

The character of this Agreement of 1899 was aptly described by the British negotiator, Lord Cromer, in his book *Modern Egypt*. In it he wrote as follows:

> It was, therefore, necessary to invent some method by which the Sudan should be, at one and the same time, Egyptian to such an extent as to satisfy equitable and political exigencies, and yet sufficiently British to prevent the administration of the country from being hampered by the international burr which necessarily hung on to the skirts of Egyptian political existence (i.e., *the Capitulations*). It was manifest that these conflicting requirements could not be satisfied without the creation of some hybrid form of Government, hitherto unknown to international jurisprudence.

In fact, the 1899 Agreement did not deal with the matter of sovereignty in any way. It was merely an informal arrangement, signed by the Egyptian Foreign Minister and the British Consul-General. No full powers were exhibited, the text was not subject to any ratification, and it was never submitted for any legislative

approval. The title of the instrument confirms its informal character. Though it is sometimes referred to as a convention, it was called an 'Agreement relative to the future administration of the Sudan'. . . .

Who are the British to force themselves and their ideas on the Sudan? To the Sudanese they are complete foreigners. They do not speak the language of the country. They do not share its religious and cultural traditions. They have no affinity with the Sudanese people. They are in no way qualified to guide the social development of the country. Yet they seek to impose an outsider's will. They stand in the way of developing homogeneity; they undermine unity; they cultivate minorities. They keep the country backward and divided.

United Kingdom designs have found still another outlet. Fearing failure in their efforts to separate the Sudan from Egypt, they have attempted to divide the Sudan itself by severing the South from the North. In the words of the Civil Secretary of the Sudan Administration: 'Our policy aims at the establishment of an autonomous regime in the South which could be separated from the North'. This programme has led to such measures as prohibiting access to the southern provinces, discriminating against northern Sudanese who are established in the South, banning the Arabic language, and forbidding intermarriage between northern and southern Sudanese. A special Consultative Council for the North has been created to serve political ends. To offset the re-establishment of the unity of Egypt and the Sudan, preparations seem to be under way for creating a separate southern province which could eventually be joined to British East Africa. . . .

We ask the Security Council to direct the termination of the United Kingdom Administration in the Sudan. What will replace that administration is for the people of the Nile valley to decide for themselves. This is a domestic issue. We deny that the United Kingdom has any authority to speak on behalf of the Sudanese. We do not need the 'aid' of the United Kingdom in dealing with this situation.

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