

SAAD ZAGHLUL AND EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM

by

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PREFACE

Zaghlul Pasha achieved great fame and political power as a nationalist leader of Egypt during the decade of the 1920's. To his contemporaries he was the Egyptian equivalent of Gopal Krishna Gokhale or Mohandas Gandhi, Indian national leaders. For a number of years he was the most influential politician of his country. Today his fame and accomplishments have dropped out of public view. A few people, who were aware of the constitutional and nationalist movements taking place within the British Empire in the first two decades of the twentieth century, undoubtedly recall him now, but to the general public he is unquestionably a dim figure.

Before beginning this study, I was aware of the indifference with which a study of Zaghlul Pasha might be received. As a nation Egypt seems to be too far removed from the main currents of contemporary history. However, I realized that I would be engaged in a worthwhile task if I could throw some light on the status of Egypt within the British Empire and on its emergence as an independent nation. It would certainly help to understand the political situation of Egypt today, the continuing struggle between royal absolutism and democracy, the lingering influence of Great Britain near the Suez

Canal, and the recent, short-lived, and unsuccessful war between Egypt and Israel. Since Zaghlul was the chief political figure who emerged from the war of 1914, I have used him as a focus around which to develop the study. The major part of the study is concerned with the years from 1906, when Zaghlul became the minister of education in Egypt, to 1926, when he died. By this latter year the pattern of Egyptian nationalism had been fixed. It was a three-cornered struggle between the king, the constitutionalists, and the British.

Although no books about Zaghlul have been written or translated into English, a fairly large number have been published about Egyptian nationalism, particularly for the years between 1919 and 1927, the culminating years of this movement. However, most of these books lack depth. They seem to be mere chronicles of a limited scope. Many of them were written by Britons like Lord Lloyd, British high commissioner in Egypt from 1925 to 1929, and reflect British prejudices and the British viewpoint. My task has been to make an analysis of Zaghlul and of his influence on the nationalist movement with as much objectivity and thoroughness as possible. In doing this I had to dig deep into his character and background. I had to determine whether he had made any

lasting achievements as a statesman or whether he was merely an unscrupulous politician as many British writers have believed. It was not my purpose either to praise or condemn Zaghlul Pasha, but to write a story in order that others may understand him.

SAAD ZAGHLUL AND EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM

PART I

Early Nationalism in Egypt

"Egypt free means the triumph of
tranquility and civilization in the East.
It means the awakening of Islam through
science and liberality of mind."

-- Mustafa Kamel, March 31, 1907

CHAPTER 1

The Birth of Egyptian Nationalism

Nationalism in Egypt has its roots and its development in the desire of native Egyptians to rule themselves and to make their nation into a Western state. Foreigners had ruled Egypt for countless centuries -- a vast length of time filled with growth and decay, with progress and decline. In 1798, Egypt, inhabited by a scant two and a half million souls, had sunk, under Ottoman suzerainty, to economic, political, and intellectual chaos. The awakening of Egypt in its modern sense followed when Egyptians, coming face to face with the Napoleonic invasion of their land, realized the superiority of western culture and the inability of their own civilization to defend itself. The result of this realization was the start of the westernization of Egypt commencing with Mehemet Ali, an Albanian adventurer who made himself, through political and military skill, the ruler of Egypt.

While this westernization was developing and in the year after Mehemet Ali died in 1849, Saad Zaghlul was born in the small Delta village of Biana. His birth came at a

significant time, for Egypt by 1850 had made some progress in modernizing itself: the culture of the western world was seeping into the land. Moreover, it was Zaghlul's generation which arose as the first native Egyptians to become nationalists; and it was Zaghlul's fate to become not only the leader of the later stages of this growing nationalism, but also the symbol of all the effort of himself and other leaders for Egyptian nationalism. His life in all its stages is the life of a man groping and striving for an Egypt which would become independent and self-governing.¹

While the youthful Zaghlul was attending the village school and later the Mosque school of the town of Daskuk, important underlying trends were developing in Egypt. Under Mehmet Ali's successors and sons, the progress of westernization continued until, in the decade of the 1870's, the Khedive Ismail ineptly got himself into financial difficulties, burdened the nation with tremendous debts to French and English bankers and with mal-administration, and brought progress in Egypt nearly to a halt. By this time, Zaghlul was in Cairo studying in the theological seminary of

¹Information of Saad Zaghlul's early life is scant. He left no memoirs, and apparently was doubtful about the dates of much of his early career. See C. C. Adams, "Mohammed Abduh, the Reformer," in Moslem World, 19 (1929) 264-73; Hans Kohn, Nationalism and Imperialism in the Near East, tr, by M. M. Green (London, 1932), 287; The Times (London), September 23, 1924.

Al Azhar -- and close to the scene of the intellectual upheaval that was occurring.

In the 1870's and the 1880's articulate and capable Egyptians were few. Roughly speaking, the fellaheen, the peasantry of Egypt, overwhelmingly formed the bulk of the population; and they were inarticulate. They meekly submitted to their rulers rather than chose them. They followed the directions of the great landowners, the dictates of their village mayors (who were state appointees), and the orders of the government officials who requisitioned them and their labor for work on public projects and who bore down upon the fellah with the hated whips of the corvee.

However, two influential, though small, groups of Egyptians existed at this time: the rising middle class in the cities and the large landowners of Turkish and Egyptian stock in the agricultural regions of Egypt. These two classes were the articulate minority. It is significant to realize that Zaghlul belonged, not to the Turko-Albanian landowning class, but to the rising middle class; for it was the middle class in Egypt who were the vigorous proponents of progress and of Egyptian independence.

What may be called the middle class of Egypt is not the middle class with which the western world is familiar. The distinguishing mark of this middle class was education. While the lowest elements of this group were able to do little more than write their names and laborously read parts

of a newspaper, the portion of the class which supplied its leadership -- the intelligentsia -- was the best educated and informed people in Egypt.

The rise of this class coincided with the birth of Zaghlul and the men of his generation, who, as the sons of fellaheen, small landowners, artisans, shopkeepers, and Mohammedan lawyers and minor religious leaders, went to the cities for education and for a livelihood; they met the impact of western ideas on Egypt.

This middle class was not commercial, for during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries commerce in Egypt was almost exclusively handled by foreigners. The middle class men like Zaghlul who studied in mosque schools and at the ancient theological school of Al Azhar were men fitted, as a result of their studies, only for the law, the professions, government service, and politics. It is no wonder that law and politics became the absorbing career of Saad Zaghlul.

Although this middle class was small in the 1880's -- and still is quite small -- it was, compared to the land-owning class, the aggressive group of Egypt. Likewise, it was an ever-increasing class; for the number of large landowners remained, even to the present, fairly constant in size. Without this middle class, the Egyptian national movement would never have occurred, unless the desires of khedives, sultans, and kings of Egypt to retain despotic

power and to remain independent of foreign control could be called a national movement -- as it indeed should not be.

It was at Al Azhar, while Zaghlul was attending, that the intellectual movement which led to Egyptian nationalism arose. The rise of this movement might be dated with the arrival in 1871 of Jamal ud Din Afghani at Al Azhar. Jamal, who was later to father Perisan nationalism, had travelled widely through the Islamic world, had seen the inadequacy of Islam to cope with the west, and consequently had turned his gift of oratory and his restless energy toward teaching that Islam must reform itself and must unite in order to drive off western aggression.²

Among the youth of Egypt, whom, in addition to Zaghlul, Jamal aroused with his magnetic personality was Mohammed Abdu. The early story of Zaghlul and the national movement is linked to a large extent with Abdu, the man who became the intellectual leader of the Arabi revolt of 1882. Like Zaghlul, Abdu came from peasant stock of the Delta region. He was born in 1849 of a family in moderate circumstances, attended mosque school in Tanta, entered Al Azhar in 1866, and finished his studies there in 1877.³ By the time the

²For information on Jamal see C. C. Adams, "Mohammed Abduh," 267; Hans Kohn, "Jamal ud Din Afghani," in Encl. Social Sciences, 8 (New York, 1832), 366.

³Adams, "Mohammed Abduh," 265-6.

Khedive Tewfik had expelled Jamal from Egypt in September 1879, Jamal had created an active intelligentsia in the country. The newspaper Al Ahram started publication in 1876 with Abdu as a frequent contributor. By 1877 Abdu had become a teacher at Al Azhar, and in 1878 at a school where those who despaired of reforming the curricula of Al Azhar had gathered.

In the spring of 1879 the Khedive Ismail, in a desperate move to gain popular support, to appeal to his subject's good will, and to ward off the financial difficulties which he found himself in, called an assembly of notables -- the first such gathering which Egypt had seen. If it was Ismail's hope to get the assembly to repudiate a portion of his debt, Ismail had not analyzed his people -- particularly the articulate minority -- with any kind of accuracy. With the assembly, the idea of constitutional reform as a cure for Egypt's ills became popularized by Jamal and his followers. To them royal absolutism was contrary to the spirit of Islam, and Islam was, in its essence, a "Republic where every Moslem had the right of free speech in its assemblies, and where the authority of the ruler rested on his conformity to the law and on popular approval."⁴ The Assembly of Notables did little for Ismail, who shortly found

⁴Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, Secret History of the British Occupation of Egypt (New York, 1922), 95.

himself deposed in favor of his son Tewfik.

The movement for constitutional reform gathered strength during the reign of Tewfik. In the spring of 1880, Riaz Pasha, the prime minister, appointed Abdu as the editor of the Journal Officiele, the chief publication of the government. In 1881 Zaghlul joined Abdu as the editor of the literary pages of the Journal. In these pages, the reform group, following the lead of Abdu and Zaghlul, expressed their ideas of political reform.⁵

The core of the proposed political reforms, to be peacefully secured, was the establishment of a democratic constitution for Egypt and a parliamentary regime based on the principle of responsible government. It was a peaceful movement; Abdu thought it would be sufficient if Egypt obtained its constitution within five years. In addition to this main reform, Abdu favored, as he formulated in a document forwarded by Wilfrid Blunt to Gladstone on December 20, 1881, administrative independence under Turkish suzerainty, continued loyalty to the Khedive Tewfik, the maintenance of joing Anglo-French control of administration, and the substitution wherever possible of Egyptian for European officials. Beyond these political reforms Abdu wished to achieve an intellectual ideal difficult to achieve: "The intellectual and moral regeneration of the country by a

⁵Adams, "Mohammed Abduh," 267-9.

better observance of the law, by increased education, and by political liberty."⁶ He was aware, as were all of his nationalist supporters and associates, that "no nation ever yet achieved liberty except by its own endeavours."

On February 7, 1882, the agitation of the nationalists culminated in the promulgation of a constitution for Egypt, worked out by the Prime Minister Mahmoud Samy, with a cabinet which included Arabi as minister of war and Mustapha Fahmy -- later to be Zaghlul's father-in-law -- as minister of foreign affairs and justice.

The constitution, voted on by the Assembly of Notables, was a constitution in the nineteenth century liberal tradition. It placed the government of Egypt in the hands of a ministry appointed by the khedive and responsible to an elected Chamber of Deputies. Its promulgation marked, as its supporters believed, the beginning "of a new era of self-government and practical reform."⁷ It granted broad freedom to Egyptians, guaranteed yearly sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, and protected members of the chamber from arrest and from any interference in the free exercise of their opinions.⁸

⁶Blunt, Secret History, 132, 378-85.

⁷The Times, December 22, 1919, letter of W. S. Blunt.

⁸For the text of the constitution, see Blunt, Secret History, 390-6.

The period of the promulgation of the constitution was an exciting one for Zaghlul, an ardent supporter of it, and for the intelligentsia of Egypt. Obtaining a constitution was in itself an accomplishment: it opened up the prospects of broad, practical reform. Mahmoud Samy, following the promulgation, prepared to abolish the corvees of the rich Turko-Albanian pashas, to protect the fellaheen from Greek usurers, to establish an agricultural bank to aid fellaheen, to advance education, to remove corruption in the administration of justice, to suppress slavery and the slave trade, and to equip and expand an army able better to defend Egypt.⁹

Stirred by the new constitution and by the promises of immediate reforms, Egypt, however, moved toward anarchy rather than toward order. The fellaheen rose up against their oppressors; Tewfik repudiated the reforms to which he had agreed; and, in order to preserve the existing political situation, Arabi had to appeal to arms. To this appeal both Zaghlul and Abdu responded, although their objectives had always been peaceful. Zaghlul became an assistant in the ministry of the interior and a propagandist for the revolt against the khedive; Abdu resigned as editor of the Journal in order to advise the military leaders and to arouse public support by speeches and writings.

⁹Blunt, Secret History, 159-60.

However, this revolt, this first expression of Egyptian nationalism -- disorganized, chaotic, fraught with anti-foreign outrages and with the violence of the fellaheen -- collapsed. To preserve order in Alexandria and in the rest of Egypt and to protect foreign interests, the British government landed troops and quelled the disorder in Egypt. Thus the revolt, "a genuine revolt against misgovernment" and not essentially anti-foreign, as Cromer termed it, came to an end.¹⁰

With the failure of the Arabi revolt, both Zaghlul and Abdu were imprisoned. Abdu was shortly pardoned by the khedive and exiled; Zaghlul, partly through the efforts of Blunt, was likewise freed, and, permitted to remain in Egypt.

The one lasting result of the revolt, however, was that the intellectual ideas and constitutional reforms which had emerged from the nationalist movement made a profound impression on Zaghlul. He was to show the influence of the movement in his subsequent career as a political and nationalist leader.

¹⁰British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter cited as P.P.), 1905, CIII, Cmd. 2409, p. 1.

CHAPTER 2

Nationalism Quiet

During the period after the Arabi Revolt, from 1882 to 1905, nationalist agitation showed little activity. At first Egyptians acquiesced in the British occupation, for it was to the advantage of both the khedive and the reformers to do so. The khedive had no desire for Arabi's rabble to rule; and the intelligentsia which had worked for reform had no desire to return to the despotism of the khedive. The British, moreover, were at first a referee in Egyptian affairs, destined by the declarations of its leaders -- Gladstone, Salisbury, and others -- to evacuate the country eventually.

In 1883, time appeared to favor the eventual autonomy of Egypt and the eventual establishment of constitutional government. Had not Gladstone absolutely opposed any suggestion of the permanent occupation of Egypt and indicated Britain would make some "reasonable beginning toward legislative institutions" in which Egyptians would have a share?¹

¹A Speech by Gladstone delivered on August 9, 1883, to the House of Commons, quoted in Joseph W. Folk, The Case of Egypt, a pamphlet published about 1919, pp. 12-3.

Indeed, in 1883, the British government created both a Legislative Council and a General Assembly -- two representative bodies to assist the government. However, these bodies were hardly comparable to the Chamber of Deputies established by the Constitution of 1882. The General Assembly had no share in legislation except to be consulted on the levying of new direct taxes and on the floating of new loans. The Legislative Council was composed of twelve men appointed by the Egyptian ministry and fourteen elected indirectly; and in the General Assembly only 46 of its 80 members were elected. These were chosen by village representatives, who were in turn selected by manhood suffrage.²

Zaghlul used the intervening time to prepare himself for a career in law. He studied European law and French, entered the bar, and in 1893 was appointed a councillor of the Native Court of Appeal. Along with his brother, a promising juriconsult and literary man, Zaghlul began to rise in the social world of Cairo. Introduced into the salon of the Princess Nazli -- perhaps the sole emancipated woman in Egypt at the time -- Zaghlul attracted the attention of the Prime Minister Mustapha Fahmy, and met and married his daughter in 1896. Madame Zaghlul was later to be of great help to him.

²G. L. Beer, African Questions at the Paris Peace Conference; with Papers on Egypt (New York, 1923), 331, gives a thorough summary of these two legislative bodies.

Abdu, permitted to return to Egypt in 1888, continued to strive for the internal reform of Islam. He became a kadi in the Moslem courts, a councillor of the Court of Appeal, and finally in 1899 a member of the Legislative Council and the Grand Mufti of Egypt -- the highest Moslem judicial officer. In 1900, he attempted to stimulate a literary revival by forming a society for the revival of Arabic sciences.

Abdu, however, met with indifferent success with his ideas on reform during the period. Where these ideas coincided with British policy -- such as permitting Moslems to deposit money in savings banks and allowing Moslems to eat meat slaughtered by non-Moslems -- Abdu was successful. When Abdu turned to the reform of Al Azhar by introducing a modern, European curriculum into the school, he made no headway. With the Khedive indifferent to reforming Al Azhar, Abdu, shortly before his death in 1905, severed all connection with Al Azhar.

After 1892, when the youthful Abbas II came to the khedivial throne, expressions of Egyptian nationalism now and then showed themselves. For a time the youthful Abbas pitted himself against Lord Cromer, the British consul-general in Egypt, in the attempt to assert his power. Cromer ruthlessly suppressed these assertions of the khedive.

Nor did the intelligentsia gain any success in their attempts to share in the administration of the country. In

1891 Abdu and Blunt suggested to Cromer that a "fellah ministry," composed of reformers like Abdu and Zaghlul, be formed to govern Egypt; but this suggestion met with no response.³

Not until 1895 when a young student in France, Mustafa Kamel, published a book titled Le peril anglais did any effective Egyptian protest to the British occupation arise. Kamel, born in 1874, had been too young to take part in the Arabi revolution. He had grown to maturity when the British, instead of the khedive, were the power keeping down the Egyptian intelligentsia. While experience taught Zaghlul a distrust of the khedive, experience showed Kamel that the British were the force blocking the course of Egyptian nationalism. Consequently Kamel directed his efforts against them.

By 1900 Kamel began publishing his newspaper El Lewa and with the encouragement of Mohammed Abdu formed the National Party. In 1899 he founded a school whose students he planned to make into "great patriots" of the Egyptian cause.⁴ The agitation which Kamel led soon showed itself in Egypt; but the British vigorously suppressed any protest to

³Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, My Diaries (2 vols, New York, 1922), 1: 48.

⁴Mustafa Kamal, pasha, ...Egyptian-French letters addressed to Mme, Juliette Adam, 1895-1908... ed. Juliette Adam, tr. F. Ryan (Cairo, 1909), 48.

the occupation. When in 1897 on the anniversary of the British occupation, some Egyptian villagers stoned a British mounted patrol, Rennell Rodd, Cromer's Oriental secretary, not only ordered the village surrounded until the villagers surrendered the "delinquents" who had thrown the stones, but also shifted troops to temporary camps in the Tanta area as a warning to any future demonstrations.⁵

The press of Egypt likewise was restrained with a firm hand. One editor of a newspaper which in 1896 abused the queen of England was quickly tried and given the maximum punishment for libel as a warning to other editors. Regardless of British control, however, the press began to stimulate nationalist sentiment among Egyptians and spread among the population what Rodd called "mendacious reports" of British "iniquities."⁶

What then was the basis of this growing agitation among the Egyptian intelligentsia? Much of it can be traced to British policy. Cromer, in saving the financial condition of Egypt and in advancing Egyptian economy, had sacrificed progress in education and political democracy. Indeed, all through his life Cromer remained a "free trader", a man who had deplored government legislation on social and economic

⁵J. R. Rood, Social and Diplomatic Memoirs (3 vols, London, 1922-5), 2: 192.

⁶Ibid., 2: 100-1, 192.

problems.⁷

Moreover, as an individual Cromer was not a pleasant man to meet or to deal with. Even Kitchener, sirdar of the Egyptian army for a time, reported that he had uneasy feelings on having conferences with Cromer. The Khedive Tewfik, upon seeing Cromer approach the palace once, turned pale and said almost in fright to his cousin the Princess Nazli: "Who knows what he is coming to say to me?"⁸ Edward VII, very much later, on keeping Cromer waiting for a royal audience for three days -- an audience that Cromer had impatiently sought -- remarked: "He seems to take me for the Khedive."⁹

In short, Cromer, no respecter of people, had wounded the feelings of cultured and intelligent Egyptians; he had governed, hardly considering their wishes at all; he had seemed to want "to destroy a whole nation," as Kamel said, "by means of money."¹⁰ Cromer was a benevolent despot -- a capable despot -- but a man who never gained much support from the intelligentsia.

Indeed, Cromer worked in such a way that his Egyptian ministers were figureheads. He required them to take his

⁷The Marquess of Zetland, Lord Cromer (London, 1932), 321-2, 324.

⁸Sir Ronald Storrs, Memoirs (New York, 1937), 50.

⁹Ibid., 51.

¹⁰Letter, Mustafa Kamel to The Times, April 29, 1907.

advice. He conferred daily with the British under-secretaries in the various ministries and in particular with the British financial advisor, kept a minute watch on the proceedings of the Egyptian Council of Ministers through his financial advisor, and set the government policy without much Egyptian assistance. Cromer's great qualification was his indefatigable labor in learning what was going on in the government, and through personal contact and vigorous action, in directing affairs to his way of thinking. Egyptian civil servants, who liked easy hours of labor, countless cups of coffee, and the avoidance of trouble, could not compete with Cromer's zeal. In this way, by his energy, by creating fear of himself, and respect for himself, Cromer kept Egypt under his control.¹¹

But Egypt was restless underneath, in spite of the fact that British rule had brought prosperity. The educated middle class, which had benefited more than any other by this prosperity, was discontented; and discontent had united the class more than before. Furthermore its leadership, which had failed in 1882, had matured by 1905.

With the death of Mohammed Abdu in 1905, Zaghlul became the leader of the reform group that had risen with the Arabi Revolt. Zaghlul, called by some an "ardent nationalist,"

¹¹Rodd, Memoirs, 55-6; Storrs, Memoirs, 19-21.

had as yet seen little progress in the reforms which he had advocated in the literary pages of Journal in 1882.¹² Events soon occurred which enabled him to carry out some of his reforming ideas.

¹²Mabel Caillard, A Lifetime in Egypt 1876-1935 (London, 1935), 205.

CHAPTER 3

Nationalism Reborn 1906-1908

In June 1906 at the small Delta village of Denshawai, a group of British officers, acting, they supposed, with the approval of the village omdeh or mayor (an official appointed by the ministry of the interior), shot some pigeons belonging to the villagers. The villagers gathered hostilely around the officers to stop the shooting of their tame pigeons; the threatened officers handed over their guns. Accidentally one of the guns went off; one British officer was wounded, another officer died of sun stroke, and several Egyptians were killed.¹

This clash would have been insignificant, except for the fact that the villagers involved in the incident were tried with undue haste and were punished for the incident with excessive severity. All Egypt and England rang with the cry of injustice.

Cromer, though in England at the time, was undone by the incident. The nationalist movement, which had been waiting

¹Blunt, *Diaries*, 2: 146-7; Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer* (2 vols, London, 1933-4), 1: 46-7; Storrs, *Memoirs*, 70-1.

for a long time for such an incident, had the talent and means to exploit it to gain sympathy for its cause. As a result Cromer had to make concessions to both British and Egyptian public opinion. Since neither Cromer nor Grey, the British foreign secretary, were willing to give Egypt responsible government, Cromer did the next best thing -- giving Egyptians a larger share in their government by appointing on October 28, 1906, a nationalist as minister of public instruction. The man appointed was Saad Zaghlul.

Cromer thus cleverly brought into the Egyptian government a man who was primarily concerned -- as Mohammed Abdu had been -- with peaceful reform, with the westernization of Egypt, and with the gradual development of democratic institutions, instead of with advocating immediate evacuation of the British.

Zaghlul and the element he represented were in a sense moderate; Cromer termed them the Girondists of the Egyptian National movement. Zaghlul expressed the essence of this moderate nationalism in a statement he made to a European journalist in 1907: "We must assimilate Western methods; we must, I might almost say, alter our mentality, for...our methods and rules are inferior to yours."²

Zaghlul did not, of course, represent all nationalism in Egypt. The extreme nationalism of Mustafa Kamel, as

²The Times, June 6, 1907.

European writers have generally called it, was dominant among the class of educated people who called themselves nationalists. Kamel, being a generation younger than Zaghlul and having been in France as a law student at a time when France and England bitterly opposed each other in Egypt, was unwilling to cooperate with the British and saw no necessity for a period of gradual preparation for self-government while the nationalists of Zaghlul's stamp deemed that step necessary.

Since education was the keystone in preparing Egypt for democratic government, Zaghlul brought to the ministry of public instruction a great deal of energy. He saw that reforms were needed. The education budget of 1905 had been LE235,000, about 1.7% of the total budget; the total number of students in schools under the supervision of the ministry in 1906 had been 182,237 out of a population of about eleven million -- 12% of the youth of school age. Moreover, considering the number of students in schools above the kuttab level (about the second grade or better) -- some 18,716 students -- the percentage of Egyptians receiving an even partially adequate education was exceedingly small.

In 1906 the government sent only three students abroad for advanced study in Europe; trained only 962 students in professional schools -- law, medicine, or teaching. For the most part the government hired European teachers or used students who had finished the primary level of schools

(about grades three to eight in American schools) to teach in the primary schools or better. Indeed the entire picture of Egyptian education condemns the British occupation: little had really been done; Egyptians of wealth could get a good education by paying for it; but the general population -- even the urban middle class -- had few educational opportunities.³

Here then was Zaghlul's great opportunity for reform.

Zaghlul was a strong individual -- courageous, sincere, outspoken at times. He was determined to dominate his own ministry and the British advisor of the ministry, Dunlap, a dour Scott -- a thing which few ministers of Egypt had even tried to do in the previous years of the occupation. If Cromer thought that he was appointing a man who would follow the lead of the British, he would have been right to a certain extent, provided Zaghlul's reforms were carried out; but Zaghlul would never be subservient.

Zaghlul's initial activity showed that he was determined to carry out immediate reforms. He inspected the schools, chided other nationalists for criticising the educational system without understanding its problems, and pointed out the need for technical and agriculture schools. Early in 1907, he worked out a scheme with Al Azhar University

³The educational statistics come from P. P., Egypt No. 1, 1908, Cmd. 3966, CXXV, 32-41.

to establish a training school for kadi, Moslem judges, in which a western curriculum of mathematics, science, and literature was added to the traditional legal studies. This was the kind of project for which Abdu had long struggled. Zaghlul established trade and agricultural schools; arranged in May 1907 for the sending of twenty-two student to Europe; began work on female education -- a project in which he had always been interested. Kassim Amin, former under secretary for education, had, indeed, dedicated his book New Women to Zaghlul. In each provincial capital he planned to establish a secondary school (high school); in each sizable provincial town he planned to set up a primary school. This work would mean about a three-fold expansion of education.⁴

Although these objectives were limited, they were an extensive advance. If education would earn Egypt the right to self-government, then Zaghlul -- though called by some contemporaries an impractical idealist -- would enable Egypt to earn this self-government.

Zaghlul's plans and work were apparently striking enough for Cromer to say in his farewell address to Egypt on May 4, 1907:

Unless I am much mistaken, a career of great public usefulness lies before the present Minister of Education, Saad Zaghlul Pasha. He possesses all the qualities neces-

⁴The Times, June 6, 1907.

sary to serve his country, He is honest; he is capable; he has the courage of his convictions; he has been abused by many of the less worthy of his countrymen. These are high qualifications. He should go far.⁵

And "far" of course did Zaghlul go in the service of his country -- farther than Cromer would have probably approved of.

While Zaghlul was engaged in reforming education, another faction of educated Egyptians actively agitated against the British. Cromer in a sense split the nationalist movement by bringing a moderate reformer like Zaghlul into the government.

Mustafa Kamel led this fight. In a letter to The Times on December 7, 1906, Kamel stated his aims:

"The Times would be much mistaken in imagining that I intend to instigate trouble or disturbance in Egypt, my true intention being to direct all my endeavours towards securing for Egypt a constitutional Government, true liberty, and the evacuation of British troops, as was promised by the late Queen, Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone. ..."⁶

To Kamel's voice was added that of the General Assembly, which, in a resolution of March 4, 1907, demanded "full parliamentary" institutions.⁷

⁵Storrs, Memoirs, 52.

⁶The Times, December 24, 1906.

⁷Ibid., March 5, 1907.

Other political factions sprang up during 1907. To Kamel's National party were added Sheikh Ali Youssef's Constitutional Reform League; a moderate nationalist group sponsored by Hafiz Awaz Bey, the editor of El Minbar; the Party of the People, formed by some advocates of moderate reform; and the Egyptian Liberal Party, which was favorable to the British. This multiplicity of parties kept themselves mainly to the educated classes of Cairo; each outlined a political program; each differed slightly from the other. The Egyptian Liberal Party, for instance, felt fully satisfied with British occupation, though its membership was small and singularly ineffective. Ali Youssef, the editor of El Moayyad, had been the member of the General Assembly most responsible for the passing of the resolution calling for parliamentary government. The Party of the People, formed by 116 notables and reformers on September 21, 1907, backed a program of gradual preparation for self-government, supported Zaghlul's educational work, and sponsored its newspaper, El Gerida. This was the party which most nearly represented Zaghlul's political outlook.

If there had been unity among these various nationalist factions, effective work might have been done; but split into groups, they could be played against each other. Moreover, the Pan-Islam faction among the nationalists -- Ali Youssef's party -- gave the unfortunate impression that all Egyptian nationalism was Pan-Islamic. London and

Paris newspapers looking at Egyptian nationalism saw that it endangered the Anglo-French entente; that "in reality the formula of 'Egypt for the Egyptians' signified Egypt restored to the Sultan's sovereignty and placed directly under the influence of Germany."⁸ But Cromer declared on March 3, 1907, that Zaghlul and his associates were not tainted with Pan-Islam. Kamel, as early as December, 1905, had been forced to great efforts to show that he was not inciting his "co-religionists against the Christians."⁹

Pan-Islam was also closely associated with the khedive's struggle against Cromer; and so the khedive supported Ali Youssef and other nationalists who were Pan-Islamic in their beliefs. The rest of the nationalist factions -- in particular Kamel's National Party and the Party of the People -- avoided any outright association with the khedive or Pan-Islam. As early as October 24, 1904, Kamel had broken with the khedive and at various times after that date he was to reaffirm that break.¹⁰

The khedive, of course, wanted the British occupation to and in order that he might rule Egypt as his predecessors had ruled before 1882; and so he was perfectly willing to allow the nationalists to attack the British regime.

⁸The Times, January 14, 1907.

⁹Kamel, Letters, 228, written to Juliette Adam on December 15, 1905.

¹⁰Ibid., 158.

Hafiz Awaz expressed the attitude of most Egyptian nationalists toward the khedive in this statement: "If his Highness approves of our political principles we thank him; if not, we should be justified in criticizing his attitude."¹¹

To the nationalist demands for self-government, British policy, as stated by Grey and Cromer, announced that Egypt was not ready for constitutional government. To Cromer, the issue was as simple as this: Self-government "will probably be the work, not of generations, but of centuries."¹²

It is no wonder that the nationalist elements became shriller in their demand for self-government and the eventual evacuation of the British. British policy makers felt that to carry out their duty toward Egypt, they had to stop this agitation, to "come down with a heavy hand upon the extremists should they overstep the limits of the law. ..."¹³

At various times, the British made use of a show of force. When a strike of cab-men in Cairo occurred in April, 1907, Cromer ordered British troops to march the streets as a warning to "roughs" who might resort to violence.

Foreign interests in Egypt also brought pressure upon the British administration to halt the nationalist agitation for constitutional government. Conservative in thier outlook, these commercial classes could think of nothing but

¹¹The Times, May 28, 1907.

¹²Zetland, Lord Cromer, 292.

¹³Speech of Cromer in The Times, October 29, 1907.

chaos if Egypt were governed by Egyptians. Their outlook is understandable, though not particularly commendable or intelligent. These commercial classes had failed to realize that a class of Egyptians, better able to rule than before, was rising in Egypt; and that representatives of this class like Zaghlul already were occupying important government posts. Particularly effective among these commercial classes was the British Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, which could bring pressure not only on Cromer but also on English chambers of commerce in order to condemn the Legislative Assembly's resolution of March 1907 for constitutional government and financial control by the Egyptian ministry.

However, nationalist agitation weakened less because of outside factors than because of the fact that the agitation reached and influenced only a narrow circle of people. The vast bulk of the population were singularly indifferent to political issues. In the elections for the General Assembly held in December 1907, only about five percent of the registered voters and about 1.5 percent of the total eligible voters of Cairo cast ballots. Part of the indifference to elections may be explained in the fact that the General Assembly had no real powers; it was about as effective as a mass meeting in its power to pass resolutions, except that it legally represented some Egyptian public opinion.

Among the fellaheen the indifference was even more striking than among urban dwellers. The fellaheen had few grievances. The things which the educated classes complained about meant little to them. Constitutional government, the evacuation of the British, free and universal education were meaningless. The fellaheen, attached to his land, concerned about the amount of his taxes, were hardly reached by the liberal, western ideas of the nationalists.¹⁴

The effect on the fellaheen, however, should not be completely ignored. The agitation of the nationalists, though unheeded, may well have been remembered in later years. The agitation of the educated classes undoubtedly seeped gradually down to them.

¹⁴The Times, May 6, 1907; March 6, 1908.

CHAPTER 4

Nationalism Suppressed 1908-1911

If nationalism were on a tenuous basis in Egypt from 1906 to 1908, it was more so after February 10, 1908 -- the day that Mustafa Kamel died.

Mustafa had aroused the imagination of urban Egypt; thousands followed his funeral procession. He had had a magnetic personality, he had been young, he had possessed the kind of courage which had attracted followers, he had conducted his agitation on a dignified level. In his newspapers he had not indulged in the kind of abuse that had marked other papers or that was to come out in the years immediately following. He had criticized vigorously but intelligently -- with a prudence that confounded the British.¹

On Kamel's death, no other leader with his qualifications appeared. His successor as leader of the National Party, Ahmed Farid Bey, was "a pretty good man, not first rate," as Blunt described him. Moreover, the whole national-

¹Kamal, Letters, 298, dated October 26, 1907.

ist movement was intellectually low. Indeed, the one man considered by Blunt and other British supporters of nationalism to have the intellectual qualifications to lead the nationalist movement -- Zaghlul -- was not available.² In 1908, Zaghlul was involved in his struggle to put vigor into the Egyptian educational system. The fact that he was in the ministry made his influence on the nationalist movement negligible. As a minister, Zaghlul was to support even the extension of the Suez Canal lease in 1910 when this question came before the Legislative Council and the General Assembly. The proposal to extend the lease thoroughly aroused the opposition of nationalists and placed Zaghlul in a somewhat difficult political position.

The tone of the newspapers degenerated, such as this article in El Lewa, the National Party organ, of September 1909:

This land was polluted with the English, putrefied with their crimes, tainted with their atrocities as they... muzzled our mouths, tied our tongues, burned our people alive, hanged our innocent relatives, and perpetrated other horrors at which the heavens are about to tremble, the earth to split, and the mountains to fall down.³

Such abuse and falseness caused the British to do one thing -- to suppress it. In 1908 and even earlier, British

²Blunt, Diaries, 2: 202-3.

³J. Alexander, The Truth About Egypt (London, etc., 1911), 271; T. L. Stoddard, The New World of Islam (New York, 1921), 180.

leaders began to question the turn of events in Egypt. "What will be the eventual outcome of our position in Egypt," Sir Alfred Lyall wrote to Lord Cromer, "is impossible to predict. The weak point in it seems to me that our occupation is still avowedly provisional, so that the restless spirits can always speculate on a change."⁴ Some members of the British parliament feared that, since the nationalist press had become quite violent, unless it were suppressed, all Egypt would break into revolt. Indeed, both friends and enemies of Egyptian nationalism in parliament warned that violence might come. Friends of Egypt such as Dr. Rutherford argued that unless parliamentary government were granted, Egyptian nationalism would be driven underground as had happened in Ireland and in India.⁵

At first the British used the standard libel laws of Egypt to restrict the press; but when Abdul Aziz Shawish, editor of El Lewa, escaped conviction for libel in June, 1908, other methods had to be employed. In the spring of 1909, the press law of 1881, under which newspapers could be suppressed after two warnings by the ministry of the interior, was revived. The censorship of the Egyptian press then began. By these means, the press law and the libel and sedition laws, the British were able to convict and imprison

⁴Sir Mortimer Durand, The Life of the Right Hon. Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall (London, etc., 1913), 427.

⁵Great Britain, House of Commons, Debates, Series 5, 8: 711, a speech delivered on July 22, 1909.

Farid Bey (he being the director of El Lewa), cause him eventually to flee the country in 1912, and silence other nationalist editors. By 1912 the Egyptian press was so effectively silenced that the Journal Officiele, a government publication, was able to say: "But why ever should there be a free Press? Who wants one?... A free Press in this country is an absurdity..."⁶

The assassination of the Egyptian prime minister, the Copt Butros Ghali Pasha, in February, 1910, gave Sir Eldon Gorst, the British consul-general who had succeeded Cromer in 1907, even more reason than before to use a "hard hand" on the nationalists. The nationalists were blamed for the assassination of this essentially unpopular minister, and accused of fomenting anti-Copt agitation. Wardani, the assassin, became a national hero. The British thus could use the excuse of protecting racial minorities in Egypt when they suppressed nationalism.

When in February, 1910, shortly before Butros's assassination, the General Assembly and the Legislative Council became filled with nationalist talk, and after they had rejected the extension of the Suez Canal lease, Gorst began to find that these bodies were "mere instruments of the nationalist agitation against the occupation"; that they represented only "the wealthy beys and pashas"; and in con-

⁶Commons Debates, series 5, 40: 1968, 10 July 1912.

sequence "that institutions really representative of the people" were impossible.⁷

In parliament on June 13, 1910, Grey summarized the British attitude toward nationalist demands:

"I cannot talk any more about self-governing institutions in Egypt so long as that agitation against British occupation continues."⁸

This statement had but one meaning: Britain would give Egypt self-government when it felt like it, regardless of the wishes of the Egyptian people.

Signs of the Egyptian nationalist movement being driven underground came long before Grey's statement. In the face of press censorship, Egyptian nationalists received advice and learned new methods of carrying on their program. "You must get together a society of young men," Blunt told one nationalist who visited him in England, "and send them round to the country towns and large villages to give lectures, and instruct the fallahin (sic) in the duty of patriotism."⁹

The Egyptian nationalists became adept at holding mass meetings and sending protests to British political leaders. Students grew so clamorous about nationalism and so demonstrative that once Zaghlul had to speak to the khedivial

⁷P. P., Egypt No. 1, 1911, Cmd 5633, CIII, 2-3.

⁸Commons Debates, series 5, 17: 1152.

⁹Blunt, Diaries, 2: 212.

law students personally to get them to return to their studies. Some students began to agitate for the use of terrorist methods; they encouraged Egyptians to carry and use weapons, to infiltrate the Egyptian army in order that it might side with the nationalists in case of trouble.¹⁰

These new methods, however, for the most part remained little used. They were ideas more than anything else--ideas of propagating nationalism that later showed up in the nationalist movement.

By 1909, the khedive ceased to be of any help to the nationalist cause; he had become closely associated with Gorst and the British. Gorst had made it one of the objectives of his administration to reconcile the khedive with the British. Indeed, nationalists declared that this was the only change that Gorst had made in the policy followed by Lord Cromer.

The khedive ceased supporting newspapers which were anti-British, notably Ali Youssef's El Moayyad. He allowed the press law of 1882 to discredit and vitiate Farid Bey's National Party. He should however not be blamed for this policy, since basically he could not have opposed the British with much strength and since his political objectives were quite different than those of the nationalists. Moreover,

¹⁰Alexander, Egypt, 313-5; Blunt, Diaries, 2: 313; The Times, May 18, 1908, May 28, 1908.

Gorst had succeeded in winning the esteem of the khedive and the khedive governed his conduct on that basis. The khedive showed his appreciation of Gorst in one of his most admirable acts--that of hurrying to England to the death bed of Gorst in July, 1911, and expressing his deep sorrow for the death of Gorst.

During this period, Zaghlul suffered increasingly from attacks on his educational work. In 1906 he had begun a broad plan of reform, and all elements of Egypt had expected great things from him, but he had not achieved his aims. When he left the ministry of public instruction in 1910 to become minister of justice under Mohamed Said Pasha, the prime minister to succeed Butros, education in Egypt was in better shape, but no miracles had been performed.

Compared to the 182,237 students in 1906, Zaghlul had raised the number of students to 237,202 in 1910. In this latter year he had secured an appropriation of LE505,000, a 114% increase over 1906. He had raised the proportion of the budget spent on education from 1.7% in 1906 to 3.4% in 1910. Zaghlul's comparative lack of success was due not to his lack of plans or zeal for reform, but rather to the conservative financial policy of the British government and the Egyptian ministry, whose main concern was to pay off the debt and to balance the budget. Moreover, Gorst's attitude toward education grew pessimistic; he did not feel that education alone was the route by which self-government would

be reached. This attitude neutralized Zaghlul's objectives. Appropriations for education increased far less than those for railroads and irrigation.¹¹

It was not until 1910 that the Egyptian government granted its first subsidy, --£2,000,--to the Egyptian University, an institution set up along western lines. This university had been fostered actively by Zaghlul, Mustafa Kamel, Kassim Artin, and other intellectuals in 1905 and had opened in 1909 after languishing for several years for lack of financial support.¹²

The main results of Zaghlul's administration had been the encouraging of intellectuals, the development and extension of schools, the gradual reduction of the illiteracy rate among the bulk of the people, and the beginnings of female education.

By remaining in the government Zaghlul showed that he still hoped to bring Egypt gradually to representative government through cooperation with the British. He remained as did other former disciples of Mahammed Abdu in the "English Party" in Egypt who expected that if the nationalists remained quiet, a new constitution would be given Egypt. In his place as minister of justice, he held a vantage point to

¹¹For various educational statistics, see P. P., 1910, Cmd. 5121, CXII: 347; 1911, Cmd. 5633, CIII: 241; 1912-3, Cmd. 6149, CXX, 635, 1913, Cmd. 6682, LXXXI, 11-13.

¹²P. P., 1911, Cmd. 5633, CIII, 58-9.

help work out this constitution.¹³

By Christmas 1910, nationalist agitation had begun to die down. Through 1911 it became increasingly clear that the opposition had practically collapsed. Blunt, the center of English support for Egyptian nationalism, was growing weary of his efforts and ready to give up all work for the nationalists and paraphrase the words of Pitt: "Roll up the map of Islam." Blunt made a futile suggestion to Ismail Abaza, the timid and moderate landowner who had led the opposition in the Legislative Council to the extension of the Suez Canal lease, to oppose Kitchener. But Abaza, although belonging to one of Egypt's greatest families, had already been turned out of his seat in the Legislative Council.¹⁴ Moreover, Kitchener, appointed consul-general in July, 1911, was made of stern stuff; one whom few could effectively oppose; a secretive man; one who expected his orders to be carried out without question.

Kitchener came to Egypt at a time when political parties had nearly ceased activity. A free press had been the chief bulwark of their activities; now it was gone. Farid Bey, after several convictions for various press violations, had lost all influence. The Party of the People, which had supplanted the National Party as the chief nationalist group,

¹³ Blunt, Diaries, 2: 350.

¹⁴ Blunt, Diaries, 2: 334, 359-60, 364.

waited trustingly for the British to start a new liberal policy and grant a constitution and parliamentary government.¹⁵

During this period, however, Zaghlul, despite his position as a minister of the government, was engaged in a certain amount of nationalist activity. He worked secretly with various nationalist groups in Cairo; he was kept informed of the various exertions in behalf of the Egyptian cause by nationalists. For instance, in October, 1910, Blunt carefully sent Zaghlul copies of the speech which Blunt had delivered before the Egyptian Congress held at Brussels during the previous month.¹⁶

With Egypt in a state of calm by 1911, members of the British parliament began to ask Grey to make good his pledge for increased Egyptian participation in government. Grey avoided committing himself to self-government or even to a larger share of representative government for Egypt; he shifted the responsibility to the man on the spot--Kitchener--and indicated that Kitchener would decide the matter.

And so the whole question of constitutional government which moderate nationalists found so important was left to a man whose outlook and personality were not democratic at all. Kitchener's program for Egypt appeared in April, 1912. In it Kitchener emphasized the need for improved methods of

¹⁵Blunt, Diaries, 2: 382.

¹⁶Blunt, Diaries, 2: 323.

agriculture, the establishment of a credit system for fellaheen which would improve their lot, the encouragement of thrift among fellaheen by savings banks, the eradication of animal diseases and crop blights, and the building of irrigation and drainage works. His educational ideas coincided with his interest in the fellaheen, for he deplored the emphasis on "bookish" education, and wanted an educational program which would teach the fellaheen how to avoid being swindled on contracts and how to manage their agricultural affairs.

As for legislative institutions, Kitchener had a passing word to say about the need for further study of the representative character of the present Egyptian institutions. By "representative character" Kitchener meant giving the agricultural interests--the most conservative political group in Egypt--the predominate voice. Kitchener showed that he, the self-styled representative of the fellaheen, would continue to dominate Egyptian affairs.¹⁷

For Zaghlul, a man of urban interests, a man concerned throughout his entire career with educational, political, and judicial reforms, this program meant little. In April, 1912, he resigned his post as minister of justice. It was no accident that his resignation came at the time of the announce-

¹⁷P. P., 1912-3, Cmd. 6149, CXX, 2-6. The material of the two previous paragraphs will be found in this document.

ment of Kitchener's program. Both were strong men, both quite determined and courageous. Zaghlul, as minister of justice, had come into increasing antagonism with the khedive; had irritated his colleagues with his obstinacy; had irritated Kitchener; and, for all practical purposes, had been dismissed by Kitchener.

Zaghlul's personality had changed little from the time he had entered the government in 1906, and had insisted on controlling the affairs of his own department, on advancing ideas of reform, and on taking the advice of his British advisors, if he disagreed with it, only under protest. Under Kitchener, Zaghlul's reform ideas seemed no longer possible of being realized. The specific cause of Zaghlul's resignation was that with customary zeal he had charged corruption and inefficiency in the khedive's administration of the Wakfs, the Moslem charitable foundations--charges known by everyone to be well-founded. Abbas II demanded that Zaghlul prove his charges or resign; and Zaghlul, unable to prove them at that time, was forced by Kitchener to resign. Zaghlul left office feeling that he had been betrayed by Kitchener.¹⁸

In addition, there are indications that Zaghlul opposed the press prosecutions of Farid Bey and other nationalists

¹⁸Sir Malcolm McIlwraith, "Egyptian Nationalism," in Edinburgh Review, 230 (July 1919): 69; The Times, August 24, 1927.

and had been induced to resign on that account also.¹⁹ Thus, with the failure of Kitchener to consider any constitutional changes which would be something in the nature of an advance, with the hostility of the khedive, and with his own unceasing restlessness at the developments in Egypt, Zaghlul could accomplish nothing by staying in the government.

It is an important factor in Zaghlul's later political activity that his period of cooperation with the British in the ministries of education and of justice had produced such disappointing results. Thirty years had passed since 1882, when as young enthusiastic reformers Zaghlul and Abdu had formulated a reform program for Egypt. Westernization of Egypt had gone forward; but the main elements of Zaghlul's political reforms had not been realized.

¹⁹Blunt, Diaries, 2: 385; Commons Debates, series 5, 38: 1254, question Dillon, M. P., to Grey on May 16, 1912.

CHAPTER 5

Legislative Changes and Disillusionment, 1913-1914.

For a short time after 1912 Zaghlul remained in retirement. Since Egypt was quiet and agitation effectively muzzled, the British government proceeded to fulfill its promise to increase the power of Egyptian representative institutions. On July 21, 1913, the Egyptian government promulgated an election law and an organic law establishing a new legislative body.

The new organic law combined the two old legislative bodies, the General Assembly and the Legislative Council, into a single body called the Legislative Assembly and granted it wider advisory powers than the old General Assembly had possessed. The new legislature was a mixed body consisting of sixty-six elected and seventeen appointed members with a president appointed by the government.

The powers that the new legislature possessed, however, hardly exceeded those which the two old bodies had exercised. The law setting up the legislature stated that "no law shall be promulgated without having been previously submitted to

the Legislative Assembly for its opinion."¹ The advantage received from this provision, however, was counteracted by the fact that the Egyptian ministry could disregard the advice of the assembly. Although the assembly could initiate legislation, the ministry could disallow this legislation. Furthermore, only measures dealing with Egypt's internal affairs could come before the body--a provision that would enable the ministry, or in effect the British consul-general, to keep what legislation it wished from the assembly.

Promulgated simultaneously with the organic law was a new electoral law. Although a broad franchise was granted Egyptian males over twenty-one years of age, two elements of the law made it apparent that property interests would control the assembly. The law set up indirect election for members of the assembly. An Egyptian would vote for an elector, who had to be at least twenty-five years of age and who would choose the members of the assembly. This complicated procedure necessarily decreased the direct participation of voters.

Moreover, the property qualifications for the members of the legislature automatically excluded most of the Egyptian people from becoming members. To become qualified for the body, a person had to have paid either a land tax of LE 50 a year, a house tax of LE 20, or a combination house

¹P. P., 1913, Cmd. 6875, LXXXI, 4, 2-5.

and land tax of LE 35. The fact that the number of people in Egypt who owned more than fifty feddans (a feddan about equals an acre) of land in 1914 was about twelve thousand shows how few people would qualify. The educated classes were somewhat favored by the law since those who held diplomas of higher schools would have their tax requirements reduced by two-fifths. But the number of people in this category would also be small. For example, in 1913, only 2,532 students were attending government secondary schools, the high school level of education.²

Thus Kitchener achieved his aim of placing the assembly in the hands of the landed class. The results of elections in December, 1913, showed that of the sixty-six members elected, forty-nine were landowners and the rest lawyers, merchants, and professional men.

Among the members elected was Saad Zaghlul. Since Zaghlul, by this time, had become the most important Egyptian politician outside the Egyptian ministry, his decision to seek election was looked on as a favorable sign for the assembly. His long career had made him well-known; nor had he ever really lost connection with the nationalist movement, though he had not had much influence on its course until he resigned from the ministry. Zaghlul ran as a member of the

²P. P., 1913, Cmd. 6682, LXXXI, 34; 1913, Cmd. 6875, LXXXI, 11-6.

National Party, the decrepit organization of Mustafa Kamel and Farid Bey; candidates withdrew in his favor; he won overwhelmingly in two constituencies. Even before the new assembly met in January 1914, Zaghlul emerged as its leader, having been elected as vice-president of the Assembly. At the inauguration of the Assembly, Zaghlul led the procession of the delegates to salute the khedivial throne, where Abbas II sat, surrounded by members of the government, the Grand Mufti and Moslem kadi, the Coptic patriarch, and Kitchener in full-dress, field marshall's uniform.

Kitchener and his advisers no doubt supposed that the new assembly would be amenable to the will of the British consul-general working through the khedive and the Egyptian ministry. Indeed, the khedive recommended in his opening address that the delegates should concentrate on improving agricultural conditions in Egypt; and warned that the assembly must be prudent in using its power to initiate legislation. What Kitchener and his advisers neglected to take into account was the fact that even the landed interests were nationalists, though moderately so.

The landed interests had been a strong force in the formation of the Party of the People in 1907--a moderately nationalist party. Moreover, these interests had dominated every General Assembly and Legislative Council in past years and had been alternately loud in their demands for Egyptian self-government and submissive, depending on the pressure of

the British consul-general.

The new assembly, given more or less a free hand in its opening sessions, demanded Egyptian autonomy as loudly as had previous legislatures; members criticised the Egyptian ministry even more violently than had previous assemblies. Zaghlul led this assembly, "with no little skill," as McIlwraith indicates, in its opposition to the government; he showed his "combative" disposition and his "fiery" temper in this opposition.³ If Kitchener had wanted to eliminate the "noisy extremists and outside influences" which might obstruct his conception of progress for Egypt, he should never have brought together the Legislative Assembly.⁴ The assembly lost its bearings at various times; Zaghlul even found himself unable to give it direction. On one occasion, when Zaghlul wished the assembly to continue consideration of a law establishing a court of criminal appeal, Zaghlul found his attempts thwarted by the assembly's desire to consider a motion whether the elected or appointed vice-president should take the chair in the absence of the president of the assembly. Zaghlul made a fiery speech; the assembly broke into an uproar which lasted several minutes; and when Zaghlul could not carry the house with him on his program, he ended the day's session by walking out with

³McIlwraith, "Egyptian Nationalism," 68.

⁴P. P., 1914, Cmd. 7358, CI, 4.

twenty-seven of his followers.⁵

From this incident The Times could point out the incapacity of Egyptians for parliamentary government. But the assembly, as with all past Egyptian representative institutions, was only in its stage of awkward early development. Since it would have no control over the Egyptian ministry, it could indulge in irresponsible action. Moreover, although the assembly could not hold the ministry responsible to itself, it made things so difficult for Mohamed Said that the khedive was able to satisfy an old grudge and force Said to resign as prime minister. Furthermore it could make things so difficult for Kitchener that he had "to hawk the premiership, almost hat in hand, round the criticism, conditions, and objections of unwilling candidates."⁶

In doing so, the assembly was able to achieve some sort of ministerial responsibility. Attempts toward this end, however, had only scant success. Zaghlul and the assembly were unable to influence the selection of a ministry to succeed Said's even though Zaghlul tried it in April, 1914, when his father-in-law Mustapha Fahmy was first offered the premiership. Prompted by Zaghlul, Fahmy refused to accept certain ministers in his cabinet. But Kitchener speedily shoughed off these conditions and offered the office to another man, Rushdi Pasha.

⁵The Times, March 20, 1914.

⁶Storrs, Memoirs, 130.

Despite the difficulties, however, the assembly by July, 1914, had passed twelve of the sixteen government proposals submitted to it, had presented seventy resolutions, had approved the state budget, the Wafds budget, and bills establishing a new court of criminal appeals and agricultural cooperatives.⁷ These achievements should have been a sign of healthy growth, a sign of Egyptians were willing to assume some of the responsibilities of self-government. But British public opinion and British officials would not look at the matter in that light. British statesmen did not want to evacuate Egypt, if they could help it. As early as 1909, Winston Churchill, then home secretary, remarked about Egypt: "We shall continue to hold it whatever happens; nobody will ever give it up--I won't--except we are driven out of it at the end of a war."⁸

Considering the international situation that had existed in Europe since 1904 and the threat of Germany in the Middle East, the British government did not wish to leave Egypt. Most of British reluctance to leave Egypt can be traced to this fear of Germany endangering the British Empire, no matter how British leaders phrased the necessity of Britain staying in Egypt. The need of helping "the silent masses of the people," the need of improving the state of the fellaheen,

⁷The Times, July 15, 1914.

⁸Blunt, Diaries, 2: 271.

the need of ensuring that Egyptian government would not fall back into the corrupt hands of the wealthy beys and pashas, was "so much" talk. By 1914 all classes were committed to agricultural development.⁹ If the British evacuated, the political element that would take over the government would be the combination of the intelligentsia and the landed class--a conservative element: for the old Turko-Albanian aristocracy - the corrupt pashas and beys of the pre-1882 days--had almost vanished.

The grant of parliamentary government and ministerial responsibility in Egypt, British leaders must have realized, would mark the beginning of British evacuation. Consequently Britain could not give Egypt a start in parliamentary government.

The Legislative Assembly ended its sessions in late spring, 1914, never to meet again legally although a session was scheduled for the fall of 1914. Whether the assembly would ever meet again must have been a question that many of its members wondered about. Zaghlul, at least, showed little confidence in the future of the assembly or in the future of any program of his being considered by the assembly, when, before the war broke out, and through the aid of his father-in-law the former prime minister Mustapha Fehmy, he requested

⁹P. P., 1913, Cmd. 6682, LXXXI, 1; The Times, January 23, 1914; Amine Youssef Bey, Independent Egypt (London, 1940), 49.

Kitchener that he be given the post of controller of Egyptian students in Paris. This request Kitchener refused, stating privately to Sir Ronald Storrs, his Oriental secretary, that Zaghlul was "more trouble than he's worth, and we must find something better."¹⁰

Another impasse had arrived in the progress^{of} Egyptian nationalism. Zaghlul had reached the end of his road in working for self-government and the reform of Egypt along Western lines. He had become a bitter old man, Symons said of him after an interview early in the war: "I missed in him the disarming geniality of so many staunch nationalists, and I felt sorry for the bitter, disappointed old man."¹¹

¹⁰ Storrs, Memoirs, 120.

¹¹ M. T. Symons, The Rise of Egyptian Nationalism (London, 1925), 92.

PART II

The Critical Phase of the Struggle for Independence (1914-1922)

Alas for Liberty, alas for Egypt!

What chance was yours in this ignoble strife?
Scorned and betrayed, dishonoured and rejected,
What was there left you but to fight for life?

-- Wilfrid Scawen Blunt:

The Wind and the Windwhirl

In reality I can content myself with
nothing less than complete independence
for my country. It is not a matter of
making concessions, but of an absolute
right.

-- Saad Zaghlul Pasha,

November 10, 1919

CHAPTER 6

The War of 1914 and Egyptian Nationalism.

What Zaghlul's next course of action would have been had Europe remained at peace during 1914 remains a question of historical speculation. The war changed the development of Egyptian nationalism entirely.

The outbreak of war in 1914 found Egypt in the midst of a severe financial crisis. Most of the cotton crop, the basis of Egypt's prosperity, lay either unpicked in the fields, or, because of the disastrously low price of nine dollars a kantar, unsold and practically unsalable on the wharfs. Fellaheen, large landowners, and cotton merchants--all were worried about the future. The government was similarly engrossed with the problem, for the failure to sell the cotton crop meant a failure of fellaheen to pay taxes and a subsequent failure of the government to receive enough money to balance the budget and meet its obligations.¹

At first the fact that war raged in Europe was only of secondary importance to the Egyptian government. In August,

¹Sir Malcom McIlwraith, "Egypt in Wartime," in Fortnightly Review, 108 (August 1, 1917): 222-5.

1914, to avert a panic it had to declare a moratorium on commercial transactions; and, in November to save fellaheen from ruin it had to purchase cotton on the open market and postpone the collection of taxes for several months. With the financial difficulties in the 1880's in mind, the Egyptian ministry let financial considerations determine the policy. The financial difficulties of 1914 made the Egyptian ministry, under the leadership of Hussein Rushdi, even more careful than usual, in following the lead of Great Britain.

What was to be Egypt's official attitude toward the war? Cautiously Rushdi turned to this question. Rushdi, a man known for his tact and political wisdom rather than for his leadership or administrative ability, let momentary political considerations guide his actions. The strongest elements surrounding him influenced his decisions. Although Turkey, the technical overlord of Egypt, still remained neutral, the fact that Turkey was firmly bound to the Central Powers and probably certain to become an enemy of Great Britain made the situation difficult. Fortunately the Khedive Abbas II, who was strongly pro-Turkish in outlook, was absent in Constantinople when the war broke out. Since British troops for all practical purposes controlled Egypt and since Rushdi could have made no decision--such as a declaration of neutrality--unfavorable to British interests, the khedive's absence eased the situation.

On August 5, Rushdi, acting as regent in the absence of

Abbas II, made Egypt de facto a belligerent in the war by various measures directed against Germany and the Central Powers, though de jure, Egypt, as a province of the Turkish Empire, was supposed to be neutral.² In a proclamation of that date Rushdi recognized that Egypt, with British troops stationed within its boundaries, was open to attack (presumably by the Turks or by the Germans operating in Turkish territory). Rushdi forbade Egyptians to do these things: to make contracts with Britain's enemies; to subscribe to the loans of Britain's enemies; to take Egyptian ships into German ports; to export arms, fuel, and other specified commodities to Britain's enemies. In addition, Rushdi ordered that Egyptians ought to give the necessary assistance to British military and naval forces, which were permitted to exercise rights of war on Egyptian soil. He set up complicated regulations regarding contraband of war, German ships in Egyptian ports, the seizing and judging of war prizes, and neutral ships carrying contraband--regulations which, for all practical purposes, meant that Egypt without specifically saying so was acting as if it were at war.

More than that, Rushdi could not do, lest he stir up the Egyptians who favored Turkey; more than that, Rushdi did not need to do, because the British generously offered to assume the whole burden of the war.

²For the details of this proclamation see Great Britain, British Foreign and State Papers, 109: 429-33.

As a result both of Rushdi's action and of the critical financial situation, Egyptians were indifferent toward the war, enthusiastic neither toward the British nor the Turk, though overawed to some extent by Britain's vigorous prosecution of the war. Some Egyptians--such as Cairo's shop and hotel keepers--suffered a depression as a result of the abrupt end of the winter tourist trade--a condition they could blame on the war and on the British. If these and other townspeople were passively anti-British, the fellahen and the large landowners were passively favorable to the British.³

A small group of Egyptians--the nationalists of Farid Bey's party--alone had the inclination and the energy to protest Egypt's entry into the war. When, in early November, Turkey appeared ready to join the Central Powers in the war, the British authorities in Egypt declared martial law, and gathered up, interned, and deprived pro-Turkish nationalists of "any chance to spread discord."⁴ What the British feared most, with the threat of Turkish troops on Egypt's borders, was a rising of Egyptian Moslems in sympathy for Turkey. But the Turkish declaration of a holy war to save the Moslem World fell flat, gathered no sympathy from preoccupied Egyptians. In general Egyptians feared to commit themselves on

³Storrs, Memoirs, 146-7; House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 179: 735-6.

⁴The Times, November 4, 1914; McIlwraith, "Egypt in Wartime," 226.

the war, as an editor of an Egyptian monthly journal found, and were prevented from doing so by the nearly complete censorship of the press. "There is no doubt," the editor of the journal added, "that a large portion of the Moslem population in Egypt dislikes British authority, would rather be ruled by a Turkish Sultan than submit to any Christian control... But the majority of the really educated class are more favorably disposed toward Great Britain and her allies and are consequently averse to any hostile action on the part of Islam."⁵

The few educated Egyptians who did express hostility toward Britain did so from neutral or enemy territory, having escaped British control. From Turkey Awiz Shawish, former editor of Lewa, urged the holy war; in Berlin Adb-el Malek Hamsa, secretary of the National Party, demanded the defeat of Britain; from Geneva Farid Bey complained that Britain, while fighting for the rights of Belgium, trampled under foot the rights of Egypt. Their efforts were ineffective and never reached the bulk of Egyptians. For, by November 10, Egypt's religious leaders--the chancellor of Al Azhar, the Grand Mufti, and their subordinates--ordered their Moslem people to shun agitators, to avoid rioting, "to keep quiet and resort to peace."⁶

With the weight of Moslem religious authority on the

⁵S. V. Trowbridge, and Selim Effendi Abd-ul-Ahad, "The Moslem Press and the War." in Moslem World, 5 (1915): 414.

⁶Trowbridge, "The Moslem Press," 418.

side of peace and with the bulk of educated Egyptians willing to co-operate with Britain, (and these elements were the public opinion that influenced government policy), the possibility of an Egyptian uprising was ended.

Zaghlul, during this period, stayed with the large group of moderate nationalists and educated Egyptians who were favorable to Britain. Because of the suspension of the Legislative Assembly on October 18 and because of the decree forbidding the assembly of more than five persons on October 20, his activities were to some extent limited. But Zaghlul had a prominent position in Egyptian politics--first as the highest elective official in Egypt, and second as a former colleague of Rushdi.

On the two pressing constitutional problems resulting from Turkey's entrance into the war--the question of what to do about the khedive, supposedly plotting with the Turks in Constantinople, and the question of British control over Egypt--Zaghlul exerted considerable influence. In return for Egyptian independence following the war, Zaghlul advocated whole-hearted Egyptian participation in the war. This proposal became a stumbling block in the intricate negotiations between Rushdi's ministry and the British government over the possibility of a British protectorate. At one time Rushdi and Adly, formerly appointed vice-president of the Legislative Assembly and then minister of foreign affairs, threatened to resign unless Egypt were offered internal autonomy in the

event of a British protectorate.⁷

While British officials tried to work out a settlement in Cairo with Egyptian politicians, the British government in London was so occupied with the problem of the European war that it took little interest in Egyptian policy and was grossly ill-informed about the situation in Egypt. If it had any idea in mind, it was to do nothing which altered the control of the Suez canal so vital to the war effort. It made no effort to replace Kitchener as consul-general. On November 13, it unexpectedly ordered the outright annexation of Egypt--a move that would have alienated both the Rushdi government and the moderate nationalists whom Zaghlul represented. As a result of protests of British officials in Cairo, the British government withdrew its annexation plan and let the British residency in Cairo work out an Egyptian settlement.

Because Rushdi and his ministry refused to serve under a "throneless protectorate," the British had to find a successor to Abbas II. On November 19, the British offered the throne of Egypt to Prince Hussein, a son of the Khedive Ismail, a man of considerable reputation among Egyptians and a strong supporter of the British. He had worked with the British before as president of the Legislative Council. From that position he had resigned in 1910, deploring the nation-

⁷Storrs, Memoirs, 149.

alist agitation against the proposal to extend the lease of the Suez Canal Company.

But Hussein had his conditions, if he were to become ruler. He wished to be called king, to be assured that the succession would remain in his immediate family, to be guaranteed that Egypt would have a separate flag and nationality of its own. For nearly a month negotiations with Hussein dragged on, until, by December 13, Hussein--his conditions not met by the British--appeared to make a final refusal.⁸

The political situation had grown critical. Rushdi and his ministry were becoming nervous over the fact that the nation had no ruler and that he would be responsible for the chaos that might result if Egypt could not get a satisfactory one. Moreover, the Rushdi ministry did not wish to take the responsibility of agreeing to a British protectorate without gaining concessions in return.

In the end, as a result of pressure by a nervous ministry and a nervous people, Hussein accepted the title of sultan over a vaguely constituted country which might or might not be a distinct nation. On December 18, the British government by unilateral action (thus relieving Rushdi of responsibility) declared its protectorate over Egypt.

Hussein apparently realized that Egypt needed the stability of a designated ruler. As he later declared, "Had it

⁸ Storrs, the negotiator behind the scenes, describes the course of negotiations in his Memoirs, 150-3.

not been for my faith in the British Government and my belief that there would be a gradual increase in the rights granted us in the matter of self-rule, I would never have undertaken the task."⁹ For the rest of his conditions, Hussein trusted to the informal assurances of Sir Milne Cheetham and Sir Ronald Storrs, top British officials in Egypt, that these demands would be worked out. But Hussein died in 1917 before much of anything had been settled concerning Egypt's status after the war. What then was this status? If not independent, was Egypt assured of its independence at the end of the war or at a later date? This question deeply troubled the minds of Egyptian leaders; it should have, except that British leaders took no time to consider it, likewise concerned the British government.

Urged to do so even by Zaghlul, Rushdi continued as prime minister with almost the same cabinet. His continuance in office gives weight to Milner's later statement about the questions:

"The Egyptians were certainly given to understand that efforts would be made at the end of the war to satisfy their national aspirations, and great pains were taken to assure them that their national status was not changed for the worse by the Protectorate."¹⁰

Zaghlul's entire course of action in 1918 seemed based

⁹The Times, September 28, 1916. Hussein made the statement on a visit to New York City.

¹⁰P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 8.

on this belief. Even Hussein, in an interview during the war with Sir Valentine Chirol, stated his belief that independence had been guaranteed to Egypt after the war.¹¹

Much of this faith rose from the wording of a telegram sent by King George V to Hussein on December 21, 1914. In it the British monarch stated:

"I feel convinced that you will be able, with the cooperation of your ministers and the protectorate of Great Britain, to overcome all influences which are seeking to destroy the independence of Egypt."¹²

To this telegram Hussein answered:

"I present to Your Majesty the expression of my deepest gratitude for the feelings of friendship which you see fit to honour me and for the assurance of your valuable support in safeguarding the integrity and independence of Egypt."¹³

In addition, Sir Milne Cheetham in an official letter to Sultan Hussein of December 19, 1914, added a further basis for this myth of independence after the war:

"In the field of internal administration ...it has been the aim of His Majesty's Government, while working through and in closest association with the constituted Egyptian authorities, to secure individual liberty and promote the spread of education and to further the development of the national resources of the country and, in such measures as the degree of enlightenment of public opinion may permit, to associate the governed in the task of government."¹⁴

¹¹Sir Valentine Chirol, "The Egyptian Deadlock," in Fortnightly Review, 117 (January, 1922): 2.

¹²The Times, December 21, 1914.

¹³The Times, December 21, 1914.

¹⁴The Guardian (Manchester, England), December 19, 1914.

In the minds of Egyptian politicians, Egypt was thus promised eventual control of its own government, first to take place in internal administration, then to be accomplished completely.

The majority of urban Egyptians, not knowing of the half-promises made during shadowy negotiations, greeted the declaration of the protectorate either with indifference or with positive hostility. To the students of the Khedivial Law School, who wore "black ties and lugubrious expressions," Sultan Hussein and the Egyptian ministry, even if only for the duration of the war, had bargained away Egyptian independence, which with the apparent break up of the Ottoman Empire, was Egypt's for the taking. The grandstand of notables and governors greeted Hussein's accession drive through the streets of Cairo with indifferent hand clapping.¹⁵ A few Egyptians--such as the Liberal Party leader Mohammed Wahid--cheered the protectorate.

The bulk of Egyptians accepted the protectorate and hoped for the best. As Rushdi in an interview on December 22 stated in regard to Egypt: "Too weak to defend herself, in order to safeguard her integrity, she must subsist under the aegis of some Great Power." Egyptians saw as Rushdi apparently did that under British rule burdensome foreign rights could be altered, Egypt's Legislative Assembly could gain new

¹⁵Storrs, Memoirs, 153-4.

power, and Egypt could achieve "internal autonomy."¹⁶

The fact that Egyptian leaders had assumed the existence of promises never actually intended to be made and that the nature of the British protectorate was unsatisfactorily defined was recognized by the British adviser to the Egyptian ministry Sir Malcom McIlwraith. In a report to the British government on February 8, 1915, he vainly called attention to this problem:

"If no steps are taken to place British control upon a more definite basis, it is probably that the government of the country, far from becoming easier under the new Protectorate, will become increasingly difficult. It is impossible to ignore the fact that there is a profound and growing tendency on the part of the more enlightened--or, rather, of the better educated--classes of the population to demand increased power for existing representative institutions, and further and constant eliminations of all the foreign elements in the Administration."¹⁷

McIlwraith predicted that if the country should emerge from its economic depression, "the more disquieting features" of the sessions of the Legislative Assembly of 1914 would reappear "in an accentuated form." He predicted, in effect, a resumption of nationalist agitation.

The British government both in London and in Cairo, apparently too busy with war problems, took no action on McIlwraith's suggestions. Vague in the beginning, the pro-

¹⁶The Times, December 24, 1914.

¹⁷Sir Malcolm McIlwraith, "The British Protectorate of Egypt," in Fortnightly Review, 113 (March, 1920): 379-80.

tectorate remained a vague legal creation until the end.

The British government, in order to get the co-operation it needed from Egyptians in the form of labour, transport, food, and cotton, took no steps that would clarify the issue so that the protectorate would be a permanent institution.

Getting out of the habit to make policy regarding Egypt, the British government, when the war ended and when peace problems pressed down on British statesmen, was still unable to decide what to do with Egypt.

CHAPTER 7

The Rise of Saad Zaghlul to Power.

If the early years of the War of 1914 had silenced nationalist leaders of Egypt, the last years of the war convinced the nationalists, particularly Zaghlul and men of his political outlook, that they had to take action to clarify Egypt's political status. When the partial elections of members both to the provincial councils and to the Legislative Assembly, due to take place in January 1916, were indefinitely suspended, the possibility of Zaghlul's taking a forceful part in Egyptian politics seemed extremely uncertain. Moreover, Rushdi and his ministry seemingly did nothing except follow the lead of the British. The time was growing short.

Not until April 1917, when Rushdi appointed a commission to study and recommend changes in courts, capitulations, and Egyptian administration, did the Rushdi ministry appear to look ahead to the end of the war. The question of Egypt's participation in the peace conference at the end of the war--a question that first broke the surface in the British parliament on March 15, 1916--remained, to the anxiety of nat-

ionalists in Egypt, unanswered. Late in 1917, Rushdi attempted to discuss with the British the status of Egypt after the war but his attempt was brushed aside.¹

Late in 1917, Zaghlul tried without success to gain a place in the Rushdi ministry. From then on he began to organize his supporters independently of Rushdi; in July 1918, Zaghlul started gathering his followers and organizing his plans.

Consider for a moment the viewpoint of Zaghlul and of educated Egyptians, the class of people in 1918 most interested in Egyptian self-rule. In administering Egypt during the war, this class had greatly aided British war efforts, loyally and wholeheartedly stepping in with voluntary assistance when the British found themselves in administrative and financial difficulties--and they were proud of their efforts.²

Egyptian fellaheen labor, mobilized for the most part by the Egyptian administrators, had built roads, railways, and canal defenses for the British; had transported supplies, without which Palestine would have been conquered; had permitted the British to buy their cattle, their donkeys and camels (so dear to each fellah) for transport, their grain and cotton to supply British troops and British industry.

¹P. P., 1921, Cmd 1131, XLII; 13.

²See statement of Sir William Brunyate, British Judicial Advisor to the Egyptian Ministry, The Times, April 20, 1918.

Moreover wealthy and educated Egyptians had in their own judgment generously given money and hospital service to wounded British and Anzac troops.³ To these educated Egyptians, Egypt was just a small nation--a very small nation compared to the great European powers--which had given all without complaint, all that had been asked, and more too, considering that Britain had at the beginning of the war promised Egyptians that Britain would assume the full burden of the war.⁴

In the face of these efforts, educated Egyptians suffered, what they considered, great indignities at the hands of British troops. The "Aussies," stationed in Egypt for much of the war, treated all Egyptians, or "Gippos" as colored people beneath their social status. Educated Egyptians, many of whom had studied in the best European universities and had been considered the equal of Europeans, or even as members of the nobility, found this treatment unbearable. More than one story spread through the country, telling how an educated European "was struck in the mouth and had his inlaid walking stick snatched from him by a soldier who wanted it."⁵

³The Times, November 28, 1917.

⁴Typical is a statement of Zaghlul on January 12, 1919: "The enormous sacrifices that we have made during the war, in blood and treasure, for the triumph of your cause, were indispensable to you, and moreover, you have recognized many times that these sacrifices were one of the principle (sic) factors of the victory in the Orient." Egyptian Delegation to the Peace Conference, White Book, Paris, 1919, 27.

⁵Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 86-7.

Moreover, British civilian and military administrators, an untrained, temporary group of men, had dealt tactlessly with the official Egyptian class. Egyptians endured "a series of official humiliations," Zaghlul noted, "that excited the resentment of all classes of people. The methods employed in the organization of what the British military authorities were pleased to call 'voluntary service' as in the requisition of supplies for the Army, were conceived in a spirit so totally lacking in kindness and justice that the discontent went beyond the working classes, most directly harmed, and reached the middle and upper classes."⁶

It mattered little that the educated and landowning class of people had benefitted from the war prosperity, which came to Egypt after 1915, and had been proportionally called upon the least for material contributions for the war effort. Educated Egyptians had identified themselves in a paternalistic way so completely with their government and with the fellaheen--a far more complete identification than in any western nation--that in their minds the contributions of the fellaheen were their contributions, and wrongs to the fellaheen were their wrongs.

When on May 17, 1917, the British ordered all Egyptians to surrender their arms, the educated classes felt that in-

⁶Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 87.

stead of being allies of the British they were being treated as an enemy people. Egyptians were not, in their own judgment, a subject people--but a separate nationality. While the war lasted Zaghlul and educated Egyptians were willing to endure "these annoyances and humiliations" as "sacrifices of pride and of material advantage, like a thousand other sacrifices they were called upon to make, for recovering their independence." When the war would end, they expected as the reward for their help to the British and for the indignities they had suffered, one thing: a government under their own control in which foreign influence had ceased.⁷

In August, 1918, when the British requisitioned an airfield at Abu Qir near Alexandria, taking the land as if it were British territory, the nationalists became aroused. How could the British government in London, Egyptians asked, forcibly take Egyptian soil without the consent of the owners of the land, even though giving just compensation for the soil? Did this act imply that the British considered Egypt to be a British possession? Did this act mean that the independence of Egypt at the end of the war was not assured?⁸

Zaghlul and the Egyptian nationalists had eagerly heard Wilson's announcement of the Fourteen Points on January 8, 1918, among which was the statement that the subject

⁷Egyptian Delegation, WhiteBook, 87.

⁸P. G. Elgood, Egypt and the Army, New York, 1924, 340-1.

nationalities of the Turkish Empire would be given their independence. Egypt was certainly, in Egyptian minds, one of these nationalities. Zaghlul placed his faith, though not all his trust, in these declarations; for other disquieting events happened before the war ended in the fall of 1918.

In November, 1918, Sir William Brunyate, judicial adviser to the Egyptian ministry, in a memorandum to the Capitulations Commission suggested changes which did not in any sense imply that the British would leave Egypt at the close of the war. A new legislative body, a senate, was to be created in Egypt, a body in which foreign interests would have a majority and which would supersede the functions of the old Legislative Assembly. This change which Brunyate recommended would not lead to independence; it frightened Egyptians regarding their country's future. It not only aroused a storm of protest among educated Egyptians, but even offended Rushdi.⁹

Moreover, rumor--widely believed--stated that Brunyate meant to change the Egyptian legal system so that British legal procedures and the English language would be exclusively used. These rumored changes would have made it impossible for Egyptian lawyers, versed in the French language and in

⁹Sir Valentine Chirol, The Egyptian Problem, London, 1921, 145-6; Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 33; P. P., 1921, Cmd 1131, XLII, 13.

modified French legal procedure, to practice in the ways in which they were familiar. The lawyers were the back bone of the educated classes and of the nationalists, moreover; and they became alarmed.

The joint Anglo-French Declaration of November 7, 1918, which stated that "the objects of France and Great Britain in the East were the 'establishment of national governments deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations,'" only served to stimulate Zaghlul and the nationalists in their efforts to clarify Egypt's¹⁰ future. About this time, Zaghlul invited seven of his associates (mostly former colleagues in the defunct Legislative Assembly) to a private meeting at his country house to discuss the situation. With these men Zaghlul formed the Wafd, or Delegation, the representative of the Egyptian people, pledged to achieve de facto the independence which, with the Turkish armistice already concluded, was Egypt's right de jure. Among his associates in this original Wafd were Abdel Aziz Fahmy Bey, Mohammed Ali Bey, Sinnot Hanna Bey, Moustafa el Nahas Bey, and Hamed Bassal Pasha.

From this date Zaghlul started his rise to official and unofficial power in Egypt. From this date, until his death in 1927, Zaghlul saw himself as the representative of the Egyptian people, superior in actual authority to either the sultan or any of the numerous prime ministers of Egypt

¹⁰H. W. V. Temperley, A History of the Peace Conference of Paris (6 vols., London, 1924), 6:196.

during the period. Indeed as Zaghlul conceived it, the "people named this Delegation," and chose him to lead Egypt to independence.¹¹

On November 13, 1918, two days after the war ended, Zaghlul, with two associates, presented himself to Sir Reginald Wingate, the high commissioner of Egypt since January 1, 1917, to claim Egypt's independence. The boldness of this move and of Zaghlul's assumption of the authority to represent the Egyptian people surprised Wingate and the British officials: they had not anticipated being faced with such determination.¹²

Immediately after this meeting, Zaghlul proceeded to obtain a firm mandate from the people. With great energy he and his followers got signatures of support from the important political figures of the nation--the members of the Legislative Assembly, the provincial and municipal councils, Egyptian bar associations, and the bulk of Egyptian notables and Egyptian civil servants. Shortly afterwards, in January 1919, after British officials had unsuccessfully attempted to block the creation of this mandate, Zaghlul sought and obtained the signature of any Egyptian who desired to support him.¹³

Zaghlul then defined his aims. He wished to go to

¹¹Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 88.

¹²For a detailed account of the conversation at this meeting see M. Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne (Paris, 1921), 10-14.

¹³Youssef Bey, Independent Egypt, 64-5.

England and discuss the status of Egypt with the leaders of liberal British opinion; he would then represent Egypt at the peace conference soon to be held in Paris. He appealed to the understanding and support of the British people and to the foreign residents in Egypt by proclaiming that he would use "all peaceful and legal means" to achieve independence.¹⁴ When his request of November 20, 1918, to get a passport to Europe was delayed and refused support by Wingate, Zaghlul tried to get help by a series of letters and telegrams to Lloyd George, Wilson, and Clemenceau. The failure of these appeals made Zaghlul ask, as he wrote Lloyd George on December 4, "whether the principles that the statesmen of the Empire do not cease to proclaim in their daily declarations are applicable to certain factions of humanity only--to the exclusion of others less favored."¹⁵

On December 6, 1918, Zaghlul, in an appeal to foreign powers announced his political program:

1) The independence of Egypt, which should be granted because it was a natural right of all nations, because Egypt had always demanded independence "even at the price of blood," because the suzerainty of Turkey had ceased, and because Egypt, for moral and material reasons, was justified in receiving independence.

2) Constitutional government, under which foreign interests would be safeguarded; and economic, administrative, and social reforms would be undertaken.

¹⁴ Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 12-3.

¹⁵ Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 24-5.

3) The respect for, though the readjustment of, foreign privileges.

4) The respect for the administration of the Caisse de la Dette Publique.

5) The safeguarding of the "neutrality" of the Suez Canal by "every measure that the Powers will judge useful."

6) The joining in the Society or League of Nations and the working for the "new ideas of Justice and of Right."¹⁶

This program not only restated Zaghlul's political philosophy of 1882, but also remained with only minor alterations his program until his death. In the definition of the term independence, as later shown in his speeches and writings, Zaghlul included the abolition of martial law, the removal of press censorship, and the withdrawal of British troops from Egyptian soil. Many a British political leader--Milner in 1920, Culzon in 1921, and MacDonald in 1924--discovered that when Zaghlul meant independence, he did not intend partial independence and the retention of British influence in Egypt. Indeed, much of the failure of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations during the following years came from a failure to believe that Zaghlul really meant what he said, that he was only demanding a great deal in the hope of creating a good bargaining position. Zaghlul was not a bargainer, as a businessman of Birmingham seeking to make a contract might be; he had no such commercial instincts in his statesmanship;

¹⁶ Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 10-1.

he never compromised in the traditional, nineteenth century way of diplomacy.

In the meantime Rushdi and Adly, leaders of the Egyptian ministry, also took action regarding Egypt's post war status. Compared to Zaghlul, Adly and Rushdi have been called moderate nationalists, but doing this assumes that Zaghlul was an extreme nationalist--a thing that he never was. Compared to the extreme Indian nationalists, he appears downright conservative. Among Egyptians, hardly a handful of men were extreme in as far as they advocated a resort to violence; and Zaghlul and his chief supporters were not among them.

What distinguished the nationalism of Rushdi from that of Zaghlul was Rushdi's willingness to compromise on "the internal autonomy" of Egypt for the time being instead of independence, his willingness to take time to discuss, and his apparent lack of forcefulness. In conformity with this outlook, Rushdi on 13 November, 1918, requested that he and Adly be permitted to go to England to discuss the future of Egypt with British statesmen. Unlike Zaghlul, he did not preface his discussions with the demand for independence. From the British foreign secretary came the answer that British statesmen were too busy with the coming peace conference to discuss with Egyptian leaders "the problems of Egyptian internal reform."¹⁷ The British leaders not only were

¹⁷P. P., 1921, Cmd 1131, XLII, 13-4.

too busy, but also apparently did not understand the nature of the proposed discussions with Egyptian leaders. To discuss "Egyptian internal reform" certainly was not independence; furthermore, to refuse to discuss was the abrogation of all the promises which Egyptian leaders felt they had received in December 1914.

Because of this refusal, and the further refusal on Rushdi's request to allow Zaghlul to leave Egypt, Rushdi, on December 23, 1918, presented the resignation of his ministry. By this time the situation had grown serious; Wingate could not have secured the formation of another ministry. As a result both Wingate and Sultan Fuad in January, 1919, endeavored to get Rushdi to withdraw his resignation. The price of such a withdrawal was the permission of Rushdi and Zaghlul to go to Europe. To Curzon, who became foreign secretary on January 6, 1919, Wingate strongly urged that this move be made. Although Curzon was apparently willing to meet the Egyptian leaders "in a moderate and conciliatory spirit," he realized that to allow the Wafd to go to the peace conference might arouse false hopes. The British government was not ready to change the status of Egypt. So there was more delay.¹⁸

On January 21, Wingate left for Britain, arriving on February 16, in order to explain the Egyptian situation to

¹⁸Harold Nickolson, Curzon: The Last Phase 1919-1925 (Boston, etc., 1934), 169-171.

the British foreign office. Before leaving Egypt Wingate gave both Rushdi and Zaghlul permission to go to Europe. "This promise of the High Commissioner," the Wafd shortly afterwards declared, "was so serious that the discussion took the form of arranging about the means of transport, so that everybody was convinced that the delegation was preparing to leave."¹⁹

Although in mid-February Curzon repeated his invitation to Rushdi and Adly to come to London, Rushdi declined to leave Egypt unless Zaghlul were also permitted to come. Soon Rushdi learned that the prohibition of Zaghlul's departure was final. The British government apparently took this action on the basis of reports from Milne Cheetham, acting in Wingate's absence, that the Egyptian situation showed no cause for alarm.

On March 1, 1919, Sultan Fuad finally accepted Rushdi's long-tendered resignation. Egyptians in Cairo, particularly the official and educated classes, grew tense and excited. The townspeople, who were close to the scene of the crisis and in a position to be easily influenced by the speeches and pamphlets of Zaghlul and the Wafd, likewise began to grow excited. In the face of Rushdi's resignation, Zaghlul demanded on March 3 in a personal interview with the sultan that no ministry be appointed which did not represent the will of the people. By this time Zaghlul fully represented the people and reflected Egyptian public opinion.

¹⁹Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 35.

To accept a Zaghlul ministry would have been difficult for Fuad; for, indeed, the whole Zaghlul movement, which had disregarded the political position of the sultan, seemed to endanger Fuad's throne. Zaghlul's forceful and threatening demand placed Fuad in a subordinate and somewhat humiliating position.

Fuad, an unpopular though strong-willed individual who had been chosen by the British in October 1917 to succeed Hussein, depended on British force to support his power. Moreover, during the British occupation the rulers of Egypt had never previously been forced to bow to popular will in appointing a ministry. Nor did Fuad wish to be the first to do so. He reported to Cheethan the details of Zaghlul's attempt to "intimidate" him. Cheethan got permission from the government in London to deport Zaghlul in order to rid Egypt of a trouble maker and enable Fuad to form another ministry.²⁰

On March 6, General Watson, the British commander in Cairo, called in Zaghlul and his associates for a conference. Watson tactlessly kept Zaghlul and his associates waiting, failed to greet them when he entered, and held them to silence before declaring: "You have been talking against the Protectorate. Understand that the Protectorate is to remain forever.

²⁰ Speech of Lord Curzon in the House of Lords, March 18, 1919. Great Britain, House of Lords, Parliamentary Debates, Series 5, 33: 712-3. Sirdar Ikbāl Ali Shah, Fuad King of Egypt (London, 1936), 136-8.

If you talk against it any more you will find yourselves in prison. Now go." When Zaghlul tried to speak, the general cut him short with another terse remark: "You were not called here to discuss. Get out." Zaghlul and his associates immediately telegraphed a protest to David Lloyd George on this tactless treatment; furthermore, they published the account of the interview and reaffirmed their opposition to the protectorate.²¹ These further protests served as the pretext for Cheetham to order the arrest of Zaghlul and three other pashas--Mohammed Mahmoud, Ismail Sidky, and Hamed Bassal-- on the afternoon of March 8. As Zaghlul describes the act, "they were taken suddenly from their homes and hurried away under cover of night. There was no trial and they were not informed of the reasons of their arrest and deportation."²²

Since the people of Cairo had been informed of the insults which Zaghlul and his associates had received at the hands of General Watson, they were already stirred up. The news of Zaghlul's arrest spread through Cairo quickly. On March 9, the students of the Khedivial Law School scorned the advice of older and cooler persons, formed demonstrations of the townspeople, together with the usual following of

²¹This story was reported by Abdul Aziz Fahmy, one of Zaghlul's associates present at the conference, to Arthur Ransome, journalist of the Manchester Guardian, March 30, 1925.

²²Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 89; The Times, March 13, 1919.

street-roughs , had reached the proportions of a major riot.

Thus the unexpected had come to pass. The British authorities by seizing and deporting Zaghlul had not only unwittingly given the signal for violence in Egypt, but also had transformed Zaghlul into a kind of martyr and hero, who was whether imprisoned or free to remain the unshaken, the god-like leader of the Egyptian masses.

CHAPTER 8

The Revolution of Protest.

In 1919 Egypt was in a state of disorder. The riots which began in Cairo on March 9, spread to Alexandria and other large cities by March 12, extended to the smaller towns and villages near the main rail lines by March 14, led to serious anti-British and anti-foreign outrages on March 18, and ended after vigorous British military measures by March 29. The number of people killed in the riots mounted to the hundreds, the amount of property destroyed totaled thousands of pounds, and the time needed to repair damage to telegraph lines, railways, and public buildings took months. The Egyptian riots were expensive.¹

The peculiar fact about the March riots was that they were unplanned, unexpected, and basically futile. Despite all his passion for independence, Zaghlul had not anticipated anything more than stirring up people to support his political program. The Wafd, as well as almost all the educated classes of Egypt, was shocked not only at the violence of the riots

¹For a detailed, factual description of the riots during March 1919 see Chirol, The Egyptian Problem, 177-189.

--the smashing of shops, tramways, and streetlights, the killing of defenseless Britons, and the shooting-down of equally defenseless Egyptians--but also at the fact that the riots had happened at all. Students, the most nationalistic element in Egypt, had started the first demonstrations in Cairo, had travelled out to the countryside among the fellahs who lived along the main railway routes, and had stirred them up; but the Wafd, the political leaders, had not intended the riots to take place. Indeed, on March 17, the Wafd attempted to induce Rushdi to re-form his cabinet in the hope of quieting a situation of violence and lawlessness which had gotten out of control.

To think of challenging and expelling the British in a war of independence was inconceivable to almost all nationalist leaders. Only one event, that of the citizens of Minia on March 23 seizing control of their city and proclaiming independence, offers any kind of exception to the unplanned program of these riots, this March Revolution, as it is frequently called. The nationalists, as Milner later declared, should not be confused with the "pronounced revolutionaries or simple criminals" responsible for the outbursts.² Even the terrorists, who found in the riots an opportunity to spread fright, to destroy property, to murder defenseless Europeans, did not think in terms of pitting a small, defense-

²P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 17.

less Egypt against the might of the British Empire in a protracted war of independence.

Protest summarizes the nature of this revolution--mass protest intended as a peaceful means to achieve peaceful political aims; and protest, even though getting out of hand and resulting in violence, is by no means a revolution in the accepted sense. Protest was the immediate cause of the riots; in the form of peaceful demonstrations it occurred in one city when the worst violence was occurring in another part of Egypt; it continued after Egypt once again became peaceful.

The protest originally came from the intelligentsia of Egypt; spread to the "effendi" or educated people, who suffered, as one observer noted, "from swelled heads and half-digested knowledge"; took hold of the urban population--the shop-keepers, the taxi drivers, and the partially or completely illiterate urban laborers, who drew meager wages from low-paid industrial or government jobs and had suffered the most from the tremendous rise of food and clothing and fuel prices.³

Beyond the cities this revolution of protest showed few signs of spreading. The fellaheen, as Lord Milner pointed out in his exhaustive study of the causes of the March riots, took only a partial and almost an inconsequential role in the troubles. "In remoter villages, less readily accessible to

³The Times, April 11, 1919.

propagandists and agitators, little disposition was shown by the small farmers to take part in any such movement."⁴ Moreover the fellaheen who took any part in the March riots took little further part in the subsequent program of protest that continued after the riots.

If causes of many kinds--war grievances, rising prices, the pride of the educated peoples, the desire of the effendi to take British-held government jobs, and above all the whole background of the educated Egyptian's desire for independence--explains the growth of protest, can these causes explain the development of the protest into the violence of the March riots? For an answer to the cause of violence and the killing, for instance, of unarmed British and foreign subjects as happened on March 19, further inter-related explanations are needed.

The riots offered an opportunity for the professional criminal class--the thieves and pickpockets and gangsters--to ply their trade. In addition, the chaotic conditions caused by the mobs, along with the resulting breakdown of rail and telegraph communications, enabled the spread of false information and false rumors. In the passion of a mob speech, an agitator could vent his wrath against the British and foreigners in Egypt; in the passion of listening to this speech, a mob could without a moment's consideration attack, steal from and frighten all British and foreigners within

⁴P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 10-1.

reach. The riots likewise enabled personal feuds among Egyptians to be worked out in the easiest possible way: by direct action--such as throwing stones at the shop windows of a despised shopkeeper.⁵ Moreover, J. A. Spender, one of Lord Milner's co-investigators, states: "There was also a religious unrest, hard to fathom or measure, but undoubtedly a very real cause of trouble at the moment. The fellah had no love for the Turk, but, when the students poured out of the Mosques to tell him that the downfall of Turkey was the defeat of Islam, and that it threatened him with permanent subjection to the infidel, unless he bestirred himself, undoubtedly he listened."⁶

This rioting and violence find their counterpart in the general unrest that swept the Islamic World at the end of the War of 1914. In Turkey and Persia from 1919 to 1925, in Syria and Iraq in the uprisings of July 1920; in the Afghan-British trouble of May 1919--all these nationalities showed the same signs of unrest, the same desire of Islamic peoples for release from Western political control.⁷ This was the same Islamic world in which Jamal ud-Din, fifty years before, had first signaled the desire of revolt from Western dominance.

⁵Youssef, Independent Egypt, 72.

⁶J. A. Spender, "The Egyptian Problem," in The Quarterly Review, 237 (April, 1922): 427.

⁷Nicholson, Curzon, 157. For a complete study see A. J. Toynbee, The Islamic World, Survey of International Affairs (Oxford, etc., 1927).

The agitation of all those years by Moslem intellectuals had seeped down at last to the masses of people, had come to its fruition.

The task of bringing Egypt to peace fell upon Field Marshal Lord Allenby. Allenby, hastily appointed by Lloyd George on March 22 as high commissioner of Egypt because Lloyd George wanted a "strong man" in Egypt, arrived on March 25. Suppression seemed to be the policy toward the protest, the rioting and the violence.⁸

Nothing shows more clearly how poorly British statesmen had analyzed the situation in Egypt than the appointment of Allenby--a military man, the victor of Palestine. But the unexpected happened with Allenby. An understanding outlook, not an imperialist viewpoint and strong-arm action, was needed in Egypt; and, ironically enough, Allenby, who should have been far less expected to ease the Egyptian situation than an experienced Egyptian administrator like Wingate, proved the most understanding and capable man to govern Egypt since Cromer. Allenby could act in a crisis with all the decisive vigor of a field commander; but he also possessed an open and judicious mind. His first act in Egypt was to announce that he intended to bring the riots to an end, to inquire into the cause of the riots, and to redress any grievances that Egypt-

⁸The Times, March 21, 1919; Viscount Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, Cambridge, 1925, 27.

ians might have. He meant what he said; his sincerity brought a quick response from the political leaders of Egypt. His policy was conciliation.

On the evening of his arrival in Cairo, Allenby called together a gathering of Egyptian notables to explain his purposes in Egypt, as he saw them. A few days later, the Wafd presented Allenby with their grievances, their story of what had happened during the past months, and their demands. With no hesitation, Allenby on March 31 met with and listened to the leaders of the Wafd, Rushdi and his former cabinet, and other Egyptian notables. They talked about the Egyptian situation freely. The conditions on which Rushdi based his re-assumption of office was the release of Zaghlul. That same evening, Allenby telegraphed the British foreign office that Zaghlul be freed.

To conciliate Egyptian leaders, Allenby had these facts in his favor: Rushdi and his colleagues wished to restore Egypt to normal conditions; the Wafd, far from wishing to fight the British, hoped to reconcile Anglo-Egyptian interests and with Britain's aid gain Egyptian independence; the British government, wishing mainly for a respite from this troublesome Egyptian problem, even if only temporarily, let itself be guided by Allenby and his advisers, under that theory that the man on the spot knew what was best. In consequence, Zaghlul was freed from Malta on March 7 and allowed to go to Europe; the Wafd received permission to leave Egypt and join

Zaghlul in his journey to the peace conference; and Rushdi formed a government on March 9--a cabinet composed of some notable members of his previous ministry, the Pashas Adly, Sarwat, and Wahba, each of whom later was to become prime minister of Egypt.

Allenby likewise pursued his policy of conciliation in ending the rioting. Although "the killing of a few thousand Gippos" might have ended the whole thing, this was not permitted. Allenby, as one British corporal expressed, "asked us to go slow and kill as few as possible; he said it would do a lot of harm in the long run if heaps of them were killed.... We're doing it for him."⁹

With the pacification of Egypt and the rapprochement of Egyptian leaders accomplished by conciliation, Egyptian politics returned to its pre-riot stage: a state of continuing protest. The fact that Rushdi had formed a ministry meant nothing so long as the reasons for Zaghlul's original campaign of protest remained largely unsatisfied. To bring pressure on Rushdi to recognize Zaghlul and the Wafd as the official Egyptian delegation to the peace conference, to force Rushdi to refuse recognition to the British protectorate, and to cause Rushdi to replace the British troops in Cairo with Egyptian guards and police, the Wafd, under the leadership of Ali Bey Maher--later to be close associate of

⁹ Sir William Hayter, Recent Constitutional Developments in Egypt Cambridge, 1925, 27.

Zaghlul--fomented a strike of government workers which halted government operations. Efforts by both Rushdi and the Wafd to negotiate their differences came to nothing; the basic problem was that Rushdi--and this can be said of Adly, his chief supporter--considered himself the maker of government policy. The dictation of the Wafd, even though it had the support of the Egyptian people, made it impossible for Rushdi to continue in office. On April 19 he resigned.

Once again Allenby found the Egyptian situation troubled: no ministry, the machinery of government inoperative. Having waited to see if the Egyptians could settle their political differences, Allenby stepped in and ended the strike of government workers by ordering them back to work on penalty of loss of pay or loss of job. This policy worked; Allenby took other decisive steps. On April 29 he ordered the British under-secretaries in each ministry to assume the functions of a minister and required students and military cadets to return to their studies. By showing the nature of the force at his disposal compared to his previous conciliation, he restored the operation of the government.

A peculiar Egyptian solution to the inability of Egyptian politicians to get together on a policy then resulted. On May 21, Mohammed Pasha Said formed a ministry. He had been a former prime minister and was a man who late in 1918 could intrigue with the extreme nationalists and in May, 1919, could accept the dictate of the autocratic Sultan Fuad--in short,

a man of no political convictions except the holding of public office. Said's so-called "business ministry" took office on the condition that it would handle only the details of administration and leave the matter of policy to Egyptian politicians with definite convictions. This peculiar method of organizing a government was used on later occasions when the conflict over policy reached an impasse.

Meanwhile, on April 19, Zaghlul, freed and joined by his Wafd, arrived in Paris where he expected to appeal in person to the peace conference for Egypt's independence. But hardly had Zaghlul and his supporters arrived when, on April 22, the United States recognized the British protectorate over Egypt. After this event, Zaghlul had to resume his campaign of protest. From the first, he faced almost insurmountable difficulties.

Zaghlul appealed to "the great and venerated President, to the eminent philosopher and statesman" Woodrow Wilson and met with curt notes of regret from Wilson's secretary that Wilson could not see Zaghlul.¹⁰ In vain did Zaghlul point out to Clemenceau that Egypt was doomed to "perpetual insurrection" if Egypt were not granted independence;¹¹ fruitlessly, Zaghlul tried to convince the American Senate, the British House of Commons and the French Chamber of Deputies

¹⁰ Zaghlul used these words in addressing various telegrams to Wilson in December 1918, and January 1919. Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 52.

¹¹ Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 196.

of the right and justice of his cause, try though Zaghlul did with eloquent appeals throughout May, June, and July, 1919.

Almost with pathos Zaghlul argued:

"For how can it be explained that the Villayet of Hedjaz....which is a rudimentary state with scanty resources and very thinly populated should be superior politically to Egypt, which has so largely and loyally contributed to the victory of the Allies?"

Hedjaz, in contrast to the ancient mother of civilizations Egypt, was getting its independence.¹²

For a while Zaghlul took comfort in the belief that "public opinion in Great Britain and her self governing dominions, in the United States, in France and in Italy" would hear Egypt's grievances.¹³ Public opinion did not rally to his cause; American Senate leaders like Borah, who did listen, used the case of Egypt to show the evils of Woodrow Wilson, of the Peace of Versailles, and of the League of Nations. But to help Egypt? The United States government would not listen, for it had made its decision to recognize the British protectorate over Egypt even before the World War had ended;¹⁴ the British government would not hear, because by May 15, having announced the formation of a special commission under Lord Milner to study Egypt, it would wait until this commiss-

¹² Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 74.

¹³ Statement made on June 28, 1919 to Clemenceau. Egyptian Delegation, White Book, 84.

¹⁴ G. L. Beer, African Questions at the Paris Peace Conference: with papers on Egypt (New York, 1923), 445.

ion had reported.

World opinion was not even stirred by the recital of British atrocities committed on Egyptians in suppressing the March riots--the stories of Egyptian women raped, villages razed, notables whipped, insults and injuries suffered. People either felt indifferent toward Egypt's injuries, disbelief of them, or weariness in hearing of the recital of a nation's injuries. Indeed, the statement of the United States government in recognizing the British protectorate is characteristic of this attitude. "The President of the American people," Lansing, U. S. Secretary of State, declared in the note, "have every sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of the Egyptian people for a further measure of self-government, but...they view with regret any effort to obtain the realization thereof by a resort to violence."¹⁵

By August, 1919, Zaghlul had failed to arouse the people of the great democracies; by August 12, four members of Zaghlul's Wafd had returned to Egypt to their private businesses, as if preparing to withdraw from the movement. A split in the Wafd over the question of future tactics appeared likely in September, when Ismail Sidky and some other prominent politicians announced their withdrawal from the Wafd.

Zaghlul insisted on staying in Paris; others wished to open more direct negotiations with the British. Faced with

¹⁵The Times, April 25, 1919.

failure and the leadership of a lost cause, in August, Zaghlul declared:

"We shall not lose hope. This confirmation (of the Protectorate) is without validity in international law: one essential element is lacking, our consent. That has not been given, and it will never be obtained. Our confidence in ourselves, in the unity of all our hearts, in the nobility of our cause, in the simplicity of our program and our faith, in the liberality of the victorious democracies, makes us hope for the realization of our national ideal."¹⁶

But these words were a pathetic last cry to the peoples of the world and to the nations of the peace conference. The cause of the Wafd needed new tactics; the hopes of the Egyptian people needed new stimulation. This hope came in September, 1919, with the formal announcement of the imminent departure of the Milner mission for Egypt. Ironically enough, it was through opposition to the Milner mission, not through cooperation, that the Wafd and Zaghlul gained a new lease of political power.

¹⁶Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 199.

CHAPTER 9

Zaghlul and the Boycott of the Milner Mission.

From the beginning the aims of the Milner mission aroused the objections of Zaghlul and the nationalists of Egypt. When Curzon announced the formation of this Special Commission to Egypt on May 15, 1919, he defined its aims:

"to inquire into the causes of the late disorders in Egypt, and to report on the existing situation in the country and the form of Constitution which, under the Protectorate, would be best calculated to promote its peace and prosperity, the progressive development of self-governing institutions, and the protection of foreign interests."¹

Lord Milner, secretary of state for the colonies and one of Britain's ablest imperial statesmen, was at the same time announced as the head of the mission.

Until September, 1919, largely because both Allenby and Mohammed Said wished to defer the coming of the mission, nothing had been done about sending it to Egypt. When its full membership finally was announced and its departure declared imminent, Egyptian nationalists, particularly Zaghlul's supporters in Egypt, rose in protest. The idea of boycotting

¹House of Lords, Debates, Series 5, 34: 679.

this mission occurred to these nationalists. On October 5 Zaghlul Pasha threw his weight behind the boycott proposal.

Conditions in Egypt were ripe for continuing the protest against the British protectorate. Beginning on August 10 with the Cairo tramway strike, a series of strikes had broken out in Egypt. Rising costs of living, together with the failure of wages to equal this price rise, had led to strikes among Cairo cafe employes, Alexandria dock workers, and some twelve thousand cigaret workers in Cairo. By the middle of September the Egyptian government had found itself so pressed by its own employes that it granted a twenty per-cent pay increase. Not until October 5, when the Cairo tramway service resumed, did the strike wave decline.

With the decline of strikes, the energies of both Egyptian politicians and urban dwellers seemed to be transferred to the boycott of the Milner mission. The newspapers loudly denounced the protectorate and the British. In Alexandria, from October 24 to 27, the protest broke out into rioting in which some thirty-four people were killed--a riot, which, for its short duration and its large proportion of casualties, was even more violent than the March riots.² Further troubles occurred in Cairo after November 15 when Allenby reiterated the aims of the Milner mission in coming to Egypt. The Wafd used this communique of Allenby as a pretext to arouse the people of Egypt.

²Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 54.

"The hour is serious," proclaimed the Wafd in answer to Allenby, "the nation calls upon its people to write a glorious history for it."³

Led by students the people of Cairo and Alexandria heeded this call, started demonstrations which led to riots in those two cities on November 16 and 18. In Cairo the demonstrators set fire to police stations near the palace of the sultan. In this riot near the palace one hundred people were killed and injured; British troops had to intervene to establish order.

Allenby acted quickly against the leaders of the Wafd who had stirred up the people of Egypt by ordering them to retire to their country homes; and upon the refusal of Ali Bey Maher and Latif Bakaret, nephew of Saad Zaghlul and president of the Moslem kadi training school, to do so, Allenby had them arrested on November 21. At the same time he suspended two newspapers for blaming the British for the large number of casualties in the Cairo riots.

But the agitation did not cease. Allenby had to warn Egyptians again on November 29 that anyone agitating against the protectorate would be arrested and punished by martial law. On December 4, he had to order two more Zaghlul leaders to retire to their villages--Ismail Sidky Pasha and Sinnot Hanna Bey--for continuing the agitation against the

³Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 61-2.

protectorate. Furthermore, although allowing the two newspapers previously suspended to start publication on December 4, he had to suspend the Coptic journal Misr for making statements such as this one of November 24:

"Herbert Spenser says that liberty is not had for the asking, but must be secured. We do not want to lose the true picture. On the other hand, we want to make every drop of blood, to the last Egyptian, not shed without great need."⁴

During this preliminary boycott, Zaghlul loomed as a far greater figure in the eyes of his countrymen while he stayed in Paris. He was the "hero of the native press." To some thirty-six hundred village mayors, to members of provincial councils and of the legislative assembly, to almost all prominent Egyptians, Zaghlul sent telegrams of encouragement and approval of the boycott. In this way, despite the distance, he controlled the policy of the boycott, ably assisted by his associates and friends in Egypt.⁵

By December 7, when the Milner mission arrived in Egypt, there was hardly an Egyptian who would have anything to do with it. "You will not find a cat in Egypt to talk with you," Rushdi told Milner.⁶ Moreover, the ministry of Said Pasha, which had resigned on November 15 because of its disapproval of the coming of the mission and of its aims, had

⁴Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 64-6.

⁵Valentine Chirol in The Times, November 22, 1919.

⁶Sabry, La Revolution Egyptienne, 100.

been replaced by a ministry under Wahba Pasha, which, while showing courtesy to Milner and his colleagues, showed their lack of interest in the mission's work and made no attempt to help it by suggesting changes in the constitutional status of Egypt.⁷ ⁷ Fuad remained neutral toward the mission, unable to act in the face of its universal unpopularity.

The mission itself arrived in Cairo in a heavily guarded train as if it were quarantined, stayed in a hotel protected by sentries, and received a flood of unfavorable telegrams of greeting (1131 unfavorable to 29 telegrams of welcome). In the face of strikes and of press vituperation, the mission began its work.

The boycott united the Egyptian people as never before. And Egyptians looked to Zaghlul as the leader, sending thousands of telegrams to him in Paris to thank him for his work. The solidarity changed the outlook of the members of the mission, so that by December 29, Milner announced a change in policy that, for all practical purposes, ignored the instructions of the British government. In a statement to the Egyptian people, in order to induce them to discuss the problems of Egypt, Milner omitted the word Protectorate; he declared that he wished to reconcile "Egyptian aspirations" with "Great Britain's special interests in Egypt" and with

⁷P.P., 1921, (cmd 1131), XLII, 3.

"the legitimate rights of foreign residents"; he would attempt to reach these aims on the basis of "a friendly accord."⁸

Although Milner was not yet ready to concede Egypt its independence, he had moved in the direction of bridging the gap between himself and Zaghlul. What were "Egyptian aspirations" but Zaghlul's political program stated in its broadest terms? And what was a "friendly accord" but the suggestion of a bilateral agreement of treaty -- a thing which Zaghlul desired to consummate? This statement of Lord Milner, general in its wording and conciliatory in its approach, eased the political situation considerably.

However, without Zaghlul's approval Egyptian politicians hesitated to talk with the Milner mission. Milner's course was still difficult. All that most Egyptian politicians would commit themselves on was to repeat the political program of Zaghlul -- "complete independence." The most influential politicians -- Adly, Said, Rushdi, and Sarwat -- universally referred Milner to Zaghlul as the man with whom to discuss the future of Egypt and to negotiate any treaty. This policy they publicly clung to, and Milner soon reached the conclusion that no settlement could be made without conversations with Zaghlul. The mission consequently worked toward getting together with Zaghlul. Indeed members of the Ward in Cairo, such as Dr. Hafiz Afifi Bey, the head of the

⁸The Times, January 1, 1920.

Cairo Wafd, also saw the necessity of Zaghlul's going to London to meet with the Milner mission.

Meanwhile, members of the mission tried to get information regarding Egypt and the desires of Egyptians. Spender, one of its members, describes many "after dark" meetings, and "whispered conversations" behind locked doors and in "inner rooms" where he and "ardent politicians" of the nationalists tried to explain each other's viewpoint.⁹

In early January Rushdi and Adly offered themselves as mediators to bring Milner and Zaghlul together. At first Zaghlul rejected these attempts. Egyptians, Zaghlul wrote in a letter of January 10, 1920, saw British policy toward Egypt as a "policy of hypocrisy which flooded the world, during the war, with mouthfilling principles of right, justice, liberty, and the rights of people to self-ideals."¹⁰ Zaghlul still looked upon the change of policy which the mission announced in late December with many qualms. He still feared that the mission's real aim was to perpetuate the "abominable protectorate" which to Zaghlul's mind had suppressed newspapers, suspended the hopes of constitutional institutions, and caused the killing of many innocent demonstrators in various Egyptian riots.

However, through the sincere and persistent efforts of

⁹J. A. Spender, Life, Journalism and Politics (2 vols., New York, n.d.), 2: 90-91.

¹⁰Saad Pasha Zaghlul, "The Case of the Egyptian Delegation," a letter to The Nation, 26 (January 10, 1920): 506.

mediators, Zaghlul began to change his attitude toward the Milner mission, so that by January 21 he announced his readiness to negotiate on condition that both parties be equal and that the discussions be pointed in the direction of arriving at an agreement which would assure both the independence of Egypt and the legitimate rights of Britain. In this light, Zaghlul wrote on January 26:

"The Egyptian Delegation of which I have the honour to be the president and which is without dispute representative of the Egyptian Nation, is prepared to negotiate with the Milner Commission here in Paris at any moment or in Egypt, if only the Milner Commission is able to declare that it has been authoratively asked by the British Government to negotiate with the Egyptian Delegation as the representative body of the Nation."¹¹

In the next few months, the Milner mission, the moderate politicians such as Adly and Rushdi, and the members of the Wafd worked to bring about this meeting of Zaghlul and Milner. By March the Milner mission had felt that it had accomplished all that it could do in Egypt and adjourned for Europe. In April Adly Pasha set out for Europe, supposedly for a rest cure, in order to smooth out the differences and difficulties blocking the meeting of Zaghlul and Milner.

By this time, Zaghlul held the controlling influence in the situation. Egyptian leaders could suggest to Zaghlul

¹¹London Times, January 26, 1920.

that he meet Milner, but none dared demand such a meeting. Indeed, Zaghlul was given a wide discretionary power in the matter. When the late Legislative Assembly met on March 9, 1920, in an unofficial meeting to declare the independence of Egypt, it neither condemned the Milner mission nor demanded that Zaghlul meet and negotiate with it. Instead, Zaghlul was praised for all his efforts and given a free hand.

Zaghlul was all powerful; none opposed him openly in Egypt. The Egyptian ministry under Wahba, which was replaced on May 21 by an almost identical ministry under Tewfik Nessim Pasha, accounted itself as a ministry of affairs which would neither suggest nor decide policy. It made no attempt to interfere in the problem of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. As a result, Zaghlul was given the discretion of accepting an invitation to come to London -- an invitation tendered by Sir Cecil Hurst of the Mission on May 3.

Time and the repeated assurances of the mediators apparently convinced Zaghlul to consent to send three of his colleagues from Paris to London on May 31. The efforts of Adly Pasha, Sir Cecil Hurst, and many others both in England and in Egypt had brought results. The difficulties blocking discussions were worked out: Zaghlul announced on June 4 that he would go to London to confer with the Milner mission.

As he departed, Zaghlul appeared optimistic. "Our

friends have had a good reception in London," he cabled the Cairo committee of the Wafd. "They have been given assurances which lead them to hope that the negotiations will result in a satisfactory arrangement."¹²

¹²London Times, June 7, 1920.

Chapter 10

Zaghlul's Negotiations With Lord Milner

On June 5, 1920, to the cheers of about two hundred Egyptians -- mostly students shouting "Long live Zaghlul Pasha" and "Long live Independence for Egypt" -- Zaghlul arrived in London with his seven colleagues and Adly Pasha. On June 9, after a friendly visit on June 7 with Milner, Zaghlul and Milner and their associates began their discussions.

The discussions began in a friendly fashion and remained cordial throughout; but the problems facing both sides were not easy to solve. During June, July, and August, both sides tried sincerely to reach some sort of understanding. Complicated questions were referred to committees composed of each party; informal conversations frequently took the place of formal conferences. The Egyptian delegates were hampered -- "and this is specially true of Zaghlul Pasha himself -- by the uncompromising line which they had taken in the recent past" in regard to Egyptian independence.¹

¹P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 22.

Three sets of proposals were drawn up: the first, the Egyptians rejected, the second, the British rejected. Finally by August 19, certain proposals, which came to be known as the Milner-Zaghlul agreement, were drawn up in order to find out what proposals the Egyptian people would support or reject. The Milner-Zaghlul agreement was not, in the correct sense of the word, an agreement; but merely a base for future discussions.

The proposals offered Egypt its independence as a constitutional monarchy, to be established when the difficult problem of ending the capitulations was settled. Moreover, the treaty to be worked out later between the two nations would not go into effect until the capitulations were ended. An Egyptian constituent assembly would ratify this treaty and draft a constitution.

Various compromises were worked out in an attempt to satisfy both Egyptian and British interests. British troops were to remain in Egypt to guard the canal, but this state of affairs was not to be considered as an occupation of the country. Egypt would appoint its diplomatic representatives and enjoy freedom in the conduct of its foreign relations subject to a certain amount of British supervision. The British government would maintain both its judicial and its financial advisers in Egypt to assist the Egyptian government. The British government was granted the discretionary power to interfere when foreign rights were injured by any

Egyptian laws. Finally, Egypt and Great Britain would be joined by an alliance.

The proposals were the result of an impasse reached by both sides. By means of them Zaghlul would be able to advocate certain measures -- without definitely committing himself to support them -- and to determine the opinions of Egyptians in regard to them. Zaghlul apparently feared being repudiated by public opinion in Egypt, for he had not secured all that he had asked or all that he had repeatedly told the Egyptian people he would ask.² He had not removed the symbols of British authority in Egypt. The presence of troops, of judicial and financial advisers, of the British high commissioner, of possible British interference in foreign affairs limited Egyptian independence. The removal of these outward symbols, and the actual authority which Britain might wield through them, was all-important to Zaghlul. He apparently was little concerned with the fact that, even with the removal of these, many economic controls, such as the dependence of Egypt's cotton industry on Britain, would still limit Egyptian independence.

Zaghlul therefore consented to advocate that the Egyptian people approve the Milner-Zaghlul agreement -- an approval which he would determine by sending four of his associates to Egypt. On August 19, Zaghlul left London for

²P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 23.

Paris, along with his four associates, who returned to Egypt on September 7.

Similarly, Milner agreed to recommend that the British government adopt the policy of the Milner-Zaghlul agreement. Actually, however, Milner had gone far beyond his original mandate from the British government. Moreover, though he had conceded much to the Egyptians, he had not satisfied all Egyptian aspirations. Like Zaghlul, he had to reckon with public opinion. "It was no use to agree to anything, with a view of pleasing the Egyptians," Milner later declared, "which would lead to the rejection of the whole scheme in Great Britain."³ In any case, he had made "the large advance" necessary at the time to reestablish Anglo-Egyptian relations on a basis of cooperation and trust. In this advance, he showed great wisdom and statesmanship.

While Zaghlul remained in Paris, his four associates -- Mohammed Pasha Mahmud and Ali Bey Maher among them -- canvassed Egyptian opinion by submitting the Milner-Zaghlul agreement to the members of the Legislative Assembly, to the various provincial councils, and to representative bodies of notables, politicians, lawyers, and other professional groups. Opinion was at first divided; many Egyptians, particularly members of the old National Party, were disturbed because the Sudan had been left out of the agree-

³P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 23.

ment.⁴

Soon, however, the agreement received the substantial approval of the majority of Egyptians. The Legislative Assembly voted in its favor by forty-four to three, ten members abstaining, mostly members of the Wafd, who felt that since they had written the agreement they should remain neutral. By October 1, the provincial councils, the Cairo and Alexandria bar associations, and various other Egyptian groups signified their approval subject to several reservations. The four emissaries consequently returned to Europe and to Zaghlul.

As a result of the opinions expressed by Egyptians Zaghlul made these reservations, or modifications, to the Milner-Zaghlul agreement: (1) that the protectorate be explicitly abolished; (2) that a treaty be negotiated and ratified regardless of the reform of the capitulations; (3) that the clause of the agreement empowering the Egyptian government to consult the judicial and the financial advisers be suppressed; (4) that the number of British troops, as well as their location (preferably east of the canal), be expressed in the treaty; (5) that Egypt's undertaking not to enter into treaties with other powers injurious to British interests be limited to political treaties only; (6) that Egypt be guaranteed the use of the Nile waters;

⁴The Times, August 26, 1920.

(7) that the status of the Sudan be settled on the most favorable terms possible.⁵

In general, these reservations aimed at limiting British influence in Egyptian administration even more than the Milner-Zaghlul agreement contemplated. With these reservations, the bulk of Egyptians hoped that a treaty would be immediately drafted, that Adly Pasha would become premier, and that he would call a constituent assembly to ratify the treaty and draft a constitution.⁶

On October 27, Zaghlul, with his four associates and Adly, returned to London to resume talks with the Milner mission. With his reservations, Zaghlul hoped to continue the discussions where the two parties had left off. This hope came to nothing. Both Curzon and Milner felt that Zaghlul's reservations must wait until formal treaty negotiations began. As Curzon stated on November 4, Milner's proposals were "not the proposals of the Government," they had "not even been submitted officially to the Egyptian Government," and as a result they were still open to "consideration or reconsideration" by both sides. Both governments were at liberty to act on the proposals as they saw fit.⁷ On the part of both Milner and Curzon, this state-

⁵Allenby lists these reservations in great detail in P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1487, XLII, 9-10.

⁶The Times, September 20, 1920.

⁷House of Lords, Debates, series 5, 42: 197.

ment appeared to be a weakening of their support and enthusiasm for the Milner-Zaghlul agreement.

The reason for this change is simple. By this time, the British Cabinet had received its first inkling of what Milner had proposed to Zaghlul. On October 11 Curzon circulated a memorandum among the cabinet to present his approval of Milner's recommendations. Curzon felt the need of acting deliberately and cautiously; neither he nor Milner felt optimistic about gaining cabinet approval. "My piece may be hissed off the stage," Milner told the House of Lords on November 4, "but I am sure the noble Lords will not wish to hiss it until they have heard it."⁸ Thus with the British leaders pessimistic and the cabinet apparently unfavorable, Zaghlul on November 5 announced that, after one further meeting with the Milner mission, he would return to Paris. On November 9, this meeting terminating the discussions took place.

At this meeting Milner and Zaghlul, in spite of the fact that they were anxious to reach a settlement and create a favorable atmosphere for a settlement, explained the ways in which they diverged. Zaghlul wanted his reservations accepted and the negotiations to continue, for, as Milner analyzed the situation, Zaghlul would be "greatly weakened in his efforts" if the British were "unable to give any promise to the Egyptians about the proposed reser-

⁸Lords Debates, series 5, 42: 213.

vations and specially by being unable to say that Great Britain had finally repudiated the protectorate." Milner on the other hand wanted the reservations to wait until formal negotiations began with an official delegation of Egyptians.⁹

Thus the negotiations ended, a set back for Zaghlul. His political opponents were jubilant; his supporters tried to assure him the support of the entire nation by passing resolutions praising his stand on the abolition of the protectorate.

Zaghlul went immediately to Paris; in January, 1921, five of his supporters left Paris for Egypt to carry on the work of making a settlement with the British. But affairs had reached a stalemate. The British government then made some attempts to end the stalemate. By February 18, the British cabinet had studied and published the report of the Milner mission. On March 3, Harmsworth, the British undersecretary for foreign affairs, announced the British policy toward Egypt. The protectorate, Harmsworth admitted, was not a satisfactory arrangement. The British government therefore suggested that the sultan nominate an official delegation with whom to negotiate so that in the place of the protectorate a new relationship could be set up that would secure "the special interest of Great Britain" in

⁹P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1131, XLII, 37.

Egypt and "meet the legitimate aspirations ... of the Egyptian people."¹⁰

With this official invitation, the politicians of Egypt set to work to form this official delegation. On March 10, Zaghlul called to Paris all the members of the Wafd in order that he might decide what the Wafd should do about the official delegation about to be formed. The opening phases of a political struggle among Egyptian politicians began to form.

¹⁰ House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 138: 2044-5.

Chapter 11

Zaghlul's Struggle With Adly Pasha

The political situation of Egypt early in March 1921 -- a situation which Zaghlul tried to direct from Paris -- was complicated by maneuvers of various Egyptian political groups, Sultan Fuad, moderates like Adly Pasha, and the Wafd. Zaghlul's summoning of the Wafd to Paris for instructions coincided with, and was undoubtedly caused by, Fuad's attempt to form a ministry which he could control, a ministry under the leadership of Mazlum Pasha, formerly the appointed president of the Legislative Assembly and a man of conservative inclinations.

Early in March, 1921, Mazlum attempted to form his cabinet. Since a government of this sort would not be likely to show much deference to Zaghlul or to follow Zaghlul's instructions in the coming negotiations, Zaghlul and the Wafd gave it no support; nor did the moderates under Adly, who knew that without Zaghlul's aid negotiations with Britain would be difficult. On March 15 Fuad had to turn to Adly, who quickly formed a cabinet of moderates in which Rushdi and Sarwat, the retiring prime minister, were the chief figures.

For the moment, the new cabinet met widespread popular approval. Its major policy was to negotiate with the British. Adly announced that he would not undertake any reforms until after Egypt had secured constitutional government. He and his colleagues received the cheers of a happy populace and congratulatory delegations of students, lawyers, and notables. There seemed to be no barriers between the people and the government; a feeling of hope and confidence prevailed. At last the way was open for the settlement of Anglo-Egyptian differences.¹

On March 20, fearing that the political situation was out of his control and desiring to be on the scene in order to control the course of events in Egypt, Zaghlul announced that he would return home. At the same time he gave provisional support to the Adly government, one which neither Zaghlul nor the members of the Wafd had entered. If the protectorate were abolished, if martial law and the censorship of the press were set aside, and if he were made the president of the official delegation to be composed of a majority of Wafd members, Zaghlul would support the government completely.² This last condition was important to Zaghlul. If Zaghlul were "to accept a position on the delegation without himself leading it and having a majority

¹The Times, March 18, 1921, March 21, 1921.

²The Times, March 23, 1921.

in support of his views," he felt that he would relinquish "his position of representative of the Egyptian people" and make a "surrender to the Palace of the democratic idea."³

The fact that Zaghlul had not been asked to be premier, or if he asked (as he indicates in 1923 that he might have been) led to great difficulty. His conditions were hard for Adly to accept since he had become premier with the expectation of leading the official delegation. Yet, without Zaghlul on the official delegation, "the negotiations were bound to fail."⁴

On April 4, 1921, Zaghlul landed in Alexandria. Passing down the streets of Egypt's second largest city, through a triumphal arch from which was released a flight of doves, Zaghlul met scenes of tremendous enthusiasm. Special trains had brought people from outlying districts to Alexandria; the city was crowded with his admirers. By the time Zaghlul reached Claridge's Hotel in Alexandria, where he was to be honored in a vast banquet of welcome, he was so exhausted that a friend had to thank the crowd for him.⁵

On the following day Zaghlul went to Cairo. Four hundred thousand people thronged the streets from the Cairo railway station to Zaghlul's home, "The House of the Nation."

³Youssef, Independent Egypt, 87.

⁴Youssef, Independent Egypt, 87.

⁵The Times, April 5, 1921.

"Cabinet Ministers, officials of every grade, delegations of every sort, princes, ladies, the masses and the classes -- everyone except the Sultan" -- vied to welcome Zaghlul back. "Processions, cheering hosts, banners, thousands of students," and panegyrics had marked his route from Alexandria to Cairo and his arrival in Cairo.⁶ Adly, Rushdi, and Mazlum Pashas composed the official welcoming group in Cairo; Zaghlul drove to his home at the head of a procession hearing the cheers of the multitude.

Upon his arrival Zaghlul is reputed to have stated this opinion regarding the Egyptian national movement and the current political situation:

I have suffered, I have worked. I will not see credit for what I have done taken away by Adly. If I work with him, it will only be when he consents to take his orders entirely from me, and to acknowledge my undisputed supremacy.⁷

This attitude is understandable; never in its history had Egypt given such a tumultuous welcome to a single man. From it Zaghlul might assume that his leadership and his policy alone had the overwhelming support of the Egyptian people. But Zaghlul's attitude brought unfortunate results. The struggle over the presidency of the official delegation became a struggle for personal political power between Adly

⁶"The Situation in Egypt," in The Outlook, 128 (June 1, 1921): 208, written by "Scriptor," a special correspondent in Cairo.

⁷Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 40.

and Zaghlul.

Zaghlul was not in a jealous rage against Adly, as Lord Lloyd, later British high commissioner in Egypt, has stated,⁸ but he felt an apprehension of being tricked out of power and a conviction that he alone could lead Egypt to independence. Zaghlul consequently clung to his demand to direct the treaty negotiations with Great Britain.

Not until April 24 did Zaghlul definitely break with Adly; until that time the two tried to work out some sort of compromise -- but none was possible. Zaghlul believed that the only the Wafd, a popularly selected body according to his viewpoint, was authorized to negotiate. Adly, although able to accept the rest of Zaghlul's conditions, felt that as premier he should head the official delegation. For Adly to carry on the negotiations would be, Zaghlul insisted, like "George the Fifth negotiating with George the Fifth."⁹

At this juncture, Zaghlul appealed for the support of the Egyptian people. The students, Zaghlul's army, rallied. Zaghlul's lieutenants went to the provinces to get people to telegraph support for Zaghlul, to demand: "No chief except Saad." However, all did not go well for Zaghlul. On April 25 Adly firmly announced that the choice of the official delegation must rest with himself. Moderates

⁸Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 40.

⁹The Times, April 27, 1921.

rallied to his support. The cabinet, which seemed about to fall, received additional support of Egyptian politicians when on April 26 Abdel Aziz Bey Fahmy, a member of Zaghlul's Wafd, and a popular member of the Cairo bar association, resigned from the Wafd, praised the Adly ministry, and demanded that this cabinet take charge of negotiations. On April 29, five other members of Zaghlul's Wafd resigned and threw their support to Adly Pasha. Thus on the issue of leading the official delegation, Zaghlul -- now the sole remaining original member of the Wafd -- met a decided set back. He had to reconstitute his Wafd and take the issue to the people.

The people -- particularly the city dwellers -- answered with their support. Demonstrations of protest against the cabinet of Adly and Rushdi took place on April 29 at Tanta. But these demonstrations led to bloodshed -- the killing of four people and the injuring of sixty more -- when police had to fire into the air at "rowdy elements" of the crowd which stormed police stations. Egyptian troops had to intervene to restore order.

Zaghlul might have taken warning at the violence touched off by his campaign against the Adly cabinet. He might also have taken warning at the unfavorable impression which his attacks were making on moderate and respectable Egyptian politicians. On May 6, after Zaghlul had vigorously attacked the cabinet at an unofficial meeting of the Legislative

Assembly, the majority of the members present left the room, refusing "to witness such a degrading spectacle," as one member declared.¹⁰ But Zaghlul continued heedlessly; moreover the rank and file of lesser Egyptian politicians and of government employees strongly supported him.

On May 15, Adly announced the composition of the official delegation, from which Zaghlul and the Wafd were excluded. This act caused Zaghlul to write a letter to the sultan on May 18, declaring that the government meant to "stifle public opinion" and "coerce the people" into accepting a situation of which they did not approve. The act would have serious consequences, Zaghlul warned.¹¹

On that very day, serious consequences occurred. A mob gathered outside the sultan's palace as if ready to storm it. Inside the palace, Fuad and Adly paced the floor, hearing the anti-government cries of the mob. Adly bitterly remarked: "I honestly strive to do my best.... I work harder than any fella, and -- this is the result."¹²

The result was sporadic rioting in Cairo lasting until May 20, in which five people were killed and 133 wounded.

Meanwhile in Alexandria, more danger signs showed themselves. There, extreme agitators organized nightly demon-

¹⁰The Times, May 10, 1921.

¹¹The Times, May 21, 1921.

¹²Ikbāl Ali Shad, Fuad, 161.

strations against the government. Pamphlets were distributed; students informed the illiterate people of the contents of the pamphlets. By May 16 the agitators were calling for more action than the kind of protest which Zaghlul was expressing. "Egypt will never obtain independence," one agitator declared, "by Zaghlul, or any other Pasha."¹³

Moreover, these agitators began to use Zaghlul's name as a means of stirring the people to violence. Typical is the speech of Sayed Rushdy outside a mosque on Friday, May 20. "What is our duty now towards the present situation?" cried this agitator. "We must stick to our demands, i.e., full independence by every means, whether peaceful or otherwise.... It is our duty to be ready to shed our blood; to lose our souls until we get what we want, with all confidence in Saad Pasha, obeying his orders without hesitation or questioning."¹⁴

Thus the extremists exploited the situation; for the demand of this agitator was the policy neither of Zaghlul nor of his lieutenants in Alexandria, Yehia Pasha and Gaafar Bey Fakhry, who shortly before, inside the same mosque, called upon the people to demonstrate peacefully, to avoid insulting the present government of Adly and Rushdi, and to

¹³P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1527, XLII, 20. Stephen White, British inspector of public security in Alexandria, gave this information to a British court of inquiry.

¹⁴P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1527, XLII, 243.

injure no one.¹⁵

The extreme agitators stirred up the rough elements of Alexandria. With carts of stones, mobs moved around the city of Alexandria, attacked and set fire to police stations, and molested foreigners. Frequently these foreigners -- as the secretary of the Greek consulate later testified from personal experience -- escaped harm only by surrendering their money and shouting, "Vive Zaghlul!"¹⁶

Late in the evening of May 20, order in Alexandria was restored when British troops took over the city and patrolled it for an hour. For several days the trouble seemed to be over; but the agitation seethed underneath. When funerals of Egyptians killed in the rioting took place on the afternoon of May 22, despite the fact that funeral orators warned Egyptians not to attack foreigners, many uneducated Egyptians came away saying to each other: "Let us beat the foreigners and damage them."¹⁷ On the evening of May 22, as a result of rumors that Greeks were firing rifles at innocent Egyptians, more disorders occurred. These anti-foreign riots reached their climax on the morning of May 23 when many foreigners fled to the government buildings for British protection. British troops came into the city and patrolled it.

¹⁵P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1527, XLII, 153-4.

¹⁶Testimony before a court of inquiry. P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1527, XLII, 101.

¹⁷P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1527, XLII, 23-4.

The riots brought a serious change to Zaghlul's political policy likewise. Although neither he nor any of his legitimate supporters had in any way fomented the riots, they had to take the blame for creating a situation of protest in which violence had occurred. Zaghlul's first response to the Alexandria riots was to deplore the attacks on foreigners and to urge that no foreigner be molested even if he be the aggressor. The events in Alexandria, Zaghlul said, "have nothing to do with politics, and should not be made capital of at our expense."¹⁸

But the blame rested on Zaghlul just the same. To show his good intentions toward foreigners and his peaceful inclinations, Zaghlul, on May 26, ordered his supporters to cease all hostile political demonstrations against the government of Adly Pasha. So ended another phase of Zaghlul's political activity -- one in which Zaghlul met serious political setbacks.

¹⁸The Times, May 26, 1921.

Chapter 12.

The Battle of the Petitions

In continuation of his struggle against the Adly ministry, Zaghlul re-used old methods and improvised new methods of showing that the Egyptian people supported him instead of Adly. The loss of the support of many prominent Egyptian politicians forced Zaghlul to seek once again some kind of mandate from the people.

Under his direction, Zaghlul had his supporters circulate petitions of no-confidence in the Adly ministry in order to show clearly that Adly did not possess the confidence of the nation. By June 9, Zaghlul had supposedly gained a million signatures on his petitions. With these petitions Zaghlul demanded the election of a national assembly which in turn would select a new official delegation to take part in negotiations.¹

Zaghlul's activity grew into sort of a "Battle of the Petitions", for Adly Pasha's supporters copied this procedure. All through Egypt petitions circulated, which by the

¹M.P. Swan, expresses the policy of the Zaghlulists in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 142: 2058.

middle of July, had gathered according to reports some seventeen million signatures--more than the population of Egypt.² Indeed, since the bulk of Egypt's population was illiterate, a million signatures would have been too many. Wise Egyptians undoubtedly signed whatever petition was presented to them. Moreover, both parties used considerable pressure to obtain signatures; both accused each other of using coercion to gain support. In the end, however, Zaghlul, with his superior organization and financial resources, gained the largest number of signatures--a thing, which appeared to the supporters of Zaghlul, to show that they had the confidence of the Egyptian people. By July 20, Zaghlul claimed that 2,250,000 Egyptians had signed his petitions, among whom were 3,156 of the 3460 members of public bodies such as provincial councils.³ In addition to using petitions, Zaghlul's supporters prepared telegrams in Cairo on printed forms, distributed these to provincial towns and had them duly telegraphed back to Zaghlul in Cairo as a further expression of loyal support.⁴

Toward the end of June, in anticipation of Adly's scheduled trip to London, Zaghlul sent his confidential secre-

²Foreign Undersecretary Harmsworth's brittle remark in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 144: 2541.

³M.P. Swan, in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 144: 2228.

⁴Asserted by Adly and reported in The Times, June 17, 1921.

tary, Hamed Mahmud, to London to observe the progress of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. Hamed was also instructed to spread publicity and to convince the British people that Adly had no authority to represent the Egyptian people--Zaghlul alone having that authority--so that the "Egyptian people will not feel any obligation to accept the results of the negotiations".⁵

As a result of Zaghlul's preparations, when Adly arrived in London on July 11, he was met with a small but hostile demonstration of students, carrying red banners printed with "No conference with Adly", and shouting, "Down with Adly". Thus the position of Adly Pasha in London from the beginning was trying; he had a disunited Egypt behind him --not a very auspicious situation under which to begin negotiations which would have to gain the approval of his political enemies.

At the same time, as part of his program of publicity to the British people, Zaghlul vigorously protested the suppression of his newspaper Al Nizam for six months early in August for printing an attack on Sultan Fuad on July 3. He described it as a reign of political suppression in Egypt when his nephew and supporter Fathallah Barakat was re-

⁵Letter, Hamed Mahmud to The Times, dated June 23, 1921, and published, June 24, 1921.

fused a license to publish another opposition newspaper.

In addition to attempting to influence British opinion in London, Zaghlul tried to influence British opinion further by inviting on August 23 a number of Labour members of parliament to visit Egypt. As a result, the chief and most effective critics of British foreign policy--Labour members Swan, Lunn, and Major Barnes--arived in Egypt in September. Zaghlul arranged to have these members of parliament greeted enthusiastically when they reached Alexandria, banqueted them, and accompanied them--to the extent that the Egyptian government would permit him--as they toured lower Egypt.

These Labour members found Zaghlul "a towering personality" and "absolutely fearless", with a keen sense of humor and a quick wit. They found that Egypt solidly supported Zaghlul. "We covered nearly every town and every village in lower Egypt," said one Labourite, "and had we the time we might have done the same in upper Egypt. Wherever we went we saw wonderful crowds of people, passionate, enthusiastic, declaring for the independence of their country and their love and fervour and devotion to their leader, Zaghlul Pasha."⁶

By the time that these Labourites had finished touring Egypt, they were ready to sanction Zaghlul's political ideas:

⁶Described by Lunn, M.P., in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 151: 2023-6.

they called for the complete independence of Egypt and the election of a constitutional assembly to select a new delegation for the negotiations with Britain.⁷

The visit of the British Labourites showed Zaghlul another way of stimulating public support for himself. Just as the Labourites had toured lower Egypt--a section of Egypt long favorable to Zaghlul--upon their departure Zaghlul began a grand tour of upper Egypt. With his entourage, Zaghlul embarked on a Nile River barge and started south. At first he met the enthusiastic cheering of the fellaheen along the river banks and enthusiastic receptions at the towns where he halted. However at Asyut on October 15, Zaghlul met a different reception. At this city, long a staunch center of support for Adly, two hundred of Adly's supporters greeted Zaghlul with a hostile demonstration, tore down the triumphal arch through which Zaghlul would walk upon disembarkation, and smashed the car in which Zaghlul would ride through the city. The supporters of the two men clashed, people were injured, and the governor of Asyut consequently forbade Zaghlul to land.⁸

At some towns along the Nile, the Asyut reception was repeated, though the clashes were minor; at others, Zaghlul

⁷Statement by the Labour M. P.'s appearing in The Times, October 29, 1921.

⁸The Times, October 17, 1921.

met enthusiastic crowds, though he was forbidden to land several more times. On October 30, with the trip only a partial success, Zaghlul returned to Cairo.

All this vigorous political activity on Zaghlul's part forced Adly Pasha to act cautiously in the negotiations with Britain. By July 28 Adly had had four meetings with Lord Curzon over the terms of the treaty; shortly afterwards the negotiations were temporarily suspended until the fall. On October 21 they were resumed.

The program which Adly presented to Curzon was in reality Zaghlul's program; indeed, the two men had disagreed only about the personnel of the official delegation. By August 15 Zaghlul himself had admitted that Adly's program complied with his demands; on September 13, Zaghlul even declared that he would join the negotiations if he were asked.⁹ No invitation, however, came.

Before the negotiations resumed on October 21, the situation became unfavorable to a satisfactory settlement. On September 13, Zaghlul had declared, in event that Britain failed to give Egypt its independence:

"It will mean that we will fight. Egypt will fight England in the same way as Ireland."¹⁰

⁹The Times, September 15, 1921.

¹⁰Interview of the Cairo Correspondent of The Times, September 15, 1921.

Curzon himself, on the day negotiations resumed, also predicted such a possibility. However, when both Curzon and Adly turned to negotiations they reached a deadlock. Adly wished British troops to evacuate Egypt, disliked the title and the position of the proposed British high commissioner of Egypt, felt that Egypt's foreign relations under the proposed treaty would be controlled by the British, demanded that Egypt have the sovereignty of the Sudan, and wanted to limit the powers of the British advisers in the Egyptian ministries of justice and finance. The British government, Curzon realized, would not concede what the Egyptians asked; Adly could not concede anything which Zaghlul would not support. The freedom of both men to negotiate therefore was seriously restricted. On November 19, the negotiations ended.¹¹

To condemn Zaghlul for the breakdown of the Adly-Curzon negotiations would be to assess the failure only partially. Up to November 19, 1921, neither British nor Egyptian public opinion had permitted their negotiators to make the concessions needed for a settlement.

Zaghlul, it is true, had done all in his power to substitute himself for Adly in the negotiations; both had been stubborn about their respective positions in Egyptian

¹¹The details of the various proposals and counter-proposals appear in *P.P.*, Egypt No. 4, 1921, Cmd. 1555, I, session 2, 1-14.

politics. Had Zaghlul given Adly wholehearted support-- the thing for which Zaghlul can be criticized--negotiations might still have broken down, so long as either or both of them adhered to the policies which they favored. Moreover, Sultan Fuad, fearful of the threat to his throne as shown in the support given to Zaghlul, had not risen to enough statesmanship in March, 1921, to entrust to Zaghlul, the recognized leader of the independence movement, the authority to negotiate. Concessions on the part of the Egyptians might have resulted in a treaty. But, as Zaghlul declared as early as November, 1919: "It is not a matter of making concessions, but of an absolute right."¹²

And Egyptians from all indications, despite the Adly-Zaghlul political struggle, seemed to consider independence as a matter of right.

¹²Letter, Zaghlul to The Times, dated 10 November, 1919, and published, November 13, 1919.

Chapter 13.

Saad Zaghlul's second Exile

The Adly negotiations had failed. To explain the position of the British government, David Lloyd George, through the instrumentality of Allenby, presented a British note to the sultan on December 3. The note came when Egyptians were confused about what they were to do; while Adly had not yet returned home to announce his plans for the future. The British would retain for themselves, Lloyd George said, the exclusive right of tendering advice on administration, on the development of judicial procedures, and on Egypt's foreign relations "until such time as Egypt's record gives confidence in her own guarantees". Moreover, Britain would maintain its troops "first and foremost" in Egypt as a guarantee of its own position.¹

Toward the Egyptian nationalists Lloyd George was even more tactless. The note came as a sharp reprimand to Zaghlul, the Wafd, and conservative nationalists such as Sarwat and Adly. Egyptian leaders, Lloyd George said, who

¹P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1555, I (session 2), 13-4.

"indulge" in their national aspirations for independence are "not a stimulus but a menace to Egyptian development". Even Allenby, not consulted about the wording of the note, realized that rather than suppress Egyptian nationalists the British government should make some settlement recognizing "the principle of Egyptian independence".²

On December 4, Adly returned to Egypt, visited the sultan, and virtually resigned. Fuad at first thought that he could induce Sarwat Pasha to form a ministry; but Sarwat hesitated when the Wafd and Zaghlul made it known that they would discourage anyone from forming a cabinet. Zaghlul said regarding the situation, "Let them govern us alone with their policy of might is right."³

By December 11, Adly's resignation was definite. Sarwat then set out the conditions under which he would form a cabinet--the chief of which were the abolition of the British protectorate, the reestablishment of an Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs, and the preparation of a democratic constitution for Egypt. On Allenby was placed the responsibility of convincing the British government in London to accept these conditions. This task was not easy, since Cuzon did not wish to change the policy of the Bri-

²P. P., 1921, Cmd. 1555, I (session 2), 13-4

³A statement made by Zaghlul in mid December and quoted in The Times, December 29, 1921.

tish government until parliament had convened. In the period of delay during December while the solution to the problem of Egypt was being attempted, Zaghlul and his associates intensified their agitation. Toward the middle of December, nightly demonstrations in which the police were stoned took place in Cairo. On December 19 Zaghlul called a great mass meeting of Egyptians in Cairo to discuss "the national situation and to decide the best methods" of reaching national aspirations.⁴

The possibility of such a meeting resulting in disorders and making it impossible to form any kind of government caused Allenby to forbid the meeting. Zaghlul protested:

This prohibition is the beginning of the new policy which the English propose to adopt in order to subdue us to their will, a policy of suppressing liberty, a policy of absolute tyranny... We are ready to meet it with stout hearts and firm determinations.⁵

The situation apparently appeared dangerous to Allenby; for he apparently was well aware of the danger of making Egypt another Ireland. Even before he had learned of Zaghlul's protest against the prohibition of the mass meeting, Allenby wrote to Curzon to find out if means could be found to arrest and deport Zaghlul should it prove necessa-

⁴B. N. Langdon-Davies, "The Deportation of Zaghlul Pasha", in The Nation and the Athenaeum, 30 (March 4, 1922), 827.

⁵Langdon-Davies, "The Deportation of Zaghlul Pasha", 827.

ry.⁶

On December 20, with the return to Cairo of Zaghlul's personal agent in London, Professor William Makram Ebeid, anti-British cries and anti-British demonstrations filled the streets, voiced by the large crowd that greeted Makram. On the evening of December 20, one British soldier was killed and another wounded in Cairo. These incidents caused Allenby on December 22 to order Zaghlul to cease all political activity--to cease holding public meetings, writing for the press, and making public speeches. Along with Zaghlul, eight other Wafd members were likewise ordered to return to their homes under police supervision.

On December 22 Zaghlul announced his refusal to comply with this order by this protest, "This is tyrannical, against which I protest with all my power... As I am delegated by the people of Egypt to strive for her independence, no one else has any authority to free me from this sacred duty."⁷

On the same evening, a demonstration of excited Egyptians took place at Zaghlul's Cairo home, at which several people were killed and more injured by the police. Zaghlul defiantly announced a policy of non-cooperation with

⁶Telegraph, Allenby to Curzon, December 20, 1921, in P. P. , 1922, Cmd. 1592, XXIII, 12.

⁷Letter, Zaghlul to Allenby, quoted in a dispatch of Allenby to Curzon, in P. P., 1922, Cmd. 1592, XXIII, 14.

the British. With this defiance, Allenby felt that he had no alternative but to arrest Zaghlul and deport him; he hastily telegraphed for Curzon's permission. But even before the permission came, Allenby on the morning of December 23, had Zaghlul arrested and taken to a British military post at Suez, from which he would be sent in exile to Ceylon. The same day, eight of Zaghlul's lieutenants of the Wafd--including Fathallah Pasha Barakat, Mustapha el Nahas Bey, and William Makram Ebeid--were arrested and sent to Suez.

As in March, 1919, at the arrest of Zaghlul, riots began to start in the large cities of Egypt. Allenby quickly moved troops into the troubled areas. For several days Egypt seethed with unrest, until, by December 27, all was quiet on the surface. In all, thirty people were killed and ninety-one wounded in various clashes throughout Egypt.

What had Allenby accomplished by the arrest of Zaghlul and the members of the Wafd? Allenby certainly had not driven the Wafd out of existence, for by December 29, the Wafd was reconstituted. Indeed, five of the new members of the Wafd--Mohammed Ali Bey among them--were men who had resigned from the Wafd on April 29, 1921, because they had disagreed with Zaghlul in his conflict with Adly Pasha. The Wafd now was composed largely of the same men who had formed it in November, 1918--except for Zaghlul--a moderate

group. Thus, what Allenby had done for the time being was to unite nationalist factions.

Allenby, however, had ended that agitation of Zaghlul's which had blocked the formation of a government. From then on Allenby concentrated his attention on convincing the British government that the protectorate must be abolished; and with all the vigor he possessed--as well as with his appreciation of the desires of moderate Egyptians--he made it clear to the British government that either the protectorate should be abolished or that he, Allenby, would resign.⁸ Under this pressure--and with the realization of Egypt's disorganized conditions--the British government on February 22 announced the abolition of this protectorate. Until future negotiations, the British government reserved the right to handle four major problems in Egypt: 1) imperial communications; 2) the defense of Egypt; 3) the protection of foreigners and minorities; 4) the Sudan. Serwat immediately formed a ministry.

The necessity of deporting Zaghlul is a controversial question. Whether Allenby could have worked out some solution by talking to Zaghlul remains an unanswered question, since prior to the deportation Allenby had never met or

⁸Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 72.

talked with Zaghlul.⁹ Zaghlul took his second deportation in his stride. Although over seventy at this time and suffering from bronchitis and diabetes, Zaghlul showed no bitterness toward the British. At Suez, he adjusted himself to the situation, reportedly played golf with the commandant of the post, and was entertained during Christmas at the officers' mess.¹⁰ Though he had frequently inveighed against the British government, he had never seemed to be against the British as individuals or as a people.

Zaghlul remained in exile until April, 1923. From Suez, Zaghlul and his associates were taken to Aden, until arrangements were made to take them to the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean. The British government instructed the governor of the Seychelles that Zaghlul and his associates were men "of good standing" and should be treated properly, receive adequate medical attention should they need it, and be housed in decent quarters.¹¹

However, the conditions on the Seychelles were not conducive to Zaghlul's health. Although qualified doctors lived on the islands, no qualified dentist was available

⁹J.M. Howell, Egypt's Past, Present, and Future, (Dayton, Ohio, 1929), 205.

¹⁰The Times, December 31, 1921.

¹¹Statement of Sir Cecil Harmsworth, undersecretary of foreign affairs, on March 8, 1922, in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 151: 1248.

except a pharmacist who had been practising for a number of years. The climate was hot and damp--not a particularly helpful climate to a man of seventy-four years.¹²

At the Seychelles, Zaghlul was completely cut off from the outside world. Mail had to come to Zaghlul through the British residency in Cairo; and even by May, 1922, Zaghlul had received only scant three letters, while none of his letters had reached his wife, even though he wrote her twice a week. A kind of censorship blocked information coming to and from Zaghlul. While on the islands Zaghlul all through the damp, hot days "insisted that Makram should teach him English six hours a day" while the other "slothful exiles slept". Typically enough, Zaghlul's zeal in his studies did not flag. For that matter, he was never lacking in industry.¹³ He had been forty or older when he had learned French.

From the first, Egyptians protested Zaghlul's deportation: first by riots, which were quickly put down; then by petitions and delegations to the British government and to the sultan. To the average Egyptian, Zaghlul was, as one servant maid expressed it, "almost higher than Allah!"¹⁴

¹²House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 156: 596-7.

¹³The Times, March 4, 1924.

¹⁴"Letters from Egypt", in Round Table, 12 (June, 1922), 560.

Although Allenby stated his view, apparently shared by Egyptians of moderate political tendencies, that Zaghlul's deportation was "a necessary preliminary to a final effort to create friendly relations between Egypt and Great Britain",¹⁵ the mass of Egyptians did not accept this view. Zaghlul's Cairo home became a center of agitation for his release, until the British authorities had to close down the house as a headquarters of the Wafd. Nine important princes of Egypt petitioned Fuad, king of Egypt after March, 1922, for Zaghlul's release. A trade union held a mass meeting attended by seven thousand people to plea for his release. Five eminent specialists and fifty doctors of Egypt separately sent to the British government their opinion that Zaghlul must be removed from the Seychelles for reasons of health. Dr. Murray, an opposition member of the British parliament, after impartially studying the reports of Zaghlul's health, came to the same conclusion.¹⁶

A wave of great sympathy spread both in Egypt and in England over Zaghlul's unpleasant lot on those hot, damp islands. Labour members of the British House of Commons particularly sounded this sympathy. On March 14 one member called British acts in Egypt--from the suppression of de-

¹⁵P. P., 1922, Cmd. 1592, XXIII, 19.

¹⁶House of Commons, Debates, July 11, 1922, series 5, 156: 1156.

monstrations to Zaghlul's deportation--a "barbarism".¹⁷ Another member declared on July 11, 1922, that Zaghlul's exile "may mean his death" and cause such a "volume of resentment" that British troops could not "possibly cope with the outbreak" that would ensue.¹⁸ The British government, said a third, should attend to "this lonely old man" --a man spoken of "very highly by Lord Cromer, whose autographed photograph is treasured by him."¹⁹

In Egypt, in sympathy for Zaghlul, the Copts foreswore part of their Easter festivals; for the same reason, the Moslem population denied themselves some of their Ramadan ceremonies. The agitation had grown so great that in March the Egyptian government forbade the Wafd to hold a public meeting under the leadership of Prince Youssef Kam-el and Morcos Hanna Bey, seized copies of their speeches, and closed down the press which had printed them. In May the British residency forbade any agitation for the release of Zaghlul to appear in the press; forbade deputations of admirers of Zaghlul to visit the palace. The Egyptian ministry soon indefinitely suspended newspapers carrying on this agitation, began ordering searches of homes for

¹⁷M. P. Lunn, House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 151: 2027.

¹⁸M. P. Mills, House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 156: 1153-6.

¹⁹M. P. Lawson, House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 156: 1156.

arms, and confiscated photographs of Zaghlul in the streets and in the shops. The British, under authority of martial law, on July 26 arrested Morcos Hanna, Bassal Pasha, and other Wafd leaders for publishing a manifesto asking for a continuation of the protest; convicted these men in a military court; and sentenced them on August 14 to seven years imprisonment. At no time in the past had repression been so forceful as at this time.

The repression of newspapers even caused a cabinet crisis on August 13 when Sarwat Pasha refused, despite King Fuad's demand, to suppress Al Ahram--a nationalist newspaper--which had described the events leading up to the arrest of the Wafd members--an account which Fuad took to be a personal attack.

By August Allenby himself requested the British government to remove Zaghlul from the Seychelles; and this request coupled with all the other pressure brought to bear in England and in Egypt finally caused the British government to move Zaghlul to Gibraltar.

With his cook and his valet, Zaghlul arrived at Gibraltar on September 3. In Gibraltar, through the kindness of the British governor, conditions were much better, although Zaghlul was alone there, unable to speak the local Arabic dialect, Spanish, or English well enough. Conditions, however, were pleasant enough for him to remark that he

would "always remember the goodness" with which he was received. To the governor of Gibraltar he later telegraphed: "I shall remain for all time your personal friend."²⁰ In October, moreover, Madame Zaghlul was permitted to join him.

Once in Gibraltar, Zaghlul was allowed to sue for a writ of habeas corpus in the courts of Gibraltar. This suit, denied in September, was appealed to the British privy council on January 23, 1923, with Sir Charles Russell as Zaghlul's London solicitor, and Sir John Simon designated as the man to carry up the appeal. However, the case, entangled with the matter of policy of what to do with Zaghlul--a non-judicial problem--was beyond the scope of the privy council. It was denied on March 9, because the privy council found that the Habeas Corpus Act did not apply to Gibraltar, a colony conquered from the Spanish.

Until his arrival at Gibraltar, Zaghlul had been completely isolated from Egyptian politics; at Gibraltar, Zaghlul once again began to be heard. At this juncture, he showed a conciliatory attitude toward both the British and the king of Egypt, as if he wished to show his eagerness to cooperate once he was released. In a cabinet crisis on November 1922, caused to a large extent because

²⁰The Times, April 10, 1923, 18g.

Fuad wished to get rid of Sarwat Pasha, Zaghlul once again exerted influence. On November 22 he expressed his "warm allegiance" to the royal house and enabled the palace and the Wafd on November 30 to agree on Tewfik Nessim as prime minister.²¹

Zaghlul began to court British favor in January when he stated his deep regret at the recent terrorist killings of British subjects in Egypt--acts which he apparently sincerely abhorred. When another cabinet crisis arose in March 1923, Zaghlul expressed his view that no cabinet could be formed without the Wafd--which, as he asserted, represented the real public opinion of Egypt. And soon, Nessim had to resign, to be succeeded by a man more favorable to the constitutional idea of government. The Wafd, by withdrawing its support from Nessim, had made it difficult for him to continue.

On March 31, 1923, the British foreign office at last announced the release of Zaghlul from Gibraltar; and thus the long detention came to an end--almost inevitably so, since Zaghlul no longer appeared to be the dangerous man that he had seemed sixteen months or so before. On April 4, Zaghlul departed from Gibraltar, travelled by ship to Toulon and overland to Marseilles where he met a cordial

²¹The Times, November 23, 1922, 9c.

welcome of Egyptians and French, and made plans to seek a continental spa for further medical treatment.

Zaghlul welcomed his release with expressions of deep gratification, and turned to a study of the political situation of Egypt, from which he had been isolated so long, in anticipation of re-entering the political scene.

PART III

Zaghlul Pasha and Constitutional Government
in Egypt

"We rely upon the traditions of Great Britain. The British have not ceased to give to the world examples of their devotion to the principles of individual liberty."

-- Zaghlul Pasha,

29 November 1918

Chapter 14

The Genesis of a Constitutional Regime

The political situation of Egypt, to which Zaghlul was returning after his exile, had undergone changes in his absence: the years of 1922 and 1923 witnessed the preliminaries of working out a constitution.

Zaghlul had long been the leader of the constitutional movement. With his long experience in the management of a legislature, he had become extremely well qualified in constitutional practices and the great popularizer of the idea of parliamentary government. Even though as the years had passed, he had acquired wealth and had become a large landowner, his fellah origins had given him a sense of sympathy for the common people of Egypt, who were destined in his eyes, once he had gained them their independence, to enjoy the benefits of a democratic government. In getting parliamentary government, he had not been successful; nor was it his fate to write the constitution.

On Sarwat Pasha, the prime minister following the abolition of the British protectorate, fell the burden of working

out the constitution. After making a preliminary study of proposed provisions, Sarwat on April 4, 1922, established a constitutional commission, composed of thirty-five representative Egyptians -- the former Grand Mufti of Egypt, several other high Moslem officials, the Coptic archbishop, former members of the Legislative Assembly, and representatives of Beduins and Jews. Hussein Rushdi, Egypt's wartime prime minister, headed this commission. The one element lacking in the commission was a representation of leading Zaghlulists, who refused to take part, although invited, because they wanted a constitutional convention to write the constitution.¹

All through the summer the commission worked on the draft of a constitution presented to the cabinet on October 21. With the draft thus completed, the struggle between the king and the constitutionalists began. The characteristic of the proposed constitution was the dominant position of parliament compared to the power of the sovereign.

The first task in Fuad's struggle was to discharge Sarwat Pasha, -- a thing made easy because of Sarwat's stand in regard to designating Fuad as king of Egypt and the Sudan. At the time, the British government had made known its position that mention of the Sudan should be left out of the constitution and that Fuad should be king only of Egypt:

¹The Times, April 6, 1922.

Sarwat appreciated the British position and to some extent agreed with it.² But both Fuad, the Wafd, and the recently formed Constitutional Liberal Party under Adly Pasha advocated Egyptian claims to the Sudan and favored calling Fuad the king of the Sudan. Moreover the Wafd felt that members of Sarwat's cabinet were willing to see Zaghlul remain in exile, though Sarwat himself might not have been. As a result, the Wafd united momentarily with Fuad, drove Sarwat out of office through various intrigues while Adly stood passively by, and on November 29 selected as prime minister Tewfik Nessim, an industrious and pliable man who was the head of Fuad's personal cabinet.³

The dismissal of Sarwat enabled Fuad to increase the powers of the monarchy in the constitution at the expense of democratic principles -- an attempt which had the approval neither of the British nor of the constitutionalists. As early as December 15, the Wafd grew uncomfortable over its alliance with the palace and began to withdraw its support.⁴ Finally, on the recurring issue whether Fuad should be designated king of the Sudan, Allenby interfered. Early in February he handed Fuad an ultimatum to the effect that

²Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 72.

³Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 192: Ikbāl Ali Khan, Fuad, 183-4; The Times, November 30, 1922; Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 92-3.

⁴Statement by McNeill, Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, on February 20, 1923, House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 160: 1540.

this provision of the constitution could not remain and that the constitution must become more democratic in character.⁵

Momentarily Fuad tried to resist the British ultimatum; but after several hours of anguish, he backed down, dismissed Nessim on February 9, offered the premiership to Adly, and after fruitless negotiations which lasted several weeks finally on March 15 designated a political unknown Yehia Pasha as prime minister. This new government of "mediocrities," in which only Yehia and one other member had been in Sarwat's previous ministry, found itself continuing the struggle with the sovereign. But public opinion both in Egypt and in Britain was against Fuad.⁶ He had tried to stimulate attacks on the ministry in April 1923 and quarreled with it over the prerogatives of the crown. He wished to bestow decorations without the interference of the ministry, to control the Wafks (Moslem charitable foundations), to govern Al Azhar without supervision of the ministry, and to appoint and dismiss diplomatic representatives without ministerial approval.⁷ With the backing of the bulk of Egypt's politicians Yehia forced Fuad to compromise. Fuad had to surrender his prerogatives (as he looked upon them) over diplomatic representation and the granting of decora-

⁵Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 73.

⁶The Times, April 4, 1923; April 14, 1923.

⁷The Times, April 19, 1923.

tions. The control of the Wafks and Al Azhar remained unchanged. On April 19, Fuad and the ministry signed and promulgated the constitution.⁸

The constitution which Yehia Ibrahim had secured for Egypt, except for minor changes, was identical with Sarwat's draft constitution. The anti-democratic tendencies thrust in it during Nessim's premiership had been eliminated, and the electoral law of the Nessim ministry favoring the aristocratic elements had been thrown out. The new constitution made Egypt a constitutional monarchy, with a two chamber parliament -- the lower house elected and the senate two-fifths appointed by the king. The Egyptian ministry, appointed by the king, was responsible to the lower chamber only, which could cause it to resign upon a vote of no-confidence. Laws had to be passed by both houses and to receive the signature of the king; but a bill failing to receive the approval of the king in one session could become a law in the next session of parliament if passed by both houses.⁹

The constitution guaranteed a long list of fundamental rights: "freedom of conscience," liberty of the press and of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom from illegal

⁸The Times, April 20, 1923.

⁹Translation of the Constitution of Egypt by the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace in "Text of the Constitution of Egypt," in Current History, 25 (January, 1927): 533-5.

arrest, and freedom from censorship of the press. A provision of the constitution particularly applicable to Zaghlul was this one: "Egyptians cannot be banished from Egyptian territory...nor be obliged to remain in a stated place except in such cases as are provided for by the law."¹⁰

The promulgation of the constitution, to take effect at the first meeting of the new parliament, was hailed by the constitutionalists of Egypt. To Sarwat, the constitution was a vindication of his efforts; to the Wafd and the Zaghlulists, the constitution was a victory of democracy in Egypt. All parties looked forward to the elections.

In the meantime, the Yehia ministry had two problems to solve: the passing of an indemnity act coupled with the abolition of martial law; and the supervision of the elections. On July 5, an indemnity act, which would legalize the wartime acts of the British government and the Egyptian ministry, was promulgated. With the abolition of martial law on the same date, Zaghlul was given permission to return to Egypt -- a thing which he announced he would do in September, 1923.

Zaghlul was now ready to re-enter politics. Upon his release, the previous April, he had sought specialized medical treatment; and by September, after an illness at Lyons and treatment at Aix-Les-Baines, he had largely

¹⁰"Text of the Constitution of Egypt," Current History, 25: 532.

regained his health. Zaghlul's position toward political issues was enigmatic, for he had not committed himself on any aspect of policy during his long rest in France. His own party, the Wafd, looked forward to his return and his vigorous leadership, but believed that he would not organize a cabinet if the Wafd succeeded in winning the coming election.¹¹ Indeed, when Zaghlul arrived at Marseilles on September 10, in preparation for a voyage to Egypt, he disclosed nothing of his state of mind, except to declare that he would continue to work for the real independence of the Egyptian people -- the old trumpet blast which he had sounded for years.

Zaghlul was the strongest force in Egyptian politics, as most Egyptian politicians realized. They recognized that he and his party would sweep the elections and saw the need of conciliating him. On September 17, ten days before the primary elections, Zaghlul arrived in Alexandria. His reception, though not on a scale of that in 1921, was still extraordinary compared to the reception that any other Egyptian had ever been accorded. Alexandria received him "with calm satisfaction."¹² Zaghlul landed, motored without delay to the king's summer palace outside Alexandria, and presented himself to Fuad -- a thing which Zaghlul

¹¹The Times, September 3, 1923.

¹²The Times, September 18, 1923.

had not done in 1921. He appeared desirous of conciliating both the British and the king.

Then began Zaghlul's political activity -- receptions, speeches, conferences with the Coptic archbishop and with Tewfik Nessim, with deputations of notables, private associations, and public organizations. He had lost none of his former vitality and persuasiveness, despite his recent illness, despite the fact that he was supposed to be nearly an invalid. As Howell, United States minister to Egypt, discovered at this time, Zaghlul was "one of the most accomplished and convincing public speakers" in Howell's recollection.¹³

The enthusiasm for Zaghlul grew. Traveling to Cairo on the day following his arrival in Alexandria, Zaghlul was greeted by crowds which in many cases had waited in the sun eight or nine hours to meet him: he was welcomed as a hero, in the fashion with which he had been long accustomed. In Cairo Zaghlul started his serious electioneering.

Under the electoral law, the male population of Egypt voted indirectly for members of parliament. In a primary election, voters chose elector-delegates, who in turn nominated the candidates for parliament and later selected the winning candidate from the nominations. Zaghlul

¹³Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 204.

energetically sought to have elector-delegates favorable to himself chosen by the voters.

If Zaghlul had arrived in Egypt as a moderate, he soon changed. Within a week of his arrival, he criticized the electoral procedure as undemocratic, declared that the "Constitution restricted the people's will"; denounced the recently enacted indemnity law as an indignity to Egypt; and condemned the government as one which had stifled the press, destroyed liberty, and prevented the free expression of public opinion.¹⁴

His program was something like "Down with Tyranny," the shout which his audiences burst out with when he recited the sufferings of his exile, the persecution of the Wafd during his absence, and the frequent searches of his Cairo residence by the police. "We are the nation," he said on this occasion, September 21. "We have no program but complete independence."¹⁵

As the electioneering continued, it became evident that no political leader of Egypt could effectively oppose him. Even the king was powerless, venting his ungovernable rage at his impotent position upon his courtiers. Zaghlul had assumed that Egypt had no other leader but himself and

¹⁴Interview with the correspondent of The Times on the afternoon of September 21. Times, September 22, 1923. See also Ikbal Ali Khan, Fuad, 186-7.

¹⁵The Times, September 22, 1923.

that the people unanimously approved his leadership. And most of the people did. "The King of the country stands with the people," said Zaghlul; "the people are united and resolute. We have right on our side and God is on our side; what, then, is lacking to the attainment of our goal, to victory?"¹⁶

Two other parties -- the Liberal Constitutionalists under Adly and the National Party led by Ali Kamel, the brother of Mustafa Kamel -- put up candidates in opposition to Zaghlul. But neither party had much popular support.

The primary elections, held on September 27 with fifty-eight percent of the electorate voting, resulted in the selection of elector-delegates who overwhelmingly favored Zaghlul. When the elector-delegates made their nominations for the Chamber of Deputies in November, Zaghlul and twenty-seven of his party were virtually elected, there being no other nominations in their constituencies, while only four Constitutional Liberals and one National Party member received their elections by nomination. In the rest of the 214 seats of the lower chamber, some 415 Zaghlulist candidates contested virtually among themselves the chance of being elected.

Although Zaghlul became ill with bronchitis in October, his political machine carried on the task of electing his

¹⁶Speech quoted by Hans Kohn, Nationalism and Imperialism in the Near East, tr., M. M. Green (London, 1932), 85-6.

supporters. This political machine, created by the Wafd -- well-furnished with funds and well-organized throughout the country by a network of committees collecting money and canvassing for support -- was one with which neither the king nor the other parties could compete.¹⁷ In November Zaghlul began to act, it seems, as if the final elections, due to be held in January, were virtually decided in his favor. He made a show of conciliation with the king, with whom he conferred in November, talked vaguely about his willingness to negotiate with the British, and kept silent on the possibility of himself becoming prime minister of Egypt.

The final elections held on January 13 and 17, 1924, found the Zaghlulists take an overwhelming majority of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies -- some 190 out of 214. Leaders of the National Party, Ali Kamel and Abdel Aziz Shawish, went down in defeat; the landowning class, the backbone of the Constitutional Liberals, captured only a few seats. Even the prime minister, Yehia Pasha, failed to be elected. As a contrast, the Zaghlulists who had been victims of exile, arrest, and imprisonment were swept into office. The victory of the Zaghlulists, as the neutral daily Al Ahram declared, was a condemnation of the British policy of "exiling, persecuting, and imprisoning" Egyptians

¹⁷ Arthur Ransome in The Guardian, March 30, 1925.

who had worked passionately and tirelessly for their independence.¹⁸

On January 27, Fuad, despite some regret, inevitably had to dismiss Yehia Pasha and call in Zaghlul to form a government. And as had been widely anticipated, he proved ready and eager to begin the task of governing Egypt under the first constitutional regime in its history. On the same day on which he was called, Zaghlul had his cabinet selected.

¹⁸The Times, January 15, 1924.

Chapter 15

Zaghlul as Prime Minister of Egypt

In 1924 Zaghlul was an old man for an Egyptian, counted among the few who ever passed the age of seventy and among the twenty-two percent of the population who survived the age of forty. He was tall, gaunt, and square-shouldered -- the typical fellaheen -- "with pale brown complexion, high cheek bones, and narrow eyes," characteristics which gave a faint Mongolian cast to his appearance. On most occasions, vigorously outspoken and irrepressible, at some times he was "hesitant and apprehensive"; but he had experienced a great deal as a martyr to Egyptian independence to justify his occasional apprehensiveness. He had a keen sense of humor and frequently laughed at himself. He had distinguished himself as an astute debater, an eloquent public speaker, and above all a peerless leader -- the idol of the Egyptian masses, over whom he had almost hypnotic powers.¹

¹The description of Zaghlul comes from The Times, September 23, 1924. See also Elgood, Egypt and the Army, 340-1; Ikbal Ali Khan, Fuad, 189; Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 38-9.

Over sixty percent of the people whom Zaghlul would now govern were agricultural directly occupied in tilling the soil and densely packed on the few fertile acres of the Nile valley. Ninety percent of the people depended on this agriculture for a livelihood -- particularly on the fluctuating state of the cotton market.² Although the nation was 91 percent Moslem and only seven percent Coptic, Zaghlul had united both portions of this population under his leadership so that the religious strife which had made an ugly appearance in 1882 and 1910 no longer existed.³

The urban population, during Zaghlul's lifetime, had risen considerably in size, so that by 1927 about 17 percent of the population lived in the large cities and the provincial capitals. This population, along with the peasants of the Delta region, was Zaghlul's strongest support.

The fellaheen, who formed the bulk of the population, were poverty stricken, undernourished, and plagued with widespread endemic diseases -- worm infections -- which caused anemia, depleted energy, and lowered ambition. To one observer, Egypt seemed a land filled with "half living, listless people," destined for early death and lives of

²Wendell Cleland, The Population Problem in Egypt (Lancaster, Pas., 1936), 91. See also A. E. Crouchley, The Economic Development of Modern Egypt (New York, etc., 1938), 257; Charles Issawi, Egypt: An Economic and Social Analysis (London, etc., 1947), 51.

³Cleland, The Population Problem, 44-5, 116.

inconsequence.⁴

The conditions of this agricultural population found their counterpart in the conditions of the cities. The urban population received meager wages, existed on an inadequate diet, and lived in houses so crowded that the ordinary urban worker spent most of his free time in cafes in order to escape the unpleasantness of home life.⁵

Egypt, a nation of agriculturists, of beautiful green fields and filthy sun-dried hovels, had made progress in irrigation and agricultural development; but its manufacturing industries, employing about ten percent of the population in cotton ginning, spinning, mining, tobacco, and salt manufacture, were small and undeveloped. Only four percent of seventy thousand so-called industrial establishments employed more than ten men; thirty-nine percent of these establishments employed a single man -- in effect a home industry.⁶

The population of Egypt, living close to destitution, was also largely illiterate. The fellaheen were suspicious and credulous; the urban workers were prone to unrestrained

⁴Cleland, The Population Problem, 108. See also a statement by Dr. J. B. Christopherson before the Congress International de Medicine Tropical et d'Hygiene held at Cairo in 1928, in Cleland, 85-86.

⁵Cleland, The Population Problem, 77-8.

⁶Cleland, The Population Problem, 99. Taken from the 1927 Census of Egypt.

disorders. The figures of this illiteracy range from a Christian missionary's estimate in 1917 of 93 per cent illiteracy to a census estimate in 1927 of 77 per cent illiteracy among men and 95 percent among women.⁷ Even in Cairo -- the literary capital of the Moslem world, the largest publishing center of the Arabic world, and the center of education for Egypt -- nearly 62 percent of the people could not even perform the most rudimentary tasks of reading and writing.⁸

Here, therefore, was the need of great social and economic reform.

Zaghlul, had earned his claim to office through the single-minded advocacy of the complete independence of Egypt. His political ideas, rooted in nineteenth century liberalism, had expressed themselves in terms of education, the rights of the individual, and parliamentary institutions. Of the modern social and economic problems of his nation he seemed hardly aware. However, in justice to Zaghlul it must be said that few of his contemporaries had any conception of these problems either. The decade of the 1920's was an age when any advocacy of economic and social change was considered dangerous and revolutionary. Perhaps among British administrators there existed men who knew

⁷Cleland, The Population Problem, 77-8; C. P. Russell, "Christian Education in Egypt," The Moslem World, 16: 144.

⁸S. M. Zwemer, "The City of Cairo," in The Moslem World, 10 (1920): 266-8.

where moderate social and economic reforms were necessary; but the movement for independence had largely isolated Egyptians from these ideas. A few of Zaghlul's contemporaries, such as his nephew by marriage Amine Youssef, had pioneered a cooperative movement among city dwellers and peasants. Men like Adly and Ismail Sidky saw the need of a protective tariff for Egypt's infant industries. But these people were limited in their scope and few in number.

Moreover, Zaghlul had not achieved his primary aim, the complete independence of Egypt. As a result Zaghlul's full powers were still channeled in this direction; and the associates whom he chose to help him were the men, like himself, who had suffered in the long struggle for independence -- the deportees, the arrested and imprisoned leaders of the Wafd, and the men whose opinions had been moulded like his.

Zaghlul's cabinet, selected on January 27, 1924, consisted of three independent nationalists and seven members of the Wafd. Notable among the independents were two former prime ministers, Mohammed Said and Tewfik Nessim -- two quite flexible politicians. Of the Wafd members, Fathallah Barakat and Mustapha Bey Nahas had been deported with Zaghlul in 1921; both Morcos Hanna, minister of public works, and Wassef Bey Ghali, minister of foreign affairs and a son of the assassinated prime minister Butros Ghali, were Copts; both had been sentenced to seven years imprisonment

and a £5,000 fine in August 1922 for publishing a "seditious" manifesto.⁹

The new government marked a complete break with the past: none of Yehia's cabinet continued in office; the bulk of the ministry had politically opposed every previous one since 1919 and had not previously held office. Moreover, the government was overwhelmingly popular -- a trait which few previous cabinets had shown.¹⁰

Following the formation of the ministry and prior to the first session of parliament, Zaghlul stated the policy of his administration: to achieve the independence of Egypt and the Sudan in a spirit of friendliness, to reconcile the legitimate interests of Great Britain and Egypt without being coerced into a settlement, and to retire from office if coercion were used. Zaghlul declared:

I say to England: Prove to me that your interests are legally comparable to ours; let us examine together in friendly conversations our respective claims, and let us try to come to an understanding; for this is imperative.... Place your conception of what you consider your interests to be in the balance against our proposal, and I am ready to call upon the conscience of the civilized world to settle the rights and wrongs of the matter.¹¹

⁹Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 206-7; The Times, January 29, 1924, and March 4, 1924.

¹⁰The Times, January 30, 1924.

¹¹The Times, March 8, 1924.

Next to independence, Zaghlul wished to free those convicted and imprisoned under martial law, to repeal recent legislation such as the indemnity law which restricted the nation's rights, to revise all legislation since the last Legislative Assembly so that the laws of the nation would harmonize with his conception of liberty.¹² Aside from these immediate aims, Zaghlul announced that he would not undertake any great reforms. He would administer the finances of the country more efficiently than before, revise inequitable taxation, decrease administrative expenses and the high salaries of officials, reduce unnecessary officials, and balance the budget. Apparently in an attempt to answer his critics in advance, Zaghlul declared that he would not remove even notorious anti-Zaghlulists from the civil service.¹³

This was a cautious and conservative program, one similar to the policies of all his predecessors. It differed only in one respect: Zaghlul and the Wafd were responsive to popular will and to the desires of the rank and file of the party; they would not act independently of popular approval. However, in being responsive to the desires of the rank and file, Zaghlul and the Wafd can be accused of jeopardizing the efficient working of the administration.

¹²The Times, January 29, 1924.

¹³The Times, February 6, 1924.

They permitted their power to be used to reward friends with political patronage and to punish enemies by withdrawing favors. To the critic of Egypt, the Wafd appeared to engage in a shameless exhibition of political corruption.¹⁴

What had happened in Egypt, it must be realized, was the overturning of one political faction -- the somewhat aristocratic regime of men like Rushdi and Adly -- and the emergence of a popular party, vigorous, enthusiastic, and desirous of overturning the old order completely. With a new party in power, a re-division of spoils took place, to the detriment of the supporters of the old order, who thereupon cried corruption and inefficiency.

While Zaghlul was considering policy and the organization of an efficient administration on the highest level, the Wafd and the members of parliament scurried around to divide the spoils of office. Members of parliament considered their constituencies as their private domain. "They behaved," one critic wrote, "as if their constituencies had been given to them as provinces were given in old time to favorites of a potentate."¹⁵ These members freely interfered in the appointment of local mayors, supported their friends for local offices, caused the dismissal of other

¹⁴The Guardian, March 31, 1925; "Egypt A Kingdom," in Round Table, 18: (July, 1928): 487-8; The Times, 13 November 1924; Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 108.

¹⁵The Guardian, March 31, 1925.

men who were not of their party. However, their political morality differed little from that of their predecessors, who had invariably rewarded their friends with local offices. It was a more striking scramble since it took place in a shorter time. But a scramble for office has not been peculiar to Egypt: the history of American government shows the same characteristic scramble which took place in 1924.

While the Wafd strengthened their political positions, Zaghlul began work on his program. With great pleasure, Zaghlul noted that Ramsey MacDonald, an old friend, and the Labour Party, staunch supporters of Zaghlul in the past, had taken office in Britain. With the Labour Party in power, the relations between Britain and Egypt began to grow cordial and optimistic. On February 8, the British government, at Zaghlul's request, granted amnesty to all the political prisoners whom Zaghlul wished to have freed. The events of the day on which the amnesty was granted, involving Mr. Clark Kerr, the first secretary of the residency, and Zaghlul, show a kind of hopeful friendliness growing up.

Upon hearing the announcement of the amnesty personally from Kerr, Zaghlul decided to see the king immediately; but his car happened to be at his home. Kerr thereupon offered to drive Zaghlul there. To this offer Zaghlul haltingly replied, "If I come with you everyone will say

that I have sold myself to England." Kerr answered jestingly: "That, your Excellency, is the fate of every Egyptian Premier." However, to the considerable astonishment of nearby Egyptians, Zaghlul packed into Kerr's dilapidated vehicle and answered, to Kerr's apologies regarding the vehicle, "I'm democratic in motors as in everything else." At his house, Zaghlul and Kerr met an astonished and delighted crowd of supporters, who cheered the show of good relations between the two men.¹⁶

In other ways good feeling seemed to be fostered by both sides in anticipation of coming negotiations. Shortly after the opening of parliament on March 15, even Allenby, a guest of honor at a dinner along with Zaghlul, found himself, though ill at ease, making great efforts at conciliating Zaghlul. Upon the opening of parliament, MacDonald telegraphed Zaghlul that he was "now and at all times" ready to negotiate.¹⁷ Zaghlul, in answer, stated that he saw the beginning of a "new era" of good relations in which the opportune moment had arrived for a settlement of differences in a friendly mood.¹⁸

However, both MacDonald and Zaghlul hesitated about negotiations. MacDonald realized the uselessness of inviting

¹⁶This incident appears in The Times, February 9, 1924.

¹⁷The Times, March 17, 1924.

¹⁸The Times, March 18, 1924; March 19, 1924.

Zaghlul to London if the latter's demands regarding the Sudan and the Suez Canal conflicted hopelessly with Britain's "irreducible requirements."¹⁹ Allenby encourage MacDonald in the hope of starting negotiations by stating on April 6 that Zaghlul was "well-disposed" toward negotiations, provided nothing changed Zaghlul's faith in Britain's good intentions.²⁰ As a result of somewhat favorable appearances in April 1924, MacDonald personally invited Zaghlul to come to London. But it was a shaky arrangement.

Zaghlul was responsible to a parliament which was vigorous and "clamorous" in its attitude toward Egyptian independence. It was a "raw" parliament, one which MacDonald felt had not yet "found its feet."²¹ Its sessions, particularly those of the Chamber of Deputies, were noisy, self-assertive, and ill-disciplined. Members practically indulged in athletic contests in order to catch the speaker's eye; and each member felt obliged to speak on each measure before the parliament. Indeed, the speaker, unable to quiet his members with the usual gavel or bell, had to install a fire alarm in order to silence the chamber. The parliament spoke almost continuously in favor of the complete evacua-

¹⁹ Dispatch, MacDonald to Allenby on April 3, 1924, in Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2:85.

²⁰ Allenby to MacDonald on April 6, 1924, in Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2:85.

²¹ MacDonald on July 10, 1924, in House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 175: 2531.

tion of British troops from Egypt and of the British government from the Sudan. Its clamorous demands exerted pressure on Zaghlul.²²

On March 29, Zaghlul, in response to questions, informed the parliament that Egypt would not give up its claims for the Sudan. By May 17 Zaghlul announced that he could no longer tolerate the existence of a foreigner, Sir Lee Stack, the governor general of the Sudan, as the commander in chief of the Egyptian army. Zaghlul repudiated the reserved subjects of the February 1922 declaration as a basis of negotiations; and parliament echoed Zaghlul's constant demand for complete freedom of negotiations between himself and MacDonald. By June 2 Zaghlul appeared satisfied that he would be completely free in coming negotiations, without making any commitments in regard to their scope; but not until June 23 did Zaghlul set a date for his departure to Europe.

Zaghlul's willingness to negotiate did not arouse the confidence of British leaders however. When he declared on June 7 that Britain occupied the Sudan wrongfully, the British began to grow apprehensive of the trend of affairs. Minor riots in the Sudan, fomented by Egyptian nationalists in the middle of June, caused Lord Parmour, the leader of the Labour Party in the House of Lords, to declare on June 25

²²Kohn, Nationalism and Imperialism in the Near East, 86-7; The Times, May 23, 1924.

that Britain intended "in no sense to give up the Sudan."²³ This statement precipitated a crisis in the Egyptian ministry and threatened for the moment to end the possibility of negotiations.

On June 28 Zaghlul appeared before parliament to announce that he would resign unless once again he were assured of the freedom of discussion in the coming negotiations. On the next day, he journeyed from Cairo to Alexandria to present his resignation to Fuad--a resignation which Fuad refused to accept. And Zaghlul, on returning to Cairo, met on all sides,--from the common people and from his cabinet,--the plea that he stay in office. On the following day amid a cheering parliament, he withdrew his resignation.

However, the possibility of beginning negotiations still remained uncertain. The previous date made for Zaghlul's departure, July 7, was postponed indefinitely. It remained for MacDonald to give Zaghlul assurances regarding the freedom of the proposed discussions. MacDonald cautiously stated his position on the Sudan so that Zaghlul might consider it worthwhile to undertake negotiations, by announcing merely that Britain could not break its "pledges to the Sudan or jeopardize the present administration and development" of the country. He said nothing about Britain remaining in the Sudan.²⁴

²³House of Lords, Debates, series 5, 57: 986.

²⁴MacDonald on June 30, 1924, House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 175: 913-4.

Moreover, MacDonald showed publicly a certain amount of confidence and went out of his way to be conciliatory to Zaghlul. "I have been hoping," he said to parliament on June 30, "that the questions still outstanding between an independent Egypt and ourselves might have been settled in the calm conditions of personal negotiations between Saad Zaghlul and myself..."²⁵ Perhaps MacDonald believed in his own inherent objectivity and reasonableness and expected others to approach the problems with the same detached feelings he had. But a Britisher could afford to be more detached regarding Egypt than an Egyptian, who could see the symbols of British military might and British influence in a nation that was supposedly independent.²⁶

In any case, MacDonald's conciliatory attitude caused Zaghlul to set a new date for his departure to Europe on July 8, when it was announced that Zaghlul would leave on July 25. Thus, after months of complicated preliminaries, MacDonald and Zaghlul finally agreed to meet; but on both sides there was still an apprehension that it would be fruitless for Zaghlul to go to London to negotiate for the complete independence of Egypt and the Sudan so long as each had decided in advance that the demands of each other would be turned down.

²⁵House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 175: 913-4.

²⁶Of Zaghlul, MacDonald said on July 10, 1924: "I sincerely hope that Zaghlul Rasha will come determined to settle, as a reasonable man, objectively minded..." House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 175: 2533.

CHAPTER 16.

Zaghlul and MacDonald

On July 12, the coming negotiations, which were still only vaguely scheduled for the future, came close never to taking place. On that day, as Zaghlul made his way through a cheering crowd in the Cairo railway station in preparation for a trip to Alexandria, the summer capital of Egypt, a student dashed out of one of the second class coaches and fired at Zaghlul. Zaghlul faltered but did not fall; kept a "calm and cheerful demeanour" while his associates anxiously carried him back to the waiting room of the station to treat him for injuries. Fortunately the aim of the assassin had been poor; Zaghlul received only slight injuries in his side. But the crowd, not knowing the nature of Zaghlul's injuries, would have torn the assassin--a sullen-appearing nationalist--to pieces on the spot had not the police hustled the man on the train as it departed.¹

Thus Zaghlul had become a victim of the mania for assassination which had taken the lives of a number of British soldiers and civilians in the past years and had

¹The Times, July 14, 1924.

threatened the lives of other Egyptian ministers. In his convalescence, however, Zaghlul characteristically jested about his fate.

As a result of the attempted assassination, Zaghlul received strong expressions of sympathy from all Egypt. Politicians, including Adly Pasha, who had not met Zaghlul since 1921, paid their respects. Allenby and MacDonald sent their sympathy. An Egyptian mob reacted in their usual way by storming and stoning the opposition newspapers. For a day or so, Zaghlul was not permitted to see visitors; but by July 17, he was able to return home, where he found himself in the midst of a pilgrimage of his people to do him honor. Despite the opposition of doctors, Zaghlul saw and spoke to the delegations of people who daily presented themselves to him. By July 20, Zaghlul was sufficiently recovered to announce that he would depart from Egypt as scheduled.

On July 22, Zaghlul once again started out for Alexandria, in the company of senators and deputies and other Egyptian leaders. On this trip he received his greatest ovation since 1921. At Cairo the crowds sang a hymn specially composed for him and ending with the refrain: "God Bless Saad." On the way, wholly unorganized crowds from the small villages forced the train to stop; peasants ran out of their fields to wave their welcomes. By the time the train had arrived in Alexandria, more people rode on

top of the cars than in them--all waving banners and palm branches. Zaghlul, still weak as a result of his convalescence, had to fight his way through these packed crowds. By the time he had departed for Europe with the hopes of Egypt depending on him to solve the difficulties between Egypt and Britain, he had received an ovation which could mean nothing else but a strengthening of all his claims for Egypt's independence.²

Zaghlul arrived in France on July 27 and very shortly went to Vichy to recuperate from the events of the past two months. The projected negotiations were so indefinite that Zaghlul spent the entire next month in France without making any effort to get in touch with MacDonald.³ On August 29, a visit by MacDonald to Geneva for other British affairs seemed to offer an opportunity for the two men to meet in Paris; but MacDonald did not get in touch with Zaghlul, who, thinking over a statement supposedly made by MacDonald in Paris regarding Britain's intention to remain in the Sudan, decided on September 3 to return to Egypt without seeing MacDonald.

Once again the possibility of negotiations seemed doomed. However, MacDonald took the necessary step by disclaiming his statement reported in Paris and by once again

²The Times, July 23, 1924; July 25, 1924.

³George Glasco, MacDonald as Diplomatist (London, 1924).
215.

inviting Zaghlul to come to London. With a certain amount of apprehension Zaghlul cryptically informed MacDonald that he would arrive in London to carry on discussions on September 25.

No other preparations for the conference were made, except for the setting of the date, and even the date was subject to change: no program was outlined for the projected discussions. Moreover Zaghlul arrived in London on September 23 as a private citizen and at his own expense, as if he considered the coming talks unofficial discussions, not official negotiations. He was a pale, thin old man as he arrived in Victoria station where he was met with the usual demonstration of students shouting "Long Live Saad Zaghlul" and "Long Live Egypt and the Sudan."⁴

Thus in an atmosphere of indefiniteness, the first talk between MacDonald and Zaghlul took place on September 25. With apparent frankness, MacDonald first introduced the subject of the Suez Canal and British imperial communications. Then the nature of Zaghlul's position was disclosed. Zaghlul wanted the withdrawal of all British troops from Egypt, the withdrawal of British financial and judicial advisers from the Egyptian government, the end of all British control over Egypt's foreign relations, the cessation of all British claims to protect minorities and foreigners in Egypt; and the abandonment of British claims to share in the protection

⁴Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 215-7.

of the Suez Canal.⁵

In the course of the conversations, MacDonald stated bluntly that British troops could not leave Egypt, that British officials had been placed in the Egyptian government to give necessary assistance and could not be withdrawn. Zaghlul suggested that the Suez Canal be placed under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations for the purpose of protecting it; but this suggestion was not acceptable to MacDonald.⁶

The result of the first conversation was a frank discussion of the views of both sides. Zaghlul, in a compromise, accepted as a basis of discussion the idea that the Canal be jointly protected by British and Egyptian troops; but he would not indicate where these troops could be expected to stay. MacDonald then asked Zaghlul to accept the idea that a strip of territory around the Canal Zone be set aside for the quartering of British troops. This last suggestion came to nothing.⁷

Officially, in a message to the Egyptian people, Zaghlul indicated that the first conversations were "most promising" in that "several serious misunderstandings" were cleared up. He responded hopefully to the possibility of future discuss-

⁵P. P., Egypt No. 1, 1924, Dispatch to His Majesty's High Commissioner, 1924, Cmd 2269, XXVI, 2-3; Youssef, Independent Egypt, 120.

⁶Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 218.

⁷Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 219.

ions by postponing for three weeks a previously scheduled departure from England.⁸ But this official attitude does not describe what his real feelings were: that question is unanswered.

On September 29, the second meeting took place between the two leaders. Here the question of the Sudan came up: neither would retreat from the position which he had previously held. Britain would not withdraw; Egypt would not cease to claim that Britain should withdraw completely. Though further meetings were arranged, the conversations brought no hopeful concessions from either side, nor any hopeful statements regarding the future conversations.⁹

Before the third meeting took place, the Imperial Defense Committee met in London, with Allenby as one of its principal members. Looking at the situation of British troops in the Suez Canal Zone, Allenby declared to the committee on October 2 that it would not only be unhealthy for British troops to live in the Canal Zone but also strategically unsatisfactory. Allenby presented this statement as an insurmountable objection to MacDonald's idea of quartering British troops in a strip of Canal Zone territory.¹⁰

⁸The Times, September 27, 1924; September 29, 1924.

⁹Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 222; The Times, October 21, 1924, gives a statement by Zaghlul regarding the course of the various negotiations.

¹⁰The Times, October 3, 1924; Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 222-3.

The MacDonald government at the time was in the midst of many other difficulties; at the moment it could not easily change British policy toward Egypt, and so MacDonald accepted the advice of the committee. As a result, when the third meeting between Zaghlul and MacDonald took place on October 3, nothing could be done to compromise the differences of the two nations. Further conferences were called off with the statement that Zaghlul had to return to Egypt in view of the November meeting of the Egyptian parliament and in view of the inclement weather in England. October 3, ironically enough, was the first day in months that the sun had broken through overcast skies, the first day of pleasant weather.¹¹

But the breakdown had occurred. MacDonald blamed the failure of negotiations on the intransigence of Zaghlul, who, in turn, blamed the failure on MacDonald's surrender to the viewpoint of the militarists and the imperialists. In regard to MacDonald, a contemporary journalist offered this interpretation: "MacDonald offered a tougher front on such issues than ever did Lord Curzon."¹² To Zaghlul, Britain's attitude toward the Sudan was the factor which induced him to halt the discussions. In his explanation of the breakdown, Zaghlul, like other Egyptians, blamed the militarists:

¹¹The Times, October 4, 1924; Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 223.

¹²Glasgow, MacDonald as Diplomatist, 224.

"They invited us to London to commit suicide, and we refused to commit suicide. That is all that happened."¹³ But, had the Sudan not been the cause, no satisfactory arrangement could have been made regarding the evacuation of British troops from Egypt itself.

Zaghlul left London for Egypt on October 7; on the following day the MacDonald government fell from power on an unfavorable vote of confidence. It may well be, that even had both men wished to continue negotiations, difficulties would have come in the way to halt the negotiations at this time, or cause their postponement. Egyptian nationalism, acting through Zaghlul and overwhelmingly supported by the people of Egypt, had made its most extreme demands in regard to its independence so far: no British government appeared ready to meet these demands.

¹³The Times, October 7, 1924; October 21, 1924.

CHAPTER 17

The Final Crisis of the Zaghlul Regime.

Zaghlul returned to Egypt on October 20, 1924, as a man who had failed in his mission. Almost his first words to the Egyptian people were apologetic; he hoped that they would receive him despite his failure in the negotiations. However, he was still the Grand Old Man of Egyptian politics. His return to Cairo, after a day in Alexandria, was as much of a "triumphal progress" as his departure had been the previous June.¹ Egyptians welcomed him back apparently as a man, who, though he had gained nothing, had not bargained away any of Egypt's sacred rights.

Welcomed back enthusiastically, Zaghlul decided to remain in office and, with a few small cabinet changes, to retain the same cabinet. Now that the most important problem of his regime had been indefinitely deferred--namely the negotiations with Britain--what was to be Zaghlul's program? This was the question which he had to consider as he resumed active leadership.

¹The Times, October 22, 1924.

The preoccupation with the question of Egyptian independence had largely postponed consideration of any other problem facing Egypt. The most admirable measure of the administration so far had been an new electoral law, by which all Egyptian males over twenty-one years could vote directly for members of the Chamber of Deputies and all over twenty-five could directly elect three-fifths of the Senate. This new electoral law was the clearest result of Zaghlul's policy of increasing democratic participation in government; it abolished the cumbersome and undemocratic indirect electoral system under which Zaghlul, despite it, had taken office.

In the other policies of his ministry prior to the negotiations, Zaghlul had more or less adhered to his conservative outlook. The budget of April, 1924, was a budget aimed at economy, it anticipated a slight surplus, and it showed an increase of about six million pounds over the actual expenditures of 1923.

As part of the program of making Egypt independent, the Egyptian parliament passed resolutions that the Egyptian currency should be independent of Britain's--a difficult thing to accomplish considering the nature of Egypt's cotton economy. The Zaghlul regime moreover increasingly undermined the power and ignored the advice of the British financial and judicial advisers and other British officials in a move to increase Egypt's independence in administration--

a policy which Lord Curzon later called "a steady and growing persecution" of British officials.² The Egyptian government refused to continue its financial contributions to the British army maintained in Egypt in part--as British leaders bitterly emphasized--for the defense of Egypt.

In regard to education, the Zaghlul regime accomplished little. Although the constitution of Egypt required that all Egyptians have elementary education--that is, schooling at the "kattab" level, the basic level of learning to read and write--the problem of independence had blocked any progress. Official circles seemed apathetic; moreover, Egypt had neither the equipment, the trained personnel, nor the funds to carry out the provisions of the constitution.³

Toward labor Zaghlul had been severe. Because of his great abhorrence of Bolshevism and its attack on private property, Zaghlul persecuted strikers in Alexandria who had siezed their plants, expelled the management of them, operated them, and refused to surrender their control until their demands were met. These strikes flavored of Bolshevism. With the support of public opinion, Zaghlul prosecuted the leaders of the strikes for conspiracy to overthrow the government.⁴

²House of Lords, Debates, series 5, 60: 35-6.

³Russell, "Christian Education in Egypt," in Moslem World, 16 (April, 1926): 144-5.

⁴M. T. Symonds, The Rise of Egyptian Nationalism (London, 1925), 273; The Times, June 10, 1924.

Zaghlul's record toward free press and free speech also had some faults. At the opening of the first parliament of the constitution in March, 1924, Zaghlul, despite the protest of the entire press, excluded several opposition newspapers from the ceremonies, because he considered that these papers, in making personal attacks on him, had been inspired by bad faith.⁵ In June, the ministry of the interior, which Zaghlul held, ordered Adly Pasha's newspaper Al Siassa to cease publication, confiscated an offending issue, and started prosecuting its staff. The courts, however, threw out the cases and the newspaper resumed publication after two days' silence.⁶

Despite these two incidents, Zaghlul shows a far better record of toleration toward the press than any previous ministry since the war--and certainly a better record than either Adly or Sarwat, who had suspended Zaghlulist papers during their ministries on a number of occasions. The opposition parties, in parliament and in the press, were left virtually free to express their opinions--a state unlike anything in the recent politics of Egypt.

Typical, and perhaps symbolic, of Zaghlul's domestic policy during 1924 is a not-too-important incident involving the settlement of Armenian refugee children in Egyptian homes during March, 1924. At the time when Armenians

⁵The Times, March 15, 1924.

⁶The Times, June 11, 1924; June 13, 1924.

were suffering great privations at the hands of the Turks, the Coptic Archbishop Thorum of Cairo approached the United States Minister Mr. Howell and then Zaghlul Pasha in order to make arrangements to settle twenty of these children in wealthy Armenian homes. Zaghlul, with great generosity, heartily approved the proposal "personally and officially," arranged to decrease rail fares for the refugees, and authorized the entry of fifteen-hundred instead of twenty children.⁷ It was an act of great humanity and toleration--for these children were Christians suffering in a Moslem state; but beside the crying needs of Egyptians--the felleheen, the labouring folk in the city--for betterment of their homes, their working conditions, their standard of living, how can it be anything more than ironic? It shows Zaghlul as a man and as a statesman: on the one hand, a man with a great heart; on the other, a man with a limited outlook.

On his return to Egypt in October, 1924, Zaghlul seems to have started planning a broader program for Egypt. He spoke vaguely about the defects needing reform, and above all about the need for unity in carrying out reforms.⁸ Youssef gives something of these ideas that were going through Zaghlul's mind during this period. To all Egyptians, Zaghlul desired to extend a kind of education which should

⁷Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 231-3.

⁸Speech by Zaghlul on October 24, 1924, summarized in The Times, October 25, 1924.

be "popular" and should emphasize the "study of citizenship." For the peasants, whom he wished to keep from migrating to the cities, Zaghlul believed in an advance in agricultural education. He felt that taxation should be returned to benefit the fellaheen primarily in the form of irrigation, sanitation, and educational projects. He wanted to remove the corrupt and outside influences hampering the administration of justice in Egypt; to raise the professional standards of the law profession. But "the precise measures that would have inaugurated these reforms cannot be guessed," said Youssef, "since there was not time or opportunity for them to take definite shape."⁹

There was no time for Zaghlul to lead in the reform of Egypt, for reasons which Zaghlul could not have been aware of in early November 1924--the principal reason being the sudden change in his fortunes caused by the unexpected and surprising assassination of the British governor general of the Sudan and commander of the Egyptian army Sir Lee Stack on November 19, 1924.

For all intents and purposes Zaghlul acted as if he had an unlimited tenure of office in Egypt--no need to hurry in preparing a program. Indeed, politics, not reform, engrossed Zaghlul's spare time. Underneath the surface of Egypt discontent showed itself--discontent rising largely from Zaghlul's

⁹Youssef, Independent Egypt, 123-6.

failure in London, from the abuse of power by the Wafd, and from administrative injustice felt by many Egyptians. This abuse of power was a thing which Zaghlul either did not control, or could not control, since the central committee of the Wafd was largely influential in directing the administration of the country as they saw fit; but Zaghlul had to take the blame for the discontent.¹⁰

At the same time as the discontent was rising, Zaghlul saw palace intrigues undermining his influence, and a lack of unity in his party. The story behind the intrigues went back to the early days of Zaghlul's administration when Al Azhar students, unable to endure poor food and bad conditions at this old theological seminary, petitioned the government for an adjustment of their grievances. Zaghlul, although an old Al Azhar student himself, had been far too Europeanized to think very highly of Al Azhar. It had not modernized itself; its curricula and its teaching methods were backward; and, as far as Zaghlul was concerned, Al Azhar, as a university was indeed far from the modern university that Egypt needed.¹¹

As a result, Zaghlul shunted the petition aside to a committee, hoping that the problem would be sidetracked for several months. However, the directing force on the committee

¹⁰The Times, November 13, 1924.

¹¹Arthus Ransome describes this intrigue in The Guardian, April 1, 1925.

was Nashaat Pasha, the king's private secretary and close advisor. In two weeks, Nashaat had returned a committee report to Zaghlul, who considered that the committee by not taking longer had slighted the problem. Zaghlul returned the report to the committee, which shortly presented it again unchanged to Zaghlul. Only because of the coming negotiations with Great Britain was Zaghlul able to delay further consideration of the reform.

When Zaghlul returned to Egypt in October, the Al Azhar students expressed their discontent by demonstrating and shouting, "Long Live the King alone!" On one occasion, the police allowed the students to be caught between a row of police and a crowd of rabble armed with sticks. The rabble made short shift with the students, who in turn struck in protest to their treatment--a strike which they refused to end despite pleas of both Zaghlul and the king. At this juncture, Zaghlul became persuaded that Nashaat was intriguing to embarrass him, and requested Fuad to remove Nashaat from office. Fuad complied by giving Nasaat another palace appointment and by granting him a decoration. This act caused Zaghlul to appear suddenly before parliament on November 15 and offer his resignation, alleging that poor health made it impossible for him to continue in office.¹²

The parliament strongly protested against Zaghlul's

¹²The Guardian, April 1, 1925.

giving up the premiership; sent a delegation to Fuad to ask that Fuad not accept the resignation; and in the end forced Fuad to refuse it.

This humiliation to Fuad was increased when, as Zaghlul approached the palace on the evening of November 15 to discuss the matter with Fuad, students--not Al Azhar students this time--gathered outside the palace gates and shouted: "Saad or Revolution." Both houses of parliament, informed of the intrigues of Nashaat, gave Zaghlul a tremendous vote of confidence; and on November 16, Zaghlul, amid great enthusiasm, withdrew his resignation.¹³

This political turmoil, which many observers considered as a twofold move by Zaghlul to humiliate Fuad and to regain lost popularity, increased unrest in Cairo. Coupled with the agitation in the Sudan, with the distrust toward the British, the situation was bad.

In the midst of this general political unrest, Sir Lee Stack, driving through Cairo streets on about 1.30 PM, November 19, was shot and wounded by an unknown assassin. The place where Stack was wounded was only a few squares from the British residence, to which place he was immediately taken. The news of the attempt on Stack's life had traveled quickly though Cairo. Zaghlul first heard that Stack had escaped injury, but, being unable to reach Stack at the Sirdirate,

¹³The Times, November 18, 1924.

Zaghlul set out for the British residency to make inquiries and to express regret at the attempt. To his astonishment and dismay, when he entered the residency, he found Stack dying.¹⁴ On his arrival, Zaghlul is reported to have said: "It is against me that they have done this."¹⁵

Inside the residency, Allenby was greatly agitated, and Zaghlul was treated as a criminal. Upon seeing Zaghlul, Allenby is reported by Howell to have declared that he had wanted to hang "all these fellows" on previous occasions, but that the government would not permit him.¹⁶ To Zaghlul, Allenby declared: "This is your doing." And Allenby wished to show Zaghlul the stricken body of Stack as a reminder of the results of his criminal handiwork, but was restrained by his advisers.¹⁷

Allenby underwent great emotional turmoil, doubly grieved by the loss of a close friend and by what he considered was Egypt's betrayal of his trust. Thirty-six hours after being shot, Stack died.

With hardly a word, Zaghlul left the British residency and went to Abdin Palace to see Fuad. He published an immediate statement in the press regarding his feelings toward

¹⁴The Times, November 20, 1924.

¹⁵Arthus Ransome in The Guardian, April 1, 1925.

¹⁶Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 211.

¹⁷Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 109-10.

the assassination. "This attempt has painfully affected me," Zaghlul wrote, "not only because of Sir Lee Stack's fine qualities, but specially because of the horror it inspires... I am stupified to see such a horrible crime committed."¹⁸ While Zaghlul could jest on the occasion of the attempt made on his own life, he saw the serious political implications of this assassination; but none of his regret could erase the feelings of Allenby and the British community in Egypt that Zaghlul, if not implicated in the plot to kill Stack, was responsible for it happening.

Stack's funeral, attended by a vast procession of Egyptians--including the ministry, the princes of Egypt, senators, deputies, and notables--took place on November 22. When Zaghlul and his ministry attended funeral services in the Anglican church, the British residents in Cairo were outraged, and Allenby, though he had authorized Zaghlul's presence, saw in Zaghlul a constant reminder of the man responsible for the tragedy.¹⁹

After the funeral, in an atmosphere of great grief, Allenby prepared the action which he would take against the Egyptian government. Since the Egyptian parliament would meet at 5.30 PM, Allenby feared that Zaghlul would resign before he could present his demands. As a result, unable to wait any longer for instructions from London (instructions

¹⁸The Times, November 20, 1924.

¹⁹Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 110-11.

which came too late to be decyphered), Allenby set out for the building housing the offices of the Egyptian ministry. A regiment of lancers escorted Allenby in dramatic fashion through the streets of Cairo, gave Allenby a salute and a flourish of trumpet as he arrived, and blocked the entrance of the Egyptian parliament which was on the point of assembling. Wearing a grey lounge suit instead of the proper military uniform, Allenby entered the Council of the Ministers (a humiliating scene indeed for Zaghlul) and in English read a statement of these accusations:

"This murder, which holds up Egypt at present governed to the contempt of civilized peoples, is the natural outgrowth of a campaign of hostility to British rights and British subjects in Egypt...not discouraged by Your Excellency's Government, and fomented by organizations in close contact with that Government."²⁰

Allenby then proceeded to state the demands which the Egyptian Government must comply with:

1. An apology for the assassination of Sir Lee Stack.
2. Vigorous prosecution and punishment of the criminals responsible for the crime.
3. Suppression henceforth of all popular and political demonstrations.
4. The payment of a fine of £500,000.
5. The withdrawal from the Sudan of all Egyptian officers and purely Egyptian units.

²⁰Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 113.

6. The increase of the irrigation area of Gezira in the Sudan from 300,000 feddans to an "unlimited" figure.
7. The withdrawal of all opposition to the British claim to protect the rights of foreigners and minorities in Egypt.²¹

Along with this first ultimatum, Allenby presented a second note in which he declared (1) that "Egyptian Officers and purely Egyptian units of the Egyptian Army having been withdrawn, the Sudanese units of the Egyptian Army shall be converted into a Sudan Force, owing allegiance to the Sudan Government alone,"; (2) that the rules governing the service, retirement and discipline of foreign officials in the Egyptian government shall be altered in accordance with British wishes; and (3) that Egypt shall retain the British financial and judicial advisers in its government.²² To comply with these demands, Zaghlul was given until 8 PM, November 23.

These demands embodied all the desires which the most imperialistic Britons had advocated in past negotiations. The Egyptian parliament had already established a law about the payment and retirement of foreign officials--a law not acceptable to British circles in Egypt. The British demands on the Sudan meant a virtual separation of the Sudan from Egypt; and the irrigation demands presented a threat to Egypt's water supply. All the measures which Zaghlul had put forward and all the attempts which he had made to in-

²¹Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 113-4.

²²Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 222-3.

crease Egypt's administrative and political independence, regardless of the outcome of treaty negotiations, were swept aside.

The demands neutralized all the concessions, all the liberal feelings, all the good faith which Milner, Curzon, and MacDonald had shown to Egypt. The method of presenting the notes--the show of force--recinded for all practical purposes the myth of Egyptian independence. How weak appeared the national movement when faced with force! How ineffective! The ultimatum was almost as arrogant as the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia in 1914; it was an attempt to force Zaghlul to accept an Egyptian settlement which he could not possibly accept.

Upon receiving the ultimatum, Zaghlul called together his cabinet for consultation, requested the Egyptian parliament, which was by then in session, not to rise until he had spoken with them, and shortly went to see Fuad. Late in the evening, after the provisions of the ultimatum had leaked out, Zaghlul presented the British notes to parliament for debate. Zaghlul counseled calmness and moderation, recommended that the provisions of the note applying specifically to the assassination of Stack be accepted, and agreed with the parliament to reject points (5) and (6) of the first note regarding the withdrawal of Egyptian troops from the Sudan and regarding the irrigation of the Gezira

area.²³

The Egyptian parliament authorized Zaghlul to answer the ultimatum along those lines. Late in the afternoon of November 23, Zaghlul prepared his answer, having been refused by the British additional time for his reply.

To the British government Zaghlul wrote:

"For this odious crime, perpetrated by criminals whom the nation unanimously condemns, the Egyptian government cannot, however, in any way be considered as responsible. This crime was committed, in fact, under circumstances such as could neither have been foreseen nor prevented.

On the other hand, this government cannot acknowledge the statement contained in the first note communicated, that this crime was the natural result of a political campaign which had not been discouraged by the Egyptian government and which had been fomented by organizations in close contact with it."²⁴

After sending this answer, Zaghlul attended the session of parliament, where once again he urged calmness, pointed out the delicacy of the situation, and requested Egyptians to be wise and to restrain their passion. While waiting in an anti-room of the parliament, Zaghlul received Allenby's answer to Zaghlul's partial acceptance of the ultimatum. Allenby informed Zaghlul that he would order the withdrawal of all Egyptian troops from the Sudan, would increase the irrigation of Gezira, and would require the Egyptian govern-

²³The Times, November 24, 1924; Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 223-5, gives the text of Zaghlul's letter to Allenby answering the ultimatum.

²⁴Howell, Egypt's Past, Present and Future, 223-4.

ment to pay the half-million pound fine by noon of November 24. In addition, Allenby, without permission of the foreign secretary in London, ordered the seizure of the Alexandria customs as a guarantee of the payment of the indemnity.²⁵

Practically the last act of the Zaghlul government, aside from resignation, was the payment of the indemnity at the time required. In the afternoon of November 24 Zaghlul announced to the Chamber of Deputies, that, for the good of the country, he and his ministry were resigning. He declared that he was proud to resign rather than surrender the rights of the nation.²⁶

In the stormy session that followed, the chamber addressed protests to the League of Nations and to the parliaments of all nations, pointed out the injustice to which Egypt was undergoing, cheered Zaghlul for his courageous stand, and at last adjourned. That session was the last one for that particular parliament.

Zaghlul visualized his fall as the downfall of constitutional government in Egypt. His government, he telegraphed Mr. Ben Socor, member of the British parliament, "has been constitutional in every sense of the word, backed by a parliament representing the nation.... The overthrow of my Ministry is interpreted as the overthrow of the

²⁵ Sir Charles Petrie, The Life and Letters of the Right Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain (2 vols., London, 1940), 2: 337-8.

²⁶ The Times, November 25, 1924.

constitutional regime, and the return to the old regime of creating ministers supported by the Residency."²⁷

Even before Zaghlul's resignation, Fuad was almost ready with another ministry, helped in its preparation by Zaghlul's political enemy Nashaat Pasha. By the evening of November 24, Ziwar Pasha, the appointed president of the Senate, had formed a cabinet of little-known politicians, in which only Ziwar had held office previously.

Ziwar was faced, as Zaghlul had been, with the acceptance of an unpopular British ultimatum. On November 25 Ziwar called upon Zaghlul, who received him "in a most friendly fashion" without committing himself on the question of supporting Ziwar or not. Ziwar stated that he would try to save something out of the situation; to this, Zaghlul silently agreed.²⁸

When the students outside Zaghlul's home began to demonstrate and to shout for Zaghlul, he asked them to cease their demonstration, if they really wished him to remain their leader, and called upon all Egyptians to refrain their demonstrations and resume their occupations. The same day, Zaghlul left Cairo for a rest at a hotel near the pyramids.

Zaghlul took his overthrow with courage and moderation.

²⁷The Times, December 3, 1924.

²⁸The Times, November 26, 1924.

Rather than risk further exile and imprisonment, as he had defiantly done on two previous occasions, he ceased all political activity. "Pour moi," he said regarding the whole crisis, "c'est un coup mortel."²⁹

With Zaghlul's retirement, the first popularly chosen ministry in Egypt's modern history ended.

²⁹Wavell, Allenby in Egypt, 116.

Chapter 18

The Regime of Royal Despotism

"The old policy of persecution now reigns," said Zaghlul about the Ziwar ministry on November 29.¹ To a large extent his opinion was right; for three of Zaghlul's close associates, notably Makram Ebeid and Nekrashi Bey, both members of the Egyptian parliament, were arrested despite constitutional immunities and held under suspicion of complicity in the assassination of Stack without a definite charge brought against them. The parliament was then adjourned, with its inevitable dissolution in sight. For all practical purposes, martial law ruled Egypt; and Ziwar, though he strove to adjust the problems of the ultimatum and to modify the Gezira irrigation scheme, followed the dictates of the British residency and the king. Uneasiness was widespread among nationalists; Zaghlul, himself, it is said, feared that he would be hanged.

During his brief retirement from politics, Zaghlul met both abuse and sympathy. To the conservatives in the

¹The Times, December 3, 1924.

British parliament, who forgot that Zaghlul was the popularly chosen head of a popular government, Zaghlul was considered as the leader of "a miserable, despotic oligarchy."² But, if any despotism existed in Egypt, it was the result of the advantage gained by Fuad through the mistake of the British government in overthrowing Egypt's constitutional government. This unconstitutional regime, which was later clearly to be royal despotism, lasted nearly a year and a half, until June 1926, when once again a constitutional government assumed control of Egyptian affairs. In the interim period occurred the struggle of king and parliament for power.

Zaghlul also found defenders in the British parliament. Nothing was revealed at the time to link Zaghlul in any way with the assassination of Stack; nothing was ever to be disclosed of that nature. To many Britishers, in consequence, the Allenby note was "a deplorable thing" since it amounted to an unjust "accusation of personal guilt" on Zaghlul's part.³ The note may have been successful in forcing British views on Egypt, but, as C. P. Trevelyan, a Labour member of the British parliament pointed out, "a successful ultimatum is not necessarily successful diplomacy."⁴ If

²Lt. Col. James, M. P., House of Commons, Debates series 5, 179: 729-30, on December 15, 1924.

³C. P. Trevelyan, M. P., House of Commons, Debates series 5, 179: 649.

⁴House of Commons, Debates, series 5, 179: 651.

anything, this note retarded the consideration of the issues between the two nations; and, in the meantime, enabled Fuad to practice his ideas of absolute government, with the skilled assistance of Nashaat Pasha.

At first, since Zaghlul's popularity appeared to have declined greatly, the Ziwar ministry scheduled elections in the hope of obtaining a parliament favorable to the king. The new elections were set for January, 1925, under the indirect system of elections, not under Zaghlul's democratic system. The only issue in the election was support of or opposition to the Wafd and to Zaghlul. No other issue was present, since almost all Egyptians were agreed on the desire for independence though not on the leadership of the movement. Opposing Zaghlul were not only the Constitutional Liberal Party (led by Mohammed Pasha Mahmud and Abdel Aziz Bey Fahmy), the National Party led by Ali Kamel, but also the king's party, organized on January 10, 1925, by Nashaat, called the Union Party.

Zaghlul took a strong stand against the Ziwar ministry in the election campaign that followed. On December 28, he publicly condemned the ministry as one which had unjustly imprisoned members of parliament, had dismissed some officials and appointed others without justification, had surrendered to British demands to the detriment of Egypt's "aspirations" and Egypt's financial status, and above all had endangered the constitution.⁵

⁵The Times, December 29, 1924.

For the moment Zaghlul and the Wafd seemed to be opposed to the institution of monarchy itself, an impression which the Wafd tried to dispel by proclaiming its staunch loyalty to the crown.⁶

On January 3, 1925, nominations were held for members of the Chamber of Deputies. Once again the strength of the Wafd showed itself. Of the 535 persons nominated in 211 out of 214 constituencies, 207 adhered to the Wafd, compared to 33 National Party men, 154 Constitutional Liberals, and 140 independents. But these nominations showed a further fact: although Zaghlul's party was still the largest, it had lost much strength.

As the month of January continued, the Wafd lost further strength. Two days after nominations were closed, fifteen Wafd nominees seceded from the party; and on January 13, Mohammed Said withdrew and decided to run as an independent. In another way Zaghlul lost ground. Instead of an easy triumph in his own constituency as in the past, Zaghlul now had a formidable opponent for his seat, the leader of the National Party, Ali Kamel.

Early in February, when the primary elections for elector-delegates took place, Zaghlul met further rebuffs.

⁶Al Siassa, the organ of the Constitutional Liberals, accused Zaghlul and the Wafd of anti-dynastic plots alleged to have occurred during the summer of 1924. These accusations, however, came in the midst of an election. See The Times, January 3, 1925.

No longer did he receive the great popular attention as was the custom when he would cast his vote. He entered the election booth almost unwelcomed, cast his ballot unobserved, and returned home unnoticed and uncheered. In this election Zaghlul failed to be elected as an elector-delegate, an unimportant rebuff since it did not injure his chances to be elected to the Chamber; but it was a blow to his prestige.

By March 12, when final elections were scheduled, the position of the Wafd had declined even further. Only 174 candidates endorsed Zaghlul, compared to 102 Constitutional Liberals and 100 Unionists. A virtual alliance had been formed between these two parties. Predictions showed that Zaghlul's party would receive a greatly reduced majority in parliament, if it received a majority at all. When the ministry of the interior published the first returns, it appeared that the anti-Zaghlul parties led the election by 109 to 102 seats -- with a few seats undecided.⁸

However, Zaghlul disputed the official figures and prepared to form another ministry. To discourage this attempt, Ziwar on March 13, days before parliament would meet, united three Constitutional Liberals, three independents, and four Unionists into a new and strongly supported ministry. Notable in this new cabinet were Yehia Ibrahim

⁷The Times, February 5, 1925.

⁸The Times, March 18, 1925.

and Aly Beh Maher, Unionists; Mohammed Aly and Abdel Aziz Fahmy, Constitutional Liberals; and Ismail Sidky, an independent.

In the election for his own seat, Zaghlul had again won overwhelmingly; but many of his supporters, including former ministers Mustapha el Nahas and Morcos Hanna -- met defeat. The roster of strong leaders now in opposition to Zaghlul included Mohammed Said, Sarwat Pasha, and Ismail Sidky, the minister of the interior who had directed the elections.

When the new parliament met on March 23, however, the unexpected happened. Although Zaghlul was opposed by Sarwat, the government candidate for the position of president of the Chamber of Deputies, the old magnetic attraction of Zaghlul once again showed itself. He won the position by a surprising majority of 125 votes to 85. Rather than face an unfavorable Chamber of Deputies and an almost certain vote of no-confidence, Ziwar offered his resignation. But neither Fuad nor the British residency wished to call upon Zaghlul, the leader of the apparent majority in parliament, to form a cabinet. Parliament, after a session of only a few hours, was dissolved; Ziwar was reinstated as prime minister; and new elections were announced for May 23.

It was a year after that date, however, before new elections were held. For a while during the intervening

time, Egyptian politics seemed to settle down. Underneath the calm, however, disruption was breaking down the unity of the Ziwar cabinet. While Ziwar took an extended rest in Europe during the summer and early fall, Nashaat intrigued to eject the Constitutional Liberals from the ministry and to establish more firmly the despotic government of the palace. By early September, the conflict between the palace politicians and the Liberals came to a crisis. The chief Liberal leader Abdel Aziz was ordered to resign because of his refusal to enforce a reactionary decree of Al Azhar condemning as heretical the writings of one of its teachers. Upon Aziz's dismissal, the two other Liberals resigned; and a day later, Sidky withdrew.⁹

By October 21, when Sir George, later Lord, Lloyd, whose appointment as high commissioner was announced on May 20 with Allenby's resignation, arrived in Egypt, the situation seemed "chaotic".¹⁰ A week after his arrival, the Wafd and the Constitutional Liberals began to unite in direct opposition to the government -- the cause of this coalition being the drafting of a law designed to suppress opposition parties.

By this time, both the Liberals and the Wafd were fully aware of the despotic tendencies of Fuad and sought

⁹The Times, September 9, 1925; September 11, 1925.

¹⁰Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 147.

to counteract royal absolutism. On November 13, Zaghlul arranged for a meeting of his supporters to celebrate Egyptian independence day and to begin his campaign against the Ziwar ministry. The government forbade the meeting and unsuccessfully sought to prevent it. This act challenged Zaghlul to declare that the present Egyptian government was far less liberal than the British protectorate, which had always allowed a celebration of independence day.¹¹ On November 15, Zaghlul called for the members of the 1925 parliament to meet on November 21 in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. The government quickly forbade this second meeting.

Once again the protest -- this time not against the British -- had risen to considerable proportions. There appeared to be great danger of disturbances if the parliament met or if the members of parliament tried to meet against the wishes of the government. Zaghlul, having apparently learned from past experience of the danger of disturbances to his political position, urged his followers to remain peaceful on the evening of the meeting.

In the meantime Fuad acted. He called in troops and quartered them at Abdin Palace. Before dawn on November 21, the Egyptian government surrounded the area of the parliament buildings with troops, closed off this area to

¹¹The Times, November 16, 1925.

the public, concentrated forces at the ministry of public works, and organized the police to patrol all the streets leading to the parliamentary buildings. In the face of this force, Zaghlul and his supporters made no attempt to hold their meeting in the parliament buildings; instead, they gathered at the Continental-Savoy Hotel; and with 134 deputies and 56 senators, almost complete representation of the opposition parties -- the Constitutional Liberals, the National Party, and the Wafd -- declared themselves to be a legal Parliament.¹²

Zaghlul was unanimously elected as president of parliament, with Mohammed Pasha Mahmud as vice-president. The parliament then passed a resolution of no-confidence in the Ziwar ministry, pledged themselves to defend the constitution, and, before adjourning, appointed a committee to present its resolutions and its dissatisfaction with Ziwar to Fuad.

By December Lloyd noted "widespread and genuine" aversion to the existing Egyptian ministry.¹³ An unpopular ministry was embarrassing for the British government to support. Lloyd saw this condition as a result of the short-sighted policy of the King and Nashaat Pasha in trying to rule Egypt without the Liberals and the best political ele-

¹²Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 148; The Times, November 23, 1925.

¹³Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 152.

ments of Egypt.

During December, Lloyd made great efforts to bolster the Ziwar ministry. For instance, when Ziwar, in anticipation of possible elections, promulgated a new electoral law on December 8 which perpetuated the indirect electoral system and in addition disenfranchised ten to fifteen percent of the electorate by raising the voting age, Lloyd tried unsuccessfully to get Ziwar to modify the law. Soon Lloyd tried to eradicate the root of the unpopularity of the Ziwar ministry by requiring Fuad to dismiss Nashaat -- a thing which Fuad, with great reluctance, did on December 10. Then with this bad influence removed, for the rest of December Lloyd tried to induce the Liberals to break their alliance with the Wafd and re-enter the Ziwar ministry -- an objective designed to eliminate the possibility of Zaghlul's return to power, an objective greatly to the advantage of the British in Egypt.¹⁴ The liberals, however, would not be induced to end their coalition; for doing so might have meant a continuation of the same despotism under slightly different circumstances, a re-enactment of the crisis of the previous September, and further postponement of constitutional government.

"Fresh elections" were what both Zaghlul and the constitutionalists desired; and Lloyd had to support this

¹⁴Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 151-2.

clamor for elections as the only alternative to the continuation of an unpopular and unsatisfactory ministry. When elections under Ziwar's reactionary electoral law were indicated, Zaghlul and his coalition announced that they would boycott the elections. A boycott would embarrass not only the Ziwar ministry but also the British residency--and Lloyd had to make efforts to prevent this boycott.

On January 29, 1926, Zaghlul, speaking for the coalition, called for another meeting of the opposition members of parliament. Lloyd advised Ziwar to allow this meeting to be held, although Ziwar wished at first to forbid it.¹⁵

Flanked by Adly and Sarwat Pashas -- Zaghlul's former political opponents -- Zaghlul presided over this opposition parliament on February 19. Attending the congress were not only members of the opposition parliament but a total of 1,200 delegates from all classes, parties, and representative groups of Egypt. The congress clearly showed that it had nearly the unanimous support of Egyptians.

The congress officially resolved to take no part in the coming elections unless they were held under the electoral law of July 1924 -- Zaghlul's universal, direct suffrage law. The congress reiterated its lack of confidence in the present regime, protested against the unconstitutional acts of the ministry, affirmed the solidarity

¹⁶Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 153-4.

of the opposition, and called for the return of constitutional government.¹⁶

In the face of this determined opposition and lacking the support of Lloyd, Fuad had to give in. Under the prodding of Ziwar, who saw the opportunity to escape his difficulties with "good grace" and realized the chaos that would result if Fuad did not bow to popular demand, Fuad on February 22 signed a decree ordering elections to be held on the basis of Zaghlul's liberal electoral law.

Elections were scheduled for May, the new parliament was to open on May 27, and Ziwar announced that he would resign immediately after the opening of the new parliament in order to permit the selection of a prime minister having the confidence of the country.¹⁷

Thus, with the leadership of Zaghlul, constitutional government was once again scheduled to resume in Egypt; and Fuad's first despotic regime was scheduled to end.

¹⁶The Times, February 20, 1926.

¹⁷The Times, February 23, 1926.

Chapter 19

The Return of Constitutional Government

Zaghlul held the key to the elections of the new parliament. Since he headed the majority party in Egypt -- a party which could win the elections without the help of either the National Party or the Liberals -- Zaghlul could dictate the respective parts which the other two parties of the coalition would play in the election. If the other two parties wanted a return of constitutional government (and it was clear that they did), they had to follow, willingly or unwillingly, the leadership of Zaghlul Pasha.¹

As one of his first moves as leader of the opposition coalition, Zaghlul allocated 155 seats to the Wafd, 43 to the Liberals, and nine to the National Party in which the candidate of the respective party would receive the official sanction of the coalition. At first, the minor parties objected to this overproportionment of seats to the Wafd; and, even more, to Zaghlul's dictation that cer-

¹The Times, May 21, 1926.

tain leaders of both parties -- leaders who had opposed him in his first ministry -- would not receive the official sanction. Not until eleven of twenty-seven members of the central executive committee of the Liberals had resigned did Liberal leaders acquiesce to Zaghlul's action. The National Party, on its part, had to be induced by the Liberals to stay in the coalition.

The Constitutional Liberals accepted this bad situation, not only because they could not win without the Wafd, but also because all indications prior to the elections showed that either Adly or Sarwat, both Liberals, would assume the premiership. Political sources and newspapers reiterated the story that Zaghlul's health was too poor for him to accept the premiership.² Despite the apparent agreement, the coalition was shaky -- and was made even more unsteady by reports that Zaghlul was encouraging independent Wafd candidates to seek election without the official blessing of the coalition.³

The weakness of the coalition, however, was no gain for the crown. The election on May 22, 1926, showed how much the prestige of the crown had sunk and how strongly the country endorsed Zaghlul. While the Union Party of the king gained only seven seats, the Wafd took 150 seats,

²The Times, May 24, 1926.

³The Times, May 22, 1926.

the Liberals 29, the National party five, and the independents 18 -- an overwhelming defeat for the king, an overwhelming victory for Zaghlul.⁴

The shakiness of the coalition, however, led to a standstill in negotiations over the choice of a prime minister and a cabinet. By May 27, it became feared that Zaghlul intended to form a ministry under himself, despite all that had been indicated regarding his unwillingness to take office.

On the previous day, May 26, as Lord Lloyd describes it, Zaghlul was for an Adly ministry; on the following morning, May 27, although Zaghlul had made no public announcement of his ambitions, if he had any, to form a cabinet, Lloyd supposedly learned that Zaghlul had changed his mind about Adly.⁵

Lloyd had prepared quite a while in advance for the possibility of a Zaghlul ministry, feeling that a return of Zaghlul would be a serious blow to British prestige and authority. He had previously received permission from the British foreign office to block the formation of such a cabinet.⁶ Lloyd had kept closely in touch with Adly, and on May 27, when he felt that Zaghlul was about ready to

⁴The Times, May 27, 1926; June 1, 1926.

⁵Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 163.

⁶Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 163.

seek office, he conferred with Fuad to stop such a move. To Fuad, Lloyd made "no secret of the delight" he would have if he denied the premiership to Zaghlul; Fuad, on his part, privately indicated that, if necessity arose, he would dissolve parliament and maintain a palace government rather than accept Zaghlul.⁷

Zaghlul interpreted these moves by Lloyd and Fuad as a challenge for him to seek the premiership seriously. By roundabout means -- the usual ways of rumors -- Zaghlul learned of the views of these two men, thereupon asked for an interview with Lloyd, expressed at this meeting his amazement that he would not be acceptable as prime minister, and indicated that he would be pleased to be the prime minister who would reduce Fuad to obedience to a constitutional ministry. By this time, whether caused by Lloyd's attempt to block him or whether it was his intention all along, Zaghlul seemed to show his desire to form a ministry.

To Lloyd, Zaghlul's "arrogant and prevocative" language at this meeting and his general attitude made immediate action necessary. Lloyd made it plain that Zaghlul would not be acceptable either to the British government or to British public opinion. Further, as a display of force to bolster his position, Lloyd called upon the British government to dispatch warships to Alexandria.⁸

⁷Ikbal Ali Khan, Fuad, 205.

⁸Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 163-4.

With both Fuad and Lloyd united in opposing Zaghlul, many of Zaghlul's supporters -- particularly the Liberals -- saw the danger to constitutional government inherent in the crisis. Men around Zaghlul tried to persuade Zaghlul to give up his attempt to form a cabinet. On June 2 various events happened which influenced the situation. In the afternoon news came that British warships were on the way to Alexandria; on the same day, Judge Kernshaw, protesting the acquittal of two of Zaghlul's supporters for complicity in the assassination of Sir Lee Stack, announced his resignation from the Egyptian Court of Appeals with a statement to Lloyd that the acquittals -- made by a court of two Egyptians and himself -- were against the weight of the evidence. This event caused Lloyd to inform the Egyptian prime minister Ziwar Pasha that these acquittals could not be considered as justified and to threaten strong measures to protect the rights and security of foreigners.

These various events showed Zaghlul the virtual impossibility of forming a cabinet and made him "apparently at last appreciate the unsurpassable obstacles resulting from his previous tenure of office."⁹ In any case, late at night on June 2, Zaghlul realized the inevitable; he had to renounce office in favor of Adly Pasha.

The next day, at a luncheon meeting of members of

⁹The Times, June 4, 1926.

parliament at the Continental Hotel, a Wafd deputy made the formal appeal to Zaghlul not to assume the premiership. Despite the fact that the events at the meeting were "pre-arranged,"¹⁰ Zaghlul showed his reluctance in giving up his desire to form a ministry. He answered the Wafd delegate that although his health was bad, he would sacrifice his health for the good of the country; that he had altered his original intention not to seek the premiership because certain persons tried to prevent his becoming premier; that he had "complete confidence" in any ministry which Adly would form if his followers wished to see Adly premier.¹¹ If Zaghlul thought that his followers would rally to demand him as premier at this occasion, Zaghlul was mistaken; at least, in his speech, Zaghlul had given his followers this option. However, the delegates, with considerable enthusiasm, approved of the decision that Adly should form the ministry. And so, Zaghlul bowed out; and Adly, after conferences with Zaghlul on the same day, began to select his ministers.

On June 5, the cabinet was ready. Zaghlul performed the formalities of having the cabinet called, since as majority leader he should have had the right to form it.

¹⁰The Times, June 4, 1926.

¹¹The Times, June 4, 1926. I have used The Times account in preference to the account of Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 166-7. This latter account differs in a number of ways from The Times account, but, of course, it was written with a decided bias and very much later.

In a meeting with Lloyd Zaghlul announced that he would never again seek the office. Later in the afternoon, Zaghlul was received by Fuad, whom Zaghlul advised to call Adly. Adly was summoned; the cabinet was announced.

The ministry was a coalition consisting of three Liberals, Adly, Sarwat, and Mohammed Pasha Mahmud; one independent; four members of the Wafd, who had been in Zaghlul's 1924 cabinet; and two additional supporters of the Wafd, who had until December 1, 1925, held office in Ziwar's Cabinet. It was a strong government; all its members had held previous cabinet positions; all were influential men in their respective parties. As for himself, Zaghlul decided to remain outside the cabinet.

When parliament met on June 10, Zaghlul received his usual reward of being elected president of the Chamber of Deputies. In accepting this position, Zaghlul declared that he could not be very active; but he emphasized his support of Adly, reserved the right to criticize, and spoke of the need of legislation to insure a continuous constitutional regime.¹²

This speech was indicative of a change in his attitude -- a growing and statesmanlike moderation -- toward Egyptian politics. By this time, he had become far more moderate than the rest of his party, which still expected

¹²The Times, June 11, 1926.

an extreme policy of protest to the British from him; and he used his post -- far more actively than expected -- to control the chamber with a firm hand, to suppress unnecessary agitation, to advance the moderate program of the Adly ministry, and to insure constitutional government.

The program of the Adly ministry -- as revealed in the speech from the throne -- called for a strengthening of the constitutional regime, reforms in education and sanitation, a tariff in order to protect industry, entrance into the League of Nations, and, above all, development of friendly relations with Great Britain.

Under Zaghlul's guidance, the Egyptian parliament established a national university to replace Al Azhar; granted money to erect five new hospitals and several child welfare centers in order to combat disease and infant mortality in Egypt.

The crown likewise came under inspection of parliament. Indeed, it was quite logical that delegates, who had suffered under an absolute regime, would turn to criticize the king. Zaghlul could prevent attacks on the king, but since royalist newspapers taunted him for his moderation and amenability to the British and since the king privately threatened parliament with dissolution, Lloyd believed that Zaghlul would not likely "remain patient for long."¹³

¹³Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 180.

Zaghlul controlled the parliament with "mastery". When a deputy became too argumentative, Zaghlul would shout for him to sit down -- "and that deputy meekly sat down." If a quorum were not present, Zaghlul would suspend the session, walk into the lobby, lecture to the lounging deputies, who would immediately return with "chastened mien."¹⁴

Zaghlul had sufficient provocations to justify an attack on the king, but he kept the chamber from becoming "too prevocative" and led them into a "concern for the health and welfare of the country at large."¹⁵ When the parliamentary finance committee under Sidky studied royal expenditures in August, discovered the tremendous rise in royal expenditures from £82,000 in 1914 to £862,000 in 1925, and recommended royal economy and a cut in the grant to the king, Zaghlul caused the king's grant to pass without a cut and without doing more than suggest royal economy.

When another parliamentary committee condemned all royal decrees during the Ziwar regime, Zaghlul worked out a compromise which kept the effect of the decrease while criticizing their principle and providing for penalties in event anyone promulgated any future decrees without parliamentary sanction. On August 5, upon the recommenda-

¹⁴Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 178.

¹⁵Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 188.

tion of the finance committee, the parliament proceeded to abolish a host of legations and consulates established by Fuad to enhance his prestige as king.

These various measures irritated Fuad -- a man easily given over to ungovernable rages -- even though the criticism of him had been restrained to a large extent by Zaghlul. Fuad, however could do little except make an empty threat of dissolution, heap his rage and irritation on Adly Pasha, and tactlessly express his complete contempt for parliament.¹⁶ The British, since they were the object of little criticism on the part of Zaghlul and the nationalists at this time, saw that it was to their advantage to encourage the moderately disposed constitutionalists and their leaders, Adly and Zaghlul.

Adly and his ministry, however, began to meet more difficulties than the wrath of Fuad, who was particularly incensed by the fact that deputies, as they had done in 1924, invaded government offices, asked for files and papers, disrupted the administration to some extent, and insisted on giving detailed instructions to the administration. Adly could do nothing about stopping this interference, because Zaghlul felt the deputies should enjoy this prerogative. On one occasion in September, after Adly had hurriedly arrived from the palace where he had

¹⁶Ikbāl Ali Khan, Fuad, 225-7.

suffered a tirade from Fuad over the matter, he entered the chamber to hear Zaghlul declaim on the rights of deputies to interfere in the administration. Momentarily Adly and Zaghlul clashed; but the ministry kept in office despite this difficulty.¹⁷

It was Zaghlul's support of the Adly government, his silencing of the extreme elements in parliament, and his assistance to their political program, which kept Adly in power as long as he did; for Fuad had increased his distaste and distrust for Adly. Fuad had another ungovernable rage because of the fact that at the reopening of parliament on November 18, the ministry with few exceptions saluted Fuad in a manner well-calculated to give offense (as he conceived it); and the deputies cheered Fuad's speech "with a weak and synchronized clapping," while greeting Zaghlul in contrast "with tumultuous cheering."¹⁸ Moreover Zaghlul, in his speech accepting the presidency of the Chamber, once again prayed that the country be preserved from intrigues -- an obvious reminder to Fuad not to repeat the crisis over Nashaat in 1924.¹⁹

The real difficulty which began to face the Adly ministry began in the fall of 1926 with the decline of

¹⁷Ikbāl Ali Khan, Fuad, 227-8.

¹⁸Ikbāl Ali Khan, Fuad, 228.

¹⁹The Times, November 19, 1926.

cotton prices. An economic crisis set in. The government had to start buying cotton at \$36 a kantar in the hopes of keeping up the price, to set aside four million pounds to help the small cultivator, and to restrict the production of cotton to one-third of the cultivated area. For his part, Zaghlul firmly backed the government's program; and, as an example to landowners in this crisis, remitted upon the petition of his tenants one-half of the rent due him.

The economic difficulties could not be halted; nor the criticism of government measures in parliament. On January 10, 1927, the ministry had to order a two-thirds reduction of the cultivated area of cotton, to extend credit to cotton farmers for another four months' term, to encourage cooperatives, and to plan work on raising the height of the Asswam Dam and constructing a new berrage.

The crisis of the Adly ministry occurred on April 18 as a result of discussions in parliament over the government's economic policy. The Chamber of Deputies made a motion to transfer government funds from the Bank of Egypt to an entirely Egyptian bank. Along with this motion, a member included a resolution thanking the ministry for its work on the budget. Another member stood up and declared that there was nothing for which to thank the government. When the motion failed to pass, the ministry interpreted the motion as an unfavorable vote of confidence. Adly

immediately and unexpectedly resigned.²⁰

Adly was by this time tired of attacks and difficulties; his whole cabinet, including the closest Zaghlul supporters in it, were likewise disgusted. In consequence, Adly refused to consider Zaghlul's request to stay in office. The formation of a new government was Zaghlul's problem as the leader of the majority party.

²⁰The Times, April 19, 1927.

CHAPTER 20

The Last Phase: Moderation

Though frequently ill during this period, Zaghlul still played a prominent role in Egyptian politics: he was indispensable in forming a cabinet. Zaghlul was not only the sole leader of the Wafd having the confidence of its diverse elements -- both the moderate men of the Wafd in the cabinet and the extreme anti-British leaders like Ahmed Maher and Nekrashi in parliament -- but also was the only leader whose decisions and guidance were acceptable to the Liberals.

In turn, the extremists were dissatisfied with Zaghlul's conduct of affairs in the chamber and were ambitious for cabinet office. Moreover, Zaghlul had difficulty in convincing the Liberal leaders that he could control the criticism of these extremists. In order to get a cabinet formed, Zaghlul had to reconcile these diverse elements; and, as a result, complicated negotiations developed between the palace and Zaghlul, ill at the "House of the Nation," with Twefik Nessim, the King's head of his personal cabinet, as the go-between. At first both Adly and Sarwat refused to form a cabinet. When, on April 22, Zaghlul appealed to Sarwat per-

sonally, Sarwat took up the task and by April 25 had formed a cabinet -- one identical, except for one new member, with Adly's Cabinet.

Sarwat formed his government on the condition that Zaghlul, if his health permitted in the future, should take over the premiership -- a thing that was unlikely and seemed more like a means by which Sarwat, if he grew dissatisfied with cabinet position, could withdraw from the scene.¹

The new ministry not only was the same as the previous one and supported the same policies, but also met the same dissatisfaction of the extremists. On May 13, Zaghlul and all the cabinet except Sarwat met at Zaghlul's country place to smooth out the difficulties arising from the fact that deputies belonging to the majority still embarrassed the cabinet with uncomfortable criticism and questioning. Zaghlul himself was displeased with the fact that deputies ignored his injunction that all Wafd deputies should first submit questions to be asked ministers to the parliamentary committee of the Wafd.²

Suddenly, on May 18, another crisis broke. Sarwat in accepting office the month before, had made his acceptance conditional of Zaghlul's assurance that interference in the

¹The Times, April 26, 1927.

²Ibid., May 17, 1927.

details of administration by members of parliament -- interference that contributed to Adly's resignation -- would be curbed. On this date, when fifteen senators and deputies petitioned Sarwat to re-instate a village mayor whom Adly had previously removed and had refused to reappoint, Sarwat saw his ministry being interfered with and announced that he would resign. Zaghlul, resting at his country estate, had to return immediately to Cairo.

So long as Zaghlul kept in the chair of the Chamber of Deputies, the criticism of the government was restrained; so long as Zaghlul stayed on the political scene, the cabinet could work without undue interference. As Zaghlul hurriedly arrived in Cairo on May 19, he strode into the Chamber, tolled his fire bell to announce his coming, and cowed his deputies into complete submission as a sign of his displeasure with their actions in causing a cabinet crisis. Only by the promise of "utmost personal support" did Zaghlul induce Sarwat to stay in office.³

The settlement of this crisis, however, provided only a momentary lull. Another larger and more dangerous crisis appeared when Zaghlul returned to Cairo. A crisis regarding the Egyptian army had been brewing for several months and had been one of the future difficulties which Adly had wanted

³The Times, May 20, 1927.

to avoid by resigning: the war committee of parliament was about to announce changes in the organization of the Egyptian army.

In the course of its report to the chamber on May 23, the committee recommended that the appropriation to the sirdar, the British officer commanding the Egyptian army, be cut off; that the LE 750,000 appropriation to support the army in the Sudan be suspended unless Egyptians were given information as to its disposal; that the army be enlarged, that new artillery equipment be purchased, and that a naval school be established.⁴

In March, long before these proposals had been officially announced, Lloyd had begun to take action. These proposals meant, as far as Lloyd was concerned, an attempt of the Wafd to control the army politically and to develop it into an anti-British weapon. The British government could not permit an unfriendly force near its vital imperial communications. As a result, early in 1927, Lloyd outlined a policy acceptable to the British foreign office -- a policy designed to keep the British in control of the army and to decrease the size of the army gradually.⁵

With Lloyd and the parliamentary war committee both acting in diametrically opposite directions, there was bound

⁴The Times, May 25, 1927.

⁵Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 194-8.

to be a conflict. On the weekend of May 21-22 this conflict began to break. Sarwat on that weekend had two conversations with the residency and a long conference with Zaghlul. Zaghlul on May 22 found himself occupied with a three hour audience with Fuad, with a conference with Adly Pasha, and with an emergency meeting of the Zaghlulist club at which all important policies were debated and decided. Zaghlul originally had backed the extremist demands for army control; but he was now wavering: "at one moment there was hope that he would reject extremists counsels and listen to words of moderation."⁶

By this time Lloyd had stated the official British position regarding changes in the Egyptian army. He could not permit that the appropriation for the sirdar be cut off, could not permit the war minister to control the Egyptian army. Sarwat, on his part, on May 24 privately wrote Lloyd that Egypt should legally have "complete liberty" in making the changes which the Egyptian government saw fit.⁷

After Lloyd had made his position known, the Chamber of Deputies took up the struggle with Lloyd. In retaliation,

⁶Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 207. In taking his stand upon the Army Crisis, Lloyd in Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 195, states quite frankly that he counted not only "upon the assurances of the Prime Minister that he would do his best to help negotiations upon these lines" but also "upon Zaghlul's undoubted anxieties in regard to the Constitution which might lead him even to conclude that in order to avoid danger our demands must be accepted."

⁷Ibid., 2: 208.

it spent the entire session of May 26 criticizing Lloyd's recent tour to Minia in upper Egypt, debated for two hours on this question, made "studied and scurrilous" speeches about Lloyd, and finally passed a resolution censuring all the notables and the governor of Minia for receiving Lloyd. Zaghlul presided over the chamber and permitted the deputies to criticize as freely as they wished.⁸

The chamber had been previously displeased with Lloyd. On May 19, for instance, after Sarwat had agreed to remain as premier, the chamber had spent much time questioning Sarwat on Lloyd's status as high commissioner and on his right to have precedence over other diplomatic representatives. Lloyd was not well-liked.

Between May 23 and May 30, both sides sparred over the question of army control, with Zaghlul and Sarwat attempting to conciliate Lloyd and the Chamber of Deputies. But nothing came of mediation; the chamber went ahead with its recommendations. On May 30, Lloyd handed Sarwat a forceful note in which he demanded that the funds for the sirdar be continued for another three years, and that appointments of officers in the Egyptian army be sent by the sirdar to Fuad for approval, instead of to the Egyptian war minister, as the chamber recommended. He called for warships to be dispatched to Alexandria.

⁸The Times, May 27, 1927; May 29, 1927.

Once again the round of conferences began. Sarwat, as soon as he had received the note, went to the chamber to confer with Zaghlul, who had already conferred again with Fuad. Zaghlul held the key whether to compromise or to resist as he had done when Allenby had presented his ultimatum. The control of the Egyptian army by Egyptians had always been one of his policies; it was he, who found in 1924, that the command of the Egyptian army by a foreigner was an insult to Egyptian independence. But Lloyd had presented an uncompromising stand and a display of force.

Moreover, Zaghlul had grown older and more moderate. He had learned, when he had resisted the Allenby ultimatum in 1924, how impossible it was to resist British force and how quickly Fuad had overthrown constitutional government once given the opportunity. The preservation of the constitution was far more important than a stand on the rights of Egypt -- a stand that was doomed to failure.

The Sarwat ministry took ample time to work out a solution agreeable to all parties concerned. And one was reached -- one in which Zaghlul figured prominently; for Sarwat, despite "all his sagacity," could not possibly have "secured a settlement acceptable by his fellow-countrymen" had not Zaghlul thrown his "conciliatory and moderating influence...so markedly displayed during the final stages"

of the crisis, behind Sarwat.⁹

On June 16, with Zaghlul in the presiding chair, Sarwat announced to the chamber the solution of the army crisis. He acceded to the principal demands of Lord Lloyd -- namely, the continuation of the sirdar and the removal of political influences in the appointment of army officers. This solution, approved by Zaghlul, was also acceptable to the chamber. Whether or not the Egyptian government had surrendered its essential sovereignty in capitulating to British demands is a question difficult to answer. So long as Zaghlul and Sarwat believed that Egyptian sovereignty was not diminished, the chamber accepted their decision and cheered the ending of the crisis. Zaghlul curbed those members of parliament who were disposed to criticize and debate, kept the discussions in the chamber on a high level, broke up possible agitation before it could start.

The settlement of the army crisis was Zaghlul's last service to the Egyptian nation. The days following found him frequently ill -- unable, for instance, to bid Fuad a personal farewell on June 24 when Fuad set out to Europe for a visit to Great Britain. The parliament ended its sessions on July 14, with Zaghlul making a few comments to the chamber on their persistent and uncomfortable criticism of the ministry -- things of which Zaghlul did not approve.

⁹The Times, June 15, 1927.

Zaghlul had grown ill, tired, and unable to continue the strenuous activity of his previous years. In the settlement of crises in the early part of 1927, he had perhaps given up too much of his strength. But in his position as president of the chamber, as leader of the majority, and as a sort of elder statesman he had been indispensable in the settling of the gravest crises. But he had been able to control the factional strife within the Wafd only with increasing difficulty. Since he had no ministerial ambitions, he could avoid the influences which had led him in the past to take extreme courses; nor did he have the physical strength to be an extremist. As a result, he was able to place the welfare of the nation over his own political advantage. Since his position as Egypt's great leader could not be challenged, he deliberately directed his policy for the preservation of constitutional government, even at the sacrifice of all his ideals which had governed his actions from 1918 on. He had made constitutional government, during his lifetime, succeed.

Upon the closing of parliament, Zaghlul retired to his country home. By the middle of August, disquieting news regarding his health began to spread. On August 17, when he was ill with a temperature of 103 and a painful abscess of his ear, Cairo doctors rushed to his home in Mesquid Wassef to give him the best possible treatment. For several days he

suffered from this illness; then he seemed to grow better. About August 22, on the advice of doctors, he returned to Cairo for further treatment. On August 23, he grew worse; he was unable to receive visitors. As the day wore on and reports became steadily more "disheartening," crowds gathered around the "House of the Nation," gradually grew more and more sad. As sunset came, hundreds of women wept openly in front of the house; wept silently for fear of disturbing the sinking pasha.¹⁰

Zaghlul had returned to Cairo only to die and the inhabitants of Cairo soon realized that fact. In the night of August 23, while all of Cairo waited, he quietly died.

Immediately the news passed out to the people of the nation. The women at vigil at Zaghlul's house gave way to "well welling" -- the sign of extreme grief in Oriental nations. Early the next morning, as soon as the news of his death had spread, "streams of visitors poured" into Cairo to express their final devotion to their hero.¹¹ All government offices closed, all businesses ceased, all flags were flown at half-mast. Fuad decreed a state funeral for Zaghlul -- the last respect which Fuad, who had given Zaghlul during his lifetime little voluntary respect, could do; the last ironic act

¹⁰The New York Times, August 24, 1927.

¹¹The Times, August 25, 1927.

of a ruler, who, because the death of Zaghlul had left the monarchy without a leader of sufficient caliber to oppose it, had gained by the death of Zaghlul, if no other person had¹² gained.

By mid-afternoon, the city was so clogged with people that all traffic had ceased in the center. The funeral procession started on its way at 4:30 in the afternoon, led by the chief mourners of the nation: Tewfik Nessim, the king's representative; Nevile Henderson, the British minister to Egypt; a delegation of Egyptian princes; Fathallah Pasha Barakat, Zaghlul's nephew and family representative; and the Egyptian ministry itself. The procession was so long that it took eighty-five minutes to pass a given point; it was composed of twenty-five thousand people -- to say nothing of the masses who watched and mourned.

Zaghlul had unexpectedly left Egypt at a time when he was still needed: his departure created a vacuum in leadership which could not be filled. Before the country were two vital problems -- the continuation of constitutional government and the consummation of a treaty with Great Britain. Already, as Zaghlul lay dying, Sarwat was negotiating in Great Britain over the terms of the treaty. Zaghlul was recognized by both Egyptians and Britons as the one man who

¹²Ikbal Ali Khan, Fuad, 239.

could induce Egyptians to accept a treaty.¹³ And Zaghlul, in order to preserve constitutional government, would undoubtedly have compromised on a solution of Anglo-Egyptian differences, a kind of compromise such as he made over the army crisis of 1927. Sarwat, as he learned in his later downfall as prime minister, could not make a treaty acceptable to Egyptians.

During his lifetime, from his earliest days with Mohammed Abdu until his death, Zaghlul had found the need of three great changes in Egypt. He had done unequalled work on two of these changes. Without him Egypt would have never gained the extensive measure of independence which it enjoyed; without him Egypt, during his last years, would not have enjoyed a constitutional regime. "In forty-five years of struggle Zaghlul had succeeded in training his people to use the machinery of democratic and parliamentary government and in forcing European politicians to recognize their ambi-¹⁴tions." During his lifetime, he had insured the continuation of this constitutional government, even though it meant, at the moment, a sacrifice of complete independence.

Unfortunately, he had not made the constitutional idea enduring enough to last many years after his death. It is too early to judge whether the seeds of constitutional

¹³Lloyd, Egypt Since Cromer, 2: 231.

¹⁴Kohn, Nationalism and Imperialism in the Near East, 96.

government will eventually flourish; in any case, three years after his death, Fuad once again established personal absolutism.

For the third of the great needs of Egypt -- the reform of Islam fostered so earnestly by Zaghlul's teacher Mohammed Abdu -- Zaghlul had done little; he was not fitted as a scholar or a thinker to foster this reform.

He had lived as a hero: but he had not won the last battle for independence. He had suffered -- exile, persecution, abuse -- but his sufferings had not made him a saint, a Gandhi, or a martyr, a Mazzini, whom the people could not quickly forget.

Despite all his ability to dramatize the issues before Egypt, all his political sagacity, all his magnetic appeal to the masses, all his incomparable service to the independence of Egypt, he had gained the title of "Father of His People" no more than for his lifetime; the reputation could not be long-lived. He had not stirred men's minds with new ideas to outlast his deeds. He had stirred men to action, but not men to think: therein lies his failure -- his want of true greatness.

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