

Muṣṭafā al-Nahhās:
A Case Study of Egyptian Political Leadership

Mohammed Alaa el-Din Aly
Shawky El-Hadidy

Thesis submitted for the Degree of PhD in Politics,
Department of Economic and Political Studies,
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

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Abstract

Nahhâs' rise to the leadership of the Wafd and the national movement reflected the rise of a new social force in Egyptian society and politics, the urban, middle-class professionals, especially the lawyers. This group, which first adopted the ideology of the Watanî Party under the leadership of Muṣṭafâ Kâmil at the turn of the century, would soon shift its ideological orientation towards the ideology of the Umma Party controlled by its rural landowner supporters, and join forces under the leadership of Saâd Zaghlûl and the newly-created Wafd Party.

Nahhâs was soon to clash with the landowners, and his political career would be marked inside the Party by a continuous struggle of his wing for the domination of the Party, partly achieved in 1927 by his election, and then by the defection of the rival wing in 1932. The policy of the Party under the leadership of Nahhâs towards the British and the Palace reflected the inner balance of power between the two wings. The landowners being defeated by the lawyers in the elections brought about by the 1923 Constitution, would abandon their Umma ant-autocratic principles, while Nahhâs, the ex-Watanî adherent, would implement the Umma's concept of co-operation with the British to achieve gradual independence, while at the same time curtailing the power of the Palace for a more constitutional representative government. In this light we can understand the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty and the Palace incident of 4 February 1942.

It was with the rise of a new urban middle class after World War II and the decline of Nahhâs as a representative of this group by bringing into the leadership ranks of the Wafd a landowner, Sirâj al-Dîn, that the social base on which he depended moved to other political groups which finally succeeded in bringing down the whole of Nahhâs' regime in 1952.

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Abbreviations Used in the Footnotes

FO = Foreign Office
CAB = Cabinet
WO = War Office
PREM = Prime Minister's Office

Glossary

Majlis al-Nuwwâb Chamber of Deputies (Debates)
Dâr al-Watha'iq National Archives (Cairo)

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TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES

THAT OTHERS MIGHT LIVE

Introduction

For more than thirty years, the political life of Egypt was characterized by a contesting "game" of power among three rival groups. First of these were the British, who held a special position in the country despite the fact that Egypt was granted independence in 1922. Yet, four main issues, "the four reserved points", allowed Britain to retain troops and considerable influence in the country, if not the strongest influence. The second was the Monarchy, that had ruled Egypt since the beginning of the nineteenth century, and were of Albanian origin. It ^{was} by its invitation that the British first intervened in 1882, on their behalf, to face a hostile uprising led by some sections of Egyptian officers. Though the power of the Palace was much curtailed by the British presence, it was still a major force to be reckoned with and very much a part of the ruling elite. The third comprised the leaders of the nationalist liberal movement, which emerged after World War One. It constituted what was to be known as the "Egyptian Delegation", or in its Arabic usage, the "Wafd", that formally demanded independence from Britain. This political movement became the most popular and dominating force among the masses at large.

The Wafd was presided over by two leaders, Saád Zaghlûl and Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs, 1918-27 and 1927-53 respectively. For both of them an independent Egypt free of British domination, and a constitutional government which curtailed the power of the Monarchy were their dual aims. They had the task of confronting both the British and the Monarchy. Alliances were often drawn between two of the three forces, only to be changed when circumstances required it.

For a student of politics, confining politics to the study of power for the moment, that was an ideal scene of a Zero-Sum Game played by three actors, and an ideal situation for a case study.

The emphasis here will be on one of the players, the Wafd, and the purpose of this study is to come to an understanding of how and why the "Wafd" acted the way it did between the years of 1918 and 1953.

A detailed study of the "Wafd" at large, would be beyond the scope and length of this thesis. Instead, we will focus on the leader of the "Wafd", who not only represented the Wafd, but also enjoyed immense powers inside it. To the extent that one studies the character of its leaders, Saád or Nahhâs, you are also studying the policies, social base, leadership, and ideas of that movement. On the other hand, one must not fall under the mistaken impression that this was a personal movement, but only that the personality of the leader could be used as a means for the study and understanding of the Wafd.

Nahhâs was chosen for this study for two reasons. One is the availability of a vast literature concerning the first leader of the Wafd, Saád Zaghlûl, in contrast to the scanty material available about Nahhâs, especially after 1952. Except for two minor books¹ and an article² explaining the reasons of the neglect of such a personality, I was not able to trace any other source. The article, for instance, states that because of the collision between the new regime which emerged after 1952 and the Wafd, Nahhâs' name was omitted as official policy. Also, most Egyptian historians have not been Wafdists, and some of them were known for their anti-Wafd sentiments. Two examples are Ahmad Shafiq, the "Palace historian" as he was known, and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Râfi'i who was a pro-Watani, and therefore not wholly unbiased against Nahhâs. That was evident when he described the return

1. Mihni Gorgi wa Yûsuf 'Abdu Sir A'zamit Hadarat Sahib al-Dawla al-Ra'is al-Galil Mustafâ al-Nahhâs Pasha Matbâit al-Iqtisad Cairo 1936. 'Abbass Hafiz Muşţafâ al-Nahhâs Al-Zâma wa al-Za'aim Matbâit Misr Cairo 1936.

2. See 'Abd al-'Azim Ramadan, "Muşţafâ al-Nahhâs al-Zâaim Allezi Nasiyahou al-Mouârkûm" Al-Kâtib Vol. 162 September 1974, pp. 77-82.

of the Wafd to power after the 1950 elections as the "return of absolute rule."

The second reason is the near total ignorance which exists about the character of Nabhâs. Some explanation is owed to my generation (born after 1952) of Nabhâs' role in Egyptian politics. He was the leader of the largest political party (see appendix 1 for the table of different elections), and for a very considerable time commanded the popular support of half of those who voted in recent Egyptian political history; that is from the time of his election as leader of the Wafd in September 1927 to the time of the dissolution of all political parties in Egypt in March 1952. Thus, for twenty-five years Nabhâs was the leader of a great section of the population in Egypt, and enjoyed a popularity unparalleled by any other leader. But was he also a charismatic leader?

Finally, as a case study of a charismatic national liberal leadership it attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) What was Nabhâs' perception of his goal (independence and defence of the Constitution), and of his main opponents, the British and the Palace?
- 2) How did Nabhâs go about achieving his goals, his ideology and strategy, and how did he actually implement them, that is, what were his policies and tactics?
- 3) What was the social base of Nabhâs' charismatic leadership?

For the purpose of this study, a chronological order of events will be followed: the ascendancy of Nabhâs over Egyptian political life, his rise to the leadership of the Wafd, his assumption of power as Prime Minister of Egypt seven times, his dealings with the British and the Monarchy, such as the Treaty of 1936 with Britain, and the famous Palace incident of 4 February 1942, and finally the events which led to the overthrow of the whole system by the army's intervention on 23 July 1952 and Nabhâs' personal eclipse into political oblivion. The thesis will focus on Nabhâs as a political leader in dealing with

political matters as defined in the areas mentioned. Wider matters of economic and social policy and the ideas of Nahhâs as leader of the "Wafd" will be touched upon only when deemed necessary for the purpose of the argument presented in this work. Generally though, public policies of Nahhâs' cabinets and other social and economic measures are not discussed.

A wide range of sources was used. Primary sources were, of course, the first to be consulted. For English sources, all material was available without any difficulty either in the Public Record Office at Kew in London for the general correspondence (political) between the Foreign Office in London and the Residency in Cairo, Egypt. Another source was the Middle Eastern Centre of St. Antony's College at Oxford for personal papers such as the Diaries of Miles Lampson, Lord Killearn (British High Commissioner, Ambassador in Egypt 1934-1946). Access to Egyptian sources was more problematic. First, not all the material needed was readily available, as for example, minutes of cabinet meetings, and minutes of the Wafd's party meetings. Secondly, access to certain documents came under the fifty-year rule. This made certain files in the Egyptian Public Record Office (Dar al-Wathâ'iq al-Qawmiyya) unattainable. Fortunately enough access to the 'Abdîn Palace Archives was comparatively easier. Interviews with ordinary ex-Wafdists gave me a clear picture of the atmosphere that prevailed before 1952. Some interviews were held with prominent Wafdists who were easy to reach. Their remarks, however, dealt with very general matters. A degree of caution on the part of these interviewees was due perhaps to the possibility of the re-emergence of the Wafd (it re-emerged under the name of the New Wafd led by Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn in 1978 and once more in 1983 to the dismay of the authorities which had to act swiftly to suppress it both times). Also a number of people claimed Nahhâs' diaries actually existed. Such was the claim of Diya'

al-Dīn Bībars in his article "Readings in Nahhās' Diaries".³ Yet both Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn (Secretary of the Wafd then) and Mr. 'Abd al-Azīz al-Nahhās (Nahhās Pāshā's nephew) denied any knowledge of a diary or diaries. More illuminating was the time spent in Samanoud, Nahhās's birthplace and constituency. Naturally all necessary published materials in Arabic and English periodicals, books, and PhD theses were consulted.

In January 1984, the New Wafd was once more legalized by the court as an active political party. It was revived under the leadership of Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn, and the memory of Nahhās was evoked once more. It contested parliamentary elections, and under the present system it won 58 seats out of 448 seats in Parliament or 12 per cent of the popular vote.

3. Bībars, Dya' al-Dīn Safhāt Maghula min Mudhakirāt al-Nahhās
Al-Isbi'a al-'Arabi Beirut 3 February 1975.

Chapter One

The Rise of Nahhâs

A. Nahhâs Background

Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs was born on 15 June 1879 in the town of Samanoud, in the province of Gharbiya. His father Sheikh Muḥammad al-Nahhâs, a timber merchant, was noted for his honesty and integrity. It seems that his father had some religious education, but was not a graduate of the Azhar. Although well-off, he was not a rich merchant. He owned some property, stores and buildings, but not agricultural land. All that is known of Muṣṭafâ's mother was that she was a pious woman. Muṣṭafâ had also brothers and sisters. As any child of his background in that environment, Muṣṭafâ learned the Qur'an by heart and started praying at an early age, seven or ten in different reports. He went to the local Quranic school, a Kuttâb, where he learned to read and write and the elementary principles of mathematics.¹

When Muṣṭafâ became eleven years old, his father, Sheikh Muḥammad, took him to the local telegraph office to learn the job. It is interesting to note that Sheikh Muḥammad thought of that career for his son rather than to bring him into the family business. To the astonishment of everybody, the eleven year old child was able to memorize the telegraph code in only three days. On hearing this, a high-ranking official who was passing by, paid a visit to Sheikh Muḥammad and convinced him that his son's talents should not be wasted. On his advice, Muṣṭafâ moved to Cairo for the first time to enter the Nasiraiyah Primary school. He was enrolled in the second grade, and was the first of all his classmates in all the subjects.

1. Gorgî, pp. 5-12.

Later he entered the Khediwiya Secondary school where he paid tuition fees from which he was subsequently exempted on the basis of his high scholastic record. An incident which occurred at that time provides a clue to Muṣṭafâ's personality. On one of his inspection tours to the school, Lord Kitchener, the British High Commissioner, pointed out to Mustafâ the advantages of entering the army. Muṣṭafâ, proudly and defiantly, answered that he was exempted from tuition not due to poverty or need, but because of his achievements in class. Eventually, at the age of seventeen, in the year 1896, Mustafâ entered the School of Law.² Four years later, in the year 1900, he graduated at the age of twenty-one, at the top of his class. The custom at that time was that graduates of the Law School would be appointed as clerks in the Judiciary with a salary of five pounds a month. Mustafâ urged his colleagues to boycott these appointments. When he was summoned by a high official to explain his attitude, he demanded an immediate rise in the salary to fifteen pounds. A compromise was reached, and ten pounds was agreed on, and he became an assistant examining magistrate. However, he himself refused to be appointed and preferred to work as a lawyer, in order "to be a free man" as he put it.³

Nahhâs, after refusing to join the government, got his first job with Muḥammad Farîd (1868-1919), who was to succeed Muṣṭafâ Kâmil as leader of the Watani Party. He did not work as a junior partner still under training, but insisted on taking on several cases in court. Soon after that he left Farid to become a full partner of a famous lawyer in Mansoura. He was to share everything in his office, and had his name

2. 'Abbâs, Hâfiz, Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs al-Za'ama wa al-Z'aime, Matbaât Misr Cairo 1936, pp. 249-269.

3. Gorgi, pp. 14-17.

printed on every document next to the other man's name.

Nahhâs worked as a lawyer for four years. By the end of this time, in 1904, 'Abd al-Khâliq Tharwaṭ, head of the courts department at the Ministry of Justice offered Nahhâs the position of a judge, which he accepted only after the former visited his father and persuaded him to convince his son to accept it. Nahhâs did not reject his father's advice. He was twenty-five years old, and was to continue to be a judge for sixteen years, when he was expelled for joining the Wafd in 1919.⁴ Nahhâs would later remember his youth and describe it by saying that he had studied law and the principles of justice and equality, the freedom of individuals and nations. He worked as a lawyer and judge and democracy became his interest. And as a young man he was attracted by two personalities, Muṣṭafâ Kâmil and Saâd Zaghlûl. He interpreted Muṣṭafâ Kâmil's connection with Khedive 'Abbâs Helmi, the representative of the legal authority, as an attempt to dissociate the legal authority from the hands of the British. That was the reason for his support for the Watani Party and his many friendships among its men.⁵

One could say that by that time Nahhâs' personality was already shaped and that a picture of him had emerged as someone who was religious, did not miss a prayer, never smoked or drank alcohol. A bachelor, but responsible for the family of his sister whose two sons lived with him and to whom he was like a father, he was an honest lawyer who never took a case unless he was quite sure the accused was innocent. His first appointment as a judge was in Qinâ and Aswân where he stayed there for six years, 1903-1908. Then he spent the following nine years in the Delta, Cairo, and Tantâ, the town of his last

4. Gorgi, p. 12. Hafiz p. 228.

5. Salâh al-Din, al-Shâhid, Dhikrayatî fi 'Ahdîn Dâr al-Ma'arif Fi Misr Cairo, 1976, p. 21.

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appointment where he was given the title of Bey. In all these years he met Saád Zaghlûl only twice.⁶

B. Early Contacts with Saád Zaghlûl and the Composition of the First Wafd

Nahhâs was deeply moved by President Wilson's fourteen points after the end of the Great War. The American President had stated that small nations had the right to determine their destiny. This was music to the ears of Nahhâs after what he had seen of the British during that war. For him the British were responsible for the much hated system of conscription, forcing Egyptians to provide a labour force in the war on her side, and was to be blamed for plundering the land.⁷ A judge in Tantâ at that time, Nahhâs used to visit Cairo very often in order to meet with some friends in the office of a well-known lawyer, Ahmad Bey 'Abd al-Latîf. Members of this group were influenced by the ideas of the Watani Party. After hearing Wilson's fourteen points, they began to think of ways and means by which Egypt's voice would be heard internationally.⁸ They thought of contacting Saád Zaghlûl Vice President of the Legislative Assembly.⁹ There are two interesting points here. First, that the political conscience of the politicized Egyptians favoured action to promote Egypt's national case abroad. There was more than one group which thought of that course of action. The second observation was that Nahhâs and his friends, who supported the Watani Party, thought of Zaghlûl as the appropriate leader and nobody else. It seems that Zaghlûl was already on the verge of capturing, or had actually captured, the imagination of the Egyptians

6. 'Alf Salâma, Ma la (Wa'arifuhu al-Nass'an al Zâim Mustafâ al-Nahhâs Matbâat Sigil al-'Arab Cairo 1980, pp. 35-39.

7. Al-Shâhid, p. 22.

8. Hâfiz, pp. 304, 305.

9. Al-Balâgh, 15 November 1927.

as their leader.

One member of Nahhâs' group of friends was 'Alî Mâhir, who was head of the Department at the Ministry of Justice, and who would play an increasingly political role afterwards as one of the main adversaries of Nahhâs. He knew 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî, member of the Legislative Assembly and a close associate of Zaghlûl. Nahhâs and his cohorts asked 'Alî Mâhir to contact 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî, and put their case to him with a view to introducing them to Zaghlûl. Mâhir failed in his mission, and on reporting this to Nahhâs, the latter got angry and decided to meet 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî himself. Nahhâs with some friends did meet Fahmy in his house, and after a long discussion the latter asked "What would come out of this movement if it was suppressed?", meaning if Zaghlûl, Fahmî and others were arrested. To this Nahhâs answered "You go and we take your place".¹⁰ By then, 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî was convinced of their seriousness and told them of the intention of organizing a delegation under Zaghlûl to speak in the name of Egypt, but asked them to keep the matter secret.¹¹

Although Nahhâs had met Zaghlûl several times before in his capacity as a judge, their relationship did not extend beyond this formal or official level. When the Watani Party differed with Zaghlûl on the number and the names of the people who were to represent it in the Egyptian Wafd, Nahhâs and Dr. Hâfiz 'Afîfî were chosen as the party's representatives. Hardliners who Zaghlûl thought would ruin his chances in any negotiations were excluded from the delegation. Stories conflict here on who nominated them. One suggests that it was Amin Yûsuf Bey who was married to Zaghlûl's niece who did so. Amin was a former member of the Watani Party, and he recommended Nahhâs to Zaghlûl as a possible candidate for Wafd membership. Amin invited Nahhâs to

10. Ibid.

11. Hâfiz, p. 305.

join the Wafd during a conversation in Groppi's (a European café in central Cairo), and Nahhâs agreed after Zaghlûl had promised to provide financial assistance so that Nahhâs would be able to continue supporting his sister and her family.¹² Another story was that 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî recommended him,¹³ which sounds more credible. The reason for choosing Nahhâs and 'Affî besides what was just mentioned, was that both were very sociable among the educated youth and would contribute to the propaganda work that was entailed.¹⁴ Al-'Aqqâd thought Zaghlûl intended to add others to the delegation in order to balance those whom the British called "moderates".¹⁵ So on 20th November 1918, the Wafd, which already comprised seven members, was joined by Nahhâs and Hâfiz 'Affî.¹⁶

In the meantime, Prince Omar Tousoun, of the royal family, was forming another delegation, and one of the reasons why Zaghlûl opposed it and decided to form his own, was the composition of Tousoun's delegation. It was drawn mostly from either the Turkish elements or the old school of politicians and officials, such as Muḥammad Sâid, the former Prime Minister. Thus the issue of Egyptians vis-à-vis Turks was revived once more after it had lain dormant since the days of Orâbî's revolt in 1881-1882.¹⁷ This issue of who represents Egypt would become Saâd's, then Nahhâs', slogan in leading the nation.

12. Janice Joles Terry, The Wafd 1919-1952: Cornerstone of Egyptian Political Power Third World Centre London 1982, p. 84. When Nahhas joined the Wafd in Paris, he was given a monthly salary for his role as secretary of the Wafd.
13. 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî, Hadhihi Hayatî Dâr al-Hilâl Cairo 1963, p. 94.
14. Muḥammâd 'Alî 'Allûba, Mudhakirat Dâr al-Wathâ'iq al-Qawmiyya Cairo, p. 56.
15. 'Abbâs Maḥmûd al-'Aqqâd, Saâd Zhaghlûl Sira wa Tahiya Maktabat al-Anglo al-Misriyya Cairo 1936, p. 257.
16. Selîm Muḥammad Kâmil, Thaurat Sanat 1919 Kama 'Aishtaha wa 'Araftaha Kitâb al-Yum Cairo 1975, p. 58.
17. Hâfiz Maḥmûd al-Ma'arik fi'l Sahâfah wa'l Siyasa wa'l Fikr bain 1919-1952 Kitâb al-Jumhuriya Cairo 1969, p. 153, Fahmî pp. 72-84.

C. Egypt at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

Egypt, at that time, was autonomous under Ottoman Turkish sovereignty, and the reins of rule were in the hands of the Albanian family of Muḥammad 'Alī. During the second half of the nineteenth century there were two developments. First, was the emergence of landowners after Khedive Sâid decreed the right to private ownership of land, and second, the penetration of foreign capital and personnel via the Capitulations given by the Ottoman Empire to the Western European powers. Landowners were not completely assured of their rights until the end of the century, and by 1875 the Mixed Courts of the Capitulatory system were established as a result of the previous concessions.¹⁸

With the advent of the British a new situation was created, what would later be known as the dualism between the "legal authority" on the one hand and the "actual authority" on the other. The former was the Khedive who derived his legitimacy from Turkey, which still held sovereignty over Egypt. The latter was the British High Commissioner backed by the British army of occupation. Once the very friendly ruling dynasty and aristocracy who had invited British support were able to quell the threat of rebellion, they wanted their previous privileges restored and sustained. The British, knowing quite well that these same advantages were the causes of rebellion, sought a new ally and began to distance themselves from them. The British found their new ally in the landowners, and each found in the other his ideal partner. Not only was there a racial, economic, and political cleavage between the Palace, the aristocracy, and the new landowners, but also contempt and mistrust on the part of the former for the latter. For

18. See Memories de Nubar Pacha, edited by Mirit Bôutros Ghali, Librairie du Liban, Beirut, 1983. ←

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the new landowners, Britain was a protector against the Palace and aristocracy, and a benefactor, through her irrigation schemes and willingness to import the main export cash crop, cotton.¹⁹

Another rising social group was the urban middle class. This class is much more difficult to trace, and was much more diversified. It included city dwellers and students of various schools and institutions, such as the al-Azhar in Cairo. Yet a third was the working class, although not in the modern sense of a proletariat, but much more in the sense of artisans organized in guilds. The merchants, a very old group but not quite a "bourgeoisie", but more of the bazaar type, were also prominent. Last but not least, were the professionals, and more important the official class, or "bureaucrats".

It was from that class of government officials that the challenge to the royal dynasty came. The ones who would lead that class were the most organized and developed section, the army. They were small in number, and not developed or modernized enough to challenge any European party, but they were to lead the restless urban middle class which was eager for political power since the úlama' tried to dominate the country in the beginning of the century. They were of mainly rural background; people had moved to a city like Cairo or Alexandria. They were educated, became neither peasants nor artisans and, deprived of a career and land or social position, were seeking a place in the establishment. Starting a business was out of the question because of the competition with the foreigners who enjoyed several privileges under the Capitulations giving them an advantage over any Egyptian entering the field.

It was from this group of urban middle-class professionals that Nahhás came, and it was that group which was to lead the national

19. Muḥammad Zakī 'Abd al-Qādir, Mihnat al-Dustūr 1923-1952 Maktabat Madbūlī Cairo 1956, pp. 17, 19, 22.

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movement throughout the British occupation of Egypt. Having nothing to lose, but much to gain, they were resentful and asking for equal rights. For undisputed political power was in the hands of the Palace and aristocracy, until the first challenge came in 1881-1882. Both landowners and urban middle class would continue to challenge the Palace and compete among themselves, as will be discussed later. Thus this embryonic urban middle class lost its first round in 1881-82, the army option was checked, and those new graduates had to accept government jobs. Not being members of the establishment, and having no common interest with the British, as did the landowners, they constituted an independent force of their own. In addition, they felt that their opportunities either in business, or in government were hindered by foreigners in general and by the British in particular. Consequently they became the most militant nationalists against the British. They were characterized by two main features. First, they were mostly lawyers, or men of the law; secondly, Muṣṭafā Kāmil's nationalist temperament expressed their demands and aspirations. As lawyers they were representative of the rising new urban middle class, although one is hesitant to call them middle or petty bourgeois or any of these categories. Yet the point that one wants to make is that the lawyers were the rising social group. Several factors enhanced their upward mobility which ultimately made them dominate political life in general, and the national movement as represented later in the Wafd Party in particular. This does not exclude members of urban social classes, such as government officials, teachers, and landowners. A common denominator was the legal training background, even among government bureaucrats and landowners.

Two major developments helped in the emergence of the lawyers as the leaders of the society. The first was the exclusion of any other rival groups such as the úlama' or the Army Officers. Secondly, the

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system of education of law and the legal profession itself.²⁰ As for the úlama', they were the traditional religious mentors of the people as they were the enlightened and learned section of the population: they combined the prestige of knowledge and religion. They were occasionally the mediators between the people and the ruling Mamluks before 1798. They led the resistance against the French campaign of 1798-1801, and it was they who finally legitimized the rule of Muḥammad 'Alí over Egypt in 1805. But it was in Muḥammad 'Alí's reign that their role declined either intentionally by him for the purposes of policy and by the new institutions he introduced for the modernization of the state.²¹

The size of the army, led also to their decline and gave way to any new group among them which could assume the role of leadership. Neither the úlama' who were weakened by Muḥammad 'Alí, nor the army that was defeated and reorganized under British auspices, was any longer attractive to the new generation. A large proportion of the latter headed towards the state schools where the future lay in a new state-secular order. Of these schools, the School of Law was the most important and played a prominent role in the political development of Egypt.²² And in a society in which the rights of property had been recently legitimized, coupled with the influx of foreigners and capital under the protection of the Capitulations, the role of lawyers was becoming increasingly important and prestigious. In the School of Law, they learned that law is equal for all. Muṣṭafá Kâmil described it as the school for writing, oratory, and the ascertainment of the rights of

20. Ziadeh, Farahat, Lawyers, the rule of law and liberalism in Modern Egypt, Stanford University, California, 1968, p. 62.

21. 'Abd al-Khâlik Lâshîn, Saád Zhaqlûl wa Dawruhu fi al-Siyasah al-Misriya Maktabat Madbûlî Cairo 1975, p. 165.

22. Ziadeh, p. 62.

individuals and nations.²³

The School of Law at that time was a kind of Faculty of Law and Arts. For students were studying many other subjects besides law. These included Arabic literature, logic, disputation, grammar, prose, rhetoric, syntax, prosody; etc.²⁴ So, by 1906, 390 out of 400 students of the school were followers of Muṣṭafā Kâmil, and Nahhâs was in their forefront.²⁵

D. The Political Scene as it Developed from 1900

As already noted, two new social groups were emerging, the landowners with their natural hostility towards the Turkish aristocracy led by the Khedive; and the new generation of urban-educated Egyptians, best described as the effendi class. This development led to new political alliances and new forms of power struggle. The British as saviours of the throne were regarded by the new Khedive 'Abbâs Helmi, in power since 1892, as an occupying force curtailing his own power. He tried to utilize a rising popular movement to strengthen his own position against the British. On the other side the British were gradually alienating the new effendi class, thus bringing them into open confrontation and driving it into an alliance with the new Khedive.

For these effendis, government service was their main avenue of employment, and that was diminishing as the number of British employees was increasing. For example, the number of Egyptian employees in high posts had decreased from 27 per cent in 1907 to 23 per cent by 1920, which meant that Egyptians had almost only one quarter of the high

23. Ibid.

24. Aḥmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, Qisat Hayati Dâr al-Hilâl Cairo 1962, p. 25.

25. Ibid. p. 65.

posts. At the same time the percentage of British employees had increased in some of these jobs from 42 per cent to 60 per cent. The Egyptians occupied 86 percent of the jobs with pensions and received 70 per cent of the wages, while the British occupied 14 per cent of the jobs with pensions and received 30 per cent of the wages.²⁶ Consequently, these effendis could not be but anti-occupation, soon came to be the most vociferous critics of the British, under a new leadership in the person of the lawyer, Muṣṭafâ Kâmil (1874-1908).

While the debate over the Tâbâ²⁷ incident was still going on, something else occurred which gave Muṣṭafâ Kâmil and his anti-British allies a new impetus. This was the Dinshway incident, and it constituted a watershed. In 1906, British officers hunting in the vicinity of Dinshway village, shot a woman by mistake. After a skirmish with the villagers, one of the officers died from sun stroke. A trial was held, four villagers were hanged, and several others punished. It came at a time when British domination over Egypt, and Cromer's personal ascendancy and never seemed more secure after concluding the Entente Cordiale (1904) with France (when the two countries agreed to recognize each other's special position in Egypt and Morocco, respectively, in return for non-interference in each other's domain). But the "veiled protectorate" had weaknesses. Cromer was both out of touch and out of sympathy with the new generation of Egyptians. The occupation had become to all intents and purposes permanent, and the consequent growth of the British official

26. Muḥammad Kâmil Selîm, Sirâ Saâd fi Urubâ Kitâb al-Yum Cairo 1975, p. 38.

27. In 1906 Turkish troops occupied Taba, a point eight miles west of Aqaba. Britain on behalf of the Egyptian Government protested on the bases of Egyptian administrative responsibility over the Sinai Peninsula. The incident became a focus of debate between the Umma Party as the protectors of the Egyptianess of Taba, and the Watani Party who saw in the Umma Party's stand as pro-British and an anti-Islamic Union position.

establishment created frustration among educated Egyptians, whose resentment became increasingly articulate. The British, however, saw themselves as the benefactors of the Egyptian peasantry, whom they had delivered from the corvée and the lash. The Dinshway incident showed them in another light.²⁸ There is no doubt that two of the immediate results of that incident were the retirement of Cromer the following year and the emergence of Muṣṭafâ Kâmil as a triumphant national leader.

E. The Emergence of Political Parties in 1907

This year saw the birth of the two political parties which had already been preceded by their newspapers. The first was the Umma Party, speaking for the landowners. The landowners who benefited from the British presence, were by no means less patriotic. On the contrary, they were more imaginative and probably helped more in the development of the national consciousness of the Egyptian nation than their counterparts. However they were mistakenly thought to be on the British side and against the national sentiment which was still predominantly Muslim, i.e., Ottoman. For them, a new situation was the answer - the return to Ottoman sovereignty was quite against their interests for it would strengthen the Palace and the aristocracy. The answer lay in a nation-state, an independent Egypt, even if that meant playing into the hands of the British for the moment. Politically the notion was disastrous: it amounted to treason, but they were Western-trained intellectuals and philosophers, not politicians. For them, siding with Ottoman Turkey, even if it was only a tactical move aimed against the British, whom they acknowledged as an occupying force, was not in the long-term interest of Egypt. The famous incident

the socio-political background of this class should have been explained

thinkers

28. J.C.B. Richmond, Egypt 1798 - 1952 Her Advance Towards a Modern Identity Methuen London 1977, p. 497.

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of Tâbâ in 1906 was the turning point. By admitting Ottoman sovereignty over it, Egypt would loose it for ever, even if it meant siding with the British at that particular juncture, because they were in Egypt temporarily, and they would leave one day, however distant that day might be. As for their view of the relationship which they thought should be adopted vis-à-vis the British, this is best illustrated in an article written by Ahmad Lutfi al Sayyid²⁹ in their newspaper al-Jarîda³⁰: on al

our policy towards the British wouldn't go beyond two options: either that of stubbornness and hostility, or that of a peaceful attitude but not of surrender. There is no doubt that the policy of enmity is grave, for how can an enemy expect from his foe any change in his condition? Thus, there is no option left but that of a peaceful attitude marked by a reciprocal goodwill.³¹

The same author wrote in his autobiography about how the party's newspaper was first established:

I had an interview with Muhammad Mahmûd³² concerning the issue of Aqaba and what Egypt in its political situation should do, such as establish a free Egyptian newspaper, which would speak in the name of Egypt alone, without being biased towards Turkey or either to the legal or actual authority in the country. And we agreed that this newspaper should be owned by a company of notables who have a real stake in the country, whom Lord Cromer and others from the British described as being content with the occupation, silent over the rights of Egypt. And that the opposition movement to the occupation is conducted by people who had no stake in the country such as the young Effendis and the Turkish Pashas."³³

As for the programme of the Party, its introduction stated that complete independence could not be obtained just by talking, but that there were prerequisites to independence, and these prerequisites are objectives which must be sought. There were several points of which

29. A liberal intellectual and the ideologist of the Umma Party.

30. Issued by Umma Party in 1907 and edited by Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid.

31. 'Abd al-Qâdir, p. 34.

32. A graduate of Oxford, ex-provincial mudir.

33. Al-Sayyid, p. 44.

the most important were: first, to use their efforts and money to encourage general education and the projects which would help to promote their aims in progress and civilization; second, to concentrate their efforts on obtaining their natural right to participate with the government in issuing laws and public projects through expanding the functions of the Local Councils and the General Assembly, until they gradually reached the Chamber of Deputies which suited their political conditions.³⁴ There were no other words mentioned about independence or democracy.

As Aḥmad Lutfī al-Sayyid recalled in his autobiography, the party was established on 21 December 1907 after the appearance of its newspaper. Maḥmūd Sulaymān (Muḥammad Maḥmūd's father) was chosen as President, Hassan 'Abd al-Rāziq and 'Alī Sh'arāwī (the colleague of Saād on 13 November 1918) as deputies, and Aḥmad Lutfī al-Sayyid as General Secretary. Lutfī commented that some of the newspapers saw in the party's demands for complete independence an opportunity to attack it and accuse it of betraying the Ottoman Porte, the legal sovereign over Egypt at that time. In 1910 the Umma Party laid down a project for a constitution, and considered presenting it to the Khedive as a petition from the people of the country. This petition was written and the people started signing it.³⁵ Lastly, to illustrate the Umma's Party attitude towards the British and the Palace, which was to be later adopted by the members of the Wafd Party as will be shown, no better words can be found than those of al-Hilbāwī³⁶ in his memoirs, when he wrote,

34. Yūnān Labīb Rizq, al-Ahzab al-Siyasiyah Qabl Thaurāt 1952, al-Ahrām Cairo, pp. 95-96. Date? ←

35. Al-Sayyid, pp. 80, 91.

36. A very distinguished lawyer, was the prosecutor in the Dinshway case.

The policy of that party [Umma] aimed at observing the two authorities, the native and the foreign, and write on each one without any bias. The British, whatever defects they had in their colonial policy, were accustomed to hearing criticism and being shown the mistakes of their policy without showing any enmity to the critic. As for the Egyptian authority, especially the palace men, it did not enjoy that quality and that tolerance towards any criticism said at the time.³⁷

These were liberal-democratic men who believed in the British liberal system and believed that it should be adopted also in Egypt.

Before commenting on the Watanî Party and its programme, some preliminary statements must be made. The interests of the Khedive ('Abbâs Helmi II) did not conflict with those of the Ottoman Empire, for both of them were trying to regain their lost influence and, since the big landowners in general were linked to the British occupation, the Khedive had no option, but to appeal to the people. And since the bulk of the masses were represented by the youth in the schools, a link always existed between him and those students, thus explaining the quick ascendancy of Mustafâ Kâmil and his accession to the rank of Pâshâ. Jump

The Watanî Party was established in 1907, the year in which the new British Consul, Eldon Gorst, arrived and embarked upon his reconciliation policy with the Palace. The party demanded democracy and evacuation (independence),³⁸ for it was not wise to ask for the evacuation of the British forces and the abolition of Ottoman sovereignty over Egypt at the same time. Antagonizing Turkey at that time would only have led her to side with Britain and concede her sovereignty, an aim Britain never ceased to pursue. On 27 December 1907, the general congress of the Party gathered in the building of the

37. Al-Hilbâwî, Ibrâhîm, Mudhakirat Dâr al-Watha'iq al-Qawmiyya, p. 83. date

38. Fawzî Girgis, Dirasat fi Tarikh Misr mundh al-'Asr al-Mamlûki Matba'at al-Dâr al-Misriyya Cairo 1958, p. 121.

newspaper al-Liwá,³⁹ and Mustafá Kâmil gave a speech in which he defined the programme of the party as follows: To grant Egypt home rule according to the Treaty of London of 1840 and the guarantees of the Imperial Firmans which Britain promised to respect officially; to establish a constitutional government by which the government would be responsible to a parliament enjoying the necessary power like other parliaments in Europe; and to strengthen the cordial relations between Egypt and Turkey, and also to win Turkey on their side and convince her of the rightness of their national aspirations.⁴⁰ Another source, however, had a different list of priorities: the most important was the first point, the independence of Egypt and the Sudan, a complete independence without any foreign protection or mandate or any other restriction. The second point was the establishment of a constitutional government in the country in which sovereignty belonged to the nation, and the ruling institution was to be responsible to a chamber of deputies with complete authority. The sixth point was to spread education throughout the country on a national basis so that the poor could benefit from it, and to establish institutes of science and to open night schools for workers. And the tenth point referred to the strengthening of cordial relations and promoting mutual trust between Egypt and other countries.⁴¹ These were the most important of the ten points in Muştafâ Kâmil's programme; there was no mention of the Sultan or Turkey.

Source

It was in this party that Nahhâs' sentiments found expression. That could be understood in the context of Nahhâs' own social and educational background. The young Nahhas was a true believer of the

39. Issued by Muştafâ Kâmil in 1900.

40. "Wathaiq Tarikhiya An al-Ahzab Wa al-Tanzimat al-Siyassiya fi Misr", al-Talia, February 1965, p.155.

41. Rizq. p. 95.

Watanî Party as he was a member of the effendi class. Although he did not participate in any direct political activity at that time, he kept in touch with the Watanî Party and had many friends there. However, nothing indicated that he had any sort of relationship with Muṣṭafâ Kâmil or later Muḥammad Farîd, although he worked in the latter's law office for a short time after his graduation. Nahhâs contacted the higher schools club and became a deputy there.⁴² The club members consisting of students and graduates was established in 1905 as a social gathering for the educated young people and intellectuals. It was inspired by the Watanî Party and became a forum for Watanî Party propaganda throughout the first decade of the century among the students, and played an important role in the outbreak of the 1919 revolution.

In 1913, a Legislative Council was formed and it was in that council that a new group, which could be best described as "constitutional nationalists", emerged from among the lawyers and notables under the leadership of Saâd Zaghlûl. It was not long before the discussions were led by the lawyers alone.⁴³

What was interesting about Saâd Zaghlûl was his cosmopolitanism, in the sense of the different influences he had been exposed to and different circles he was attached to. His father was the mayor of a village in the Gharbiyya district with a landed property of two hundred feddans. He was born in the mid-nineteenth century. After attending the village Kuttâb he went to al-Azhar, where he became a disciple of Jamâl al-Din al-Afghani⁴⁴ and Muḥammad 'Abdû⁴⁵ whom he later helped

42. Muḥammad Farîd 'Abd al-Magid Hashîsh, Hizb al-Wafd 1936-1952, M.A. Thesis 'Ain Shams University Cairo 1970, p. 88.

43. Aḥmad 'Abd al-Rahîm Muṣṭafâ, Tarikh Misr al-Siyasi min al-Ihtilâl ila al-Mu'ahadah Dâr al-Maârif al-Qâhira 1967, p. 83.

44. An Islamic reformer and agitator

45. A disciple of Afghani, an Islamic reformer and later rector of the Azhar.

in editing al-Waqa'i al-Misriyya (the official newspaper of the government). He witnessed the defeat of the Urabi revolution, and was alleged to have formed a revenge society for which he was jailed for a short period. Until then he had a traditional rural middle-class upbringing and career.

The change started when he became a lawyer, which was still a new profession and one regarded with scepticism, because of the introduction of the mixed courts under the Capitulations and the gradual phasing out of the Shariá courts as the only judicial system in the country.⁴⁶ He was elected as Counsellor in the Court of Appeal in 1892, studied French law and received his B.A. in 1897. The other major change which happened in his life was joining the establishment, first through the Salon of Princess Sheuikar, then by marrying the daughter of Muṣṭafâ Fahmî (the Prime Minister from 1891 to 1893, 1895 to 1908) in 1895. In 1906, he became Minister of Education, and subsequently joined the ill-fated cabinet of Butrus Ghâlî as Minister of Education and later Justice. He had to side with the government when the issue of prolonging the contract of the Suez Canal was discussed in the Legislative Council. In April 1912 he resigned his post after relations between himself and the Khedive reached an impasse.

Zaghlûl was a candidate in two of Cairo's four constituencies, Boulaq and Sayida Zeinab, and won despite the opposition of Kitchener, the British Consul-General.⁴⁷ Most members of the Legislative Council agreed to elect him as their Deputy Speaker, since the President and one of the two deputies were appointed by the government, which meant

46. See Law Reform in Egypt: 1850-1950 J.N.D. Anderson, pp. 209-230 in Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt, P.M. Holt (ed.), Oxford University Press, London, 1968.

47. 'Azbawî, 'Abd Allah Muḥammad, Hizb al Wafd mun'z Nasha'tahu 1919-1936, M.A. thesis 'Aim Shams University Cairo 1970, p. 34.

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in fact choosing him as their leader. Their reasons were that he was both disregarded by the Khedive and the British; the former had ousted him from the cabinet and the latter did not back him against the Khedive. (A very important note here: one of the main features of Egyptian political life is that people sympathized and identified with those being prosecuted by both authorities. This would later apply to the Wafd, and especially Nahhâs when he became its leader, but was often denied his right to form a cabinet either by the British or the King.) It was said that as minister, Zaghlûl defied the Khedive, who thought that Zaghlûl would not have done that unless he was sure of his position because of his family relationship with the ex-prime minister (Muṣṭafâ Fahmî), his close friendships with the British, since Lord Cromer had appointed him minister and praised him in his annual report to his government.⁴⁸

In his diary Zaghlûl wrote,

As for the Watani Party, I am not one of their men, and I am the first man that party attacked and injured. And if I had a tendency towards parties, I would have joined the Umma Party in which many of my friends were members. Or I would have looked to the leadership of the Watani Party before it had become a failure and its glory had gone and its men were dispersed. There was no need for me to seek a special position.⁴⁹

That was Saâd Zaghlûl, of 1915, who later led the national movement. Nahhâs was to become his most loyal adherent.

F. World War I and its Consequences

Although Egypt did not enter the war, the people, and particularly the peasants, nevertheless suffered from its effects. The declaration of martial law and the suspension of the Legislative Assembly curbed

48. 'Alluba, p. 33.

49. Lashin, pp. 71-72. Quoting Saâd Zhaglûl, Mudhakirat Vol. 26, year 1915, p. 1353.

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the activities of the middle-class nationalists.⁵⁰ 'Alluba⁵¹ in his diary described how from the beginning of the war, the British took control of every public utility in the country and confiscated the crops and animals. Peasants were taken by force to serve as a labour force in battlefields under the guise of volunteers. As a result, the resentment of the people against the British reached a level at which they were hoping for the victory of Germany and her allies, including Turkey in this bloody war.⁵² Nahhâs was no exception; Dr. Haykal⁵³ described him as pro-German during the war, and said that he always carried with him a map to be able to follow what was happening in Europe. He was also so delighted with the rumour that the Turks had crossed the Suez Canal, that a friend of his had to take him there to convince him otherwise. The major development was the declaration by Britain of the Protectorate over Egypt on the eve of the declaration of war in August 1914, and the ousting of Khedive 'Abbâs Helmî, who was in Turkey at that time. Hussein Kâmil was appointed a Sultan. He was succeeded by Sultan (King) Fuâd in 1917.

By the end of the war the Watani Party was in an awkward position. Its president, Muḥammâd Farîd, was exiled in Europe and died there in 1919. At the same time, the party found the political environment had changed. Its old policy depended on three pillars. The first was not to recognize the legitimacy of the occupation, and thus the Protectorate, and to work for internationalizing the Egyptian case. The second was to uphold the idea of the Islamic community, and to look to the Ottoman Caliphate as the centre of that entity. The third,

50. Richmond, History of Egypt, p. 458.

51. A lawyer and a future politician.

52. 'Alluba, p. 36.

53. A distinguished liberal intellectual and editor of al-Siyassa, leader of the Liberal Constitutional Party.

especially during the war, was not to recognize anyone but Khedive 'Abbâs Helmi as the legal sovereign of the country. That was for two reasons: (1) because of the improvement of the relationship between the Party and the Khedive during the war when the leadership of the party and the ex-Khedive 'Abbâs found themselves in the same camp; and (2) because it refused to recognize the rule of Sultan Hussein Kâmil and later Fuâd I, since that implied the recognition of the Protectorate which had resulted in unseating the ex-Khedive.

All these principal foundations on which the party's ideology and political stands were based collapsed. First, there was the collapse of the Ottoman empire and the Caliphate, and second, the presence of Sultan Fuâd on the Egyptian throne was an unchallenged reality and fact. Last but not least, all other major European countries had accepted and recognized the British Protectorate over Egypt.⁵⁴ This explains why the Umma Party emerged alone in the political scene after the war without any competition from the Watani Party. Not only was the Watani Party ideologically defeated as a result of the change in the political environment, but also physically it was almost eliminated, with the death of its founder-leader Muṣṭafâ Kâmil and the absence of his successor in Europe and the detention of its most active members during the war. The stage was therefore set for Saâd Zaghlûl and the Wafd, many of whose members were mainly from the Umma Party, to take over the leadership of the National Movement. It was no surprise therefore that the Delegation (Wafd) was comprised mainly of Umma Party members or sympathizers.

The formation of the Egyptian Wafd was the final blow suffered by the Watani Party which had failed to make its own "National Wafd" the official spokesman of the national movement. What is interesting in the context of this thesis, is the composition of the Wafd itself and

54. Rizq, pp. 75-76.

the place of Nahhâs in it, how he joined it, and the basis on which it was formed, in terms of its programme, internal organization, and its strategy and tactics.

G. The Formation of the Wafd

Of the seventeen members, including Nahhâs and Zaghlûl, Aḥmad Lutfî al-Sayyid was from the class of large landowners, a lawyer by profession (class of 1894) who became editor of the al-Jarida, the mouthpiece of the Umma Party from 1907 to 1914.⁵⁵ 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî, was also a practicing lawyer, after leaving his job as Legal Consellor in the Wafd administration, and in 1913 was elected to the Legislative Assembly.⁵⁶ 'Alî Sh'arâwî, a notable and big landowner, and deputy of the Umma Party, was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1914.⁵⁷ Muḥammad Maḥmûd, son of Muḥammad Sulaimân Pâshâ (President of the Umma Party), had graduated from Oxford and had been governor of Buheira province.⁵⁸ 'Abd al-Latif al-Makabâtî, had been a Watani Party sympathizer and had been detained during the Great War.⁵⁹ Muḥammad 'Alî 'Alluba, was a lawyer, a prominent member of the Watani party, and member of the Legislative Assembly.⁶⁰ Thus, besides Zaghlûl, another five in the delegation were members of the Legislative Assembly, two were members of the Watani party, two were members of the Umma party, and another two were linked to it - Muḥammad Maḥmûd through his father, and Saâd Zaghlûl by intellectual inclination and political

55. 'Azabawî, p. 35. al-Sayyid, p. 18.

56. Ibid. p. 36. Fahmî, p. 3.

57. Ibid. p. 36. Ahmad 'Abd al-Rihîm Mustafâ, p. 51.

58. Ibid. p. 34.

59. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Raffi Thaurat Sanat 1919 Vol. 1 Maktabat al-Nahdah Cairo 1946, p. 93.

60. Azabawî, p. 46. 'Alluba, p. 16.

preference. All were members of the establishment, one way or another, either through land ownership, or ^sholder of senior government positions.

The rest of the group did not differ much. Hafiz 'Afifi was a physician who sympathized with the Watanî Party;⁶¹ Nahhâs, was a lawyer and a judge.⁶² Of the nine mentioned so far, five at least had legal training: Hamad al-Bâsil was a member of the Legislative Assembly;⁶³ Ismail Siḍkî took a law degree in 1894, was Minister of Agriculture in 1914 and later of Waqf;⁶⁴ Maḥmūd Abu al-Nasr, a notable, graduated from Dar el 'Ulūm, but later obtained a law degree from Lyon University, practised law and became President of the Bar Association. He was a sympathizer of the Watanî Party.⁶⁵ Sinnūt Hanna, from a wealthy Coptic family in Assyout, was supporter of the Watanî Party, who was elected to the legislative assembly in 1914;⁶⁶ George Khayyat was another wealthy Copt from Assyūt;⁶⁷ Wassif Ghali, second son of Butrus Ghali, ex-prime minister, studied in France;⁶⁸ and 'Abd al-Khâliq Madkūr, a wealthy merchant, was a member of the Legislative Assembly.⁶⁹ Hussein Wassif was also member of the 1914 assembly.⁷⁰

61. 'Azabâwî p. 50. al-Ahâlî, 6 May 1919.

62. Ibid. p. 50. al-Ahrâm, 22 January 1924.

63. Ibid. p. 53. Quoting Ilyas Zarr^{kh}oura, 333-334.

64. Ibid. p. 51. Ismail Sidqî, Mudhakirati Dâr al-Hilâl Cairo 1950, pp. 5-12.

65. Ibid. p. 53.

66. Ibid. p. 53.

67. Ibid. p. 53.

68. Ibid. p. 54. Al-Ahrâm, 29 January 1924.

69. Ibid. p. 52. Al-Ahali, 3 May 1919.

70. al-Rafiî, p. 126.

As can be seen, a number of them were already wealthy Egyptians or members of the Legislative Assembly in 1914. Their total number was seventeen, nine of whom were members of the 1914 Assembly, and at least eight had legal backgrounds, if they were not practising lawyers. As for the political composition of the Wafd, most of its members were either from the Umma Party, or from the upper stratum of landowners who believed in sharing power with the British, and were opposed to the extremist and uncompromising militant policies of the Watani Party of direct confrontation and immediate evacuation. But there was a rising urban middle class, the "effendi class", of lawyers, or state employees, with legal training or background. These formed the nucleus of the Wafd, they collected donations and urged people to sign petitions, and later were to lead the masses and become their natural leaders. Nahhâs represented this new social group in the Wafd.⁷¹ As will be shown later, it was these people who formed the second layer of the Wafd from whence came the notorious "Three Musketeers", Makram Ebeid, Ahmad Mâhir and Mahmûd Fahmî al-Nokrashî. Along with Nahhâs they would form an unbreakable "gang of four" which would dominate the Wafd and Egyptian party politics for more than a decade. But their power was not as yet appreciated by the rest of the Wafd members; it was detected early on by Zaghlûl, who used them to his best advantage.

The law which regulated the Wafd was composed of twenty-six articles. Four of these articles were very important indeed - Numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5. Article 2 defined the objective of the Wafd to be to attain the complete independence of Egypt by legitimate and peaceful means. The third article stipulated that the Delegation represents the Egyptian people. The fourth article stated that the delegation shall be disbanded once independence was achieved. No member of the Delegation shall be allowed to redefine the mission assigned to the

71. Ibid. p. 126.

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Delegation, according to the fifth Article.

This spells out the aim of the Delegation, which was independence through peaceful, legal ways by an elected body (Articles 2 and 3). As for the organization of the Delegation and the various functions of its members, the following Articles dealt with the ones relating to this thesis:

- 7 - Whenever necessary a member may be expelled on a resolution passed by at least three-fourths of the Delegation. A member may resign whenever he so wishes without having a right to seek a refund of the amount of contribution he made to it.
- 10 - Decisions shall be taken by simple majority. In case of the equal division of votes the opinion of the group along with which the President votes shall be preferred (i.e. the President had the decisive vote).

(These rules would never be followed. The president had the authority to overrule and to do so unimpeded.)

- 13 - The President shall represent the Delegation, preside over its meetings, look after its organization and supervise the work of committees, officials, the secretariat and the treasury.
- 14 - The Secretary shall be responsible for the documentation of the Delegation. He shall look after the archives, minutes and other papers of the Delegation, except those concerning the accounts.
- 19 - In addition to the minutes, the Secretary shall maintain a register in which he shall make daily entries of all important events, communications and activities. The register shall be consulted by the President every day.
- 21 - Each member shall bear his own expenses of travel and stay. He shall not demand anything except whatever he shall spend in connection with the mission of the Delegation, nor shall he spend anything from the Delegation's Fund except in order to serve its cause.
- 26 - The Delegation shall appoint a committee called the Central Committee of the Egyptian Delegation, and shall select its members from distinguished and enthusiastic persons. It shall be responsible for collecting donations on behalf of the Delegation and for communicating to the Delegation whatever may be important within the scope of its responsibility.⁷²

72. Quaraishi, Zaheir Masoud, Liberal Nationalism in Egypt: Rise and Fall of the Wafd Party, Kitab Mahel, India 1967, pp. 213-216.

Subsequently, the Central Committee proved to be of crucial importance, since it became the backbone of the Wafd, providing it with all the necessary information, and doing all the hard work in Egypt. Mâhir and Nokrashî were members of the Committee, a vital body in winning the support of the grassroots for the Wafd and in favour of Nahhâs later. The offices of president and general secretary were held by Saâd Zaghlûl and Muştafâ al-Nahhâs respectively.

It is necessary to consider Zaghlûl's political thinking for three reasons: (1) because he was the leader of the Wafd, with all that that implies; (2) because Nahhâs, as the faithful disciple of Zaghlûl, would be greatly influenced by him (needless to say, both of them shared a common background in their rural origin and their legal and judicial careers. Their views were often similar, if not identical. Zaghlul was closer to the younger generation of Nahhas in thought and view. Nahhâs on the other hand had inherited some of the fears and traditional thinking of Zaghlûl's generation); (3) because this similarity of views and common approach led to the first split in the ranks of the Wafd, from which emerged a more homogeneous Wafd as a party rather than the earlier heterogeneous coalition of notables and high government officials which was active during the 1919 revolt. The latter had united people with different tendencies and interests at the time, but later each distinctive group went its own way.

Saâd Zaghlûl approached politics the way a lawyer or judge approaches a legal court. The issue was resolved according to justice. His method in defending his case was that of logic and complete frankness. Whoever had right on his side should recover it completely. And the aggressor, should pay back his victim. Thus there was no room for compromise, manoeuvre, or negotiation. (It is interesting to note what Saâd said to Macdonald in their negotiations of 1924 when they came to an impasse. "Then it is a matter of force,

and not of Justice?!!") When the Wafd protested about the Peace Conference's decision to acknowledge Britain's position in Egypt, it stated, "There is no honest judge in the world who would find one single reason for accepting what the Conference had decided concerning Egypt". Another indication of Saád's legal mentality which dominated him, is how he saw his position vis à vis the British and the people in Egypt. In an extract of his negotiations with Lord Milner in London on 21 July 1920, Saád said: "We cannot accept the continuation of the occupation as it contradicts our mandate and contradicts independence." Milner: "It was you who formulated it?" Saád: "So be it, but now it is a contract between us and the nation which we can neither modify nor deviate from".⁷³

Zaghlûl's faith in the force of liberal democracy in Europe, and its ultimate domination over any other force was to be shattered in Paris. He believed that the people in general would shun ill repute and would be keen to distance themselves from whatever injustice might be attributed to them.⁷⁴ He sincerely believed that it was the moral code of justice which governs the law, binds the nation and motivates its governments. And this would condemn any immoral act by their government against other nations such as Egypt.

As for the more practical side of his thinking, there were his demands on 13 November 1918 when, together with 'Alî Sh'arawî and 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî, he met with the British High Commissioner, Wingate. He stated that should Britain help them in gaining their complete independence, they would give her a reasonable guarantee without allowing any country to interfere with their independence or Britain's interests. They would give Britain a guarantee to insure its route to

73. Selîm, Sira'a Saád fi Urubá, p. 68.

74. Ibid. Thaurat Sanat 1919, p. 132.

India, which was the Suez Canal, by giving her priority over others and supply her with soldiers in case of necessity as a treaty would imply. And that they would go to London if necessary, to speak with the British government alone, and speak to none but them either in Egypt or outside Egypt.⁷⁵

It should be noted that it was Zaghlûl who suggested a treaty, so that all later developments including the 1936 treaty emanated from his initial line of thought. All the time there was no notion of going to Paris. As Dr. Haykal explained in his Memoirs, it was the intransigence of the British, which made the Wafd change their policy. As for his stand over the Capitulations, Saád asserted "As regards the interests of the resident Europeans, whose number does not exceed 150,000, we say that their interests are guaranteed by the capitulations and mixed courts together with the Caisse de la Dette". Al-'Aqqâd had characterized Saád's mentality as that of a realistic conservative, because he held firm to the rules, and if he attacked "oppressors", that was not revolutionary of him, but only because he held firmly to the rules.⁷⁶

In order to highlight further the role of the lawyers in the revolution, and the reasons which made them the most outspoken critics of the occupation, no better example could be found than that of Zaghlûl's speech at the Egyptian Society of Law, Economics, and Political Legislation. The intention (as prepared in 1917) was to change the existing legal system to a system more amenable to British interests, which meant changing over to the English legal system, although the lawyers were trained according to the French system. Nothing more could have alienated the lawyers than that. Zaghlûl

75. Ibid. pp. 66-67. al-Rafái, p. 96.

76. al-'Aqqâd, p. 563.

defended the existing legal system by saying, "The Egyptian criminal law, taken from the French law, has been implemented for a long time. Thus it is part of our legal heritage, running in the country like blood in the body!"⁷⁷ This was not only his own personal opinion, but that of a whole segment of the professional urban middle class against a perceived danger which was threatening their livelihood. It was not surprising, therefore, to find the lawyers in the forefront of the March 1919 upheaval when it erupted after the arrest and deportation of Saád and his three colleagues, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, Ismail Siḍkī, and Hamad al-Basel. Two reports may be cited here in order to support the thesis that March 1919 was a "lawyers revolt" and a "lawyers' movement". The first report is by a British subject, resident for many years in the provinces, dated 4 July 1919. It says

Nearly all the native lawyers are nationalists (they number possibly 200,000 including judges, ushers, experts, etc). Sir William Brunyate⁷⁸ is, I think, responsible for a good deal of the bad feeling aroused against the British rule among them, caused by his suggestion to make English the predominant language of the Courts. This suggestion if carried out would mean that as very few of the native lawyers know English, their occupation would be gone, as they are now too old to begin to learn the English language. This partly accounts for the active part they had taken "in the late disorders."⁷⁹



The other report (dated September 1919) was from "a number of senior missionaries working in Egypt".

The lawyer class, a very influential and important one, was alienated by what they regarded as sudden and ill-considered changes in the legal system of the country, changes which would seriously and unjustifiably damage their professional interests. The English official, in whose hands the matter rested, was universally believed to have behaved with arbitrary inconsiderateness and extraordinary rudeness, which has been universally and intensely resented. This class as a

77. Selim, Thaurat Sanat 1919, p. 92.

78. British financial adviser for the Egyptian government and whose proposals for changing the legal system were the primary cause of the alienation of Egyptian lawyers. p. 27.

79. FO371 (3721) 160854. Letter from Saád Zhaḡlul to Lord Curzon Paris, 9 December 1919.

whole went over to the nationalists, and lent them the dangerous assistance of their brains and pens.⁸⁰

Thus it was no surprise that the "General Strike Committee" was directed by Wafdist lawyers in the Justice Department.⁸¹

H. Nahhâs as a Student Organizer

It is interesting to note here the role played by the students, and most important, by "Nadî el-Madares el-'Ulya"; or Club of Higher Schools, for all sources agree that it was the students who had started the rebellion, and it was they who were its mainstay. The reason often cited is the role of the Watanî Party earlier on in involving them in politics, thus preparing the way for the revolution. The above-mentioned club was founded by the Watanî Party, and it played a key organizational role during those days of 1918.⁸² Also, one could argue that the students who had nothing to lose, besides an uncertain future, and felt no further dismay in their position than the lawyers. The increasing attacks on the British civilian personnel working in the Egyptian government was justified as helping to clear the way for Egyptian employment; at least this was the reason given by one of the attackers.⁸³

One scholar wrote that Nahhâs organized the students round the Wafd and thanks to his efforts he turned them from a form of pressure group to a potent instrument.⁸⁴ But no other source states clearly

80. FO 371-3712 E4369/6/16. Report of the Council of Cairo Non Official British Community to the British Mission of Enquiry, 7 May 1919.

81. Terry, p. 104.

82. Muḥammad Anîs & Jalal Yahya, al-'Usûl al-Tarikhayya li Thaurat Yuliyu 1952 al-Dâr al-Qawmiyya li'l Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr Cairo 1964, p. 131. FO 371-3717 (No. 76118). A Report By Scotland Yard, Paris, 16 May 1919.

83. 'Azabawî, p. .

84. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot Egypt's Liberal Experiment 1922-1936 University of California Press Los Angeles 1977, pp. 38, 74.

that he had organized students in 1919 in his capacity as deputy of the Club, or as a result of his past links with them.⁸⁵ There is no doubt though, the Club had played a role in his political education and formation, as it was well known that he was a supporter of the Watani Party and joined the Wafd as one of its representatives. But the role Nahhas played in the revolution was that of organizing the strike of the lawyers (understandably, since that was his field of work) and government employees (the nearest to his profession, in one sense, as a judge employed by the state he was an employee, and for another reason which will be mentioned later). As for the lawyers' strike, Hilbawi wrote that it was organized by both Nahhâs and 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî. It was agreed that lawyers would decline deputations which had been assigned to them in the cases they were supposed to defend. A fellow lawyer would attend demanding the adjournment of the cases until the clients could find other lawyers.⁸⁶

Nahhâs had also to get in touch with the Committee of Government officials in Cairo, and co-ordinate revolutionary activities with them. He had to travel between Cairo and Tantâ, where his post was, hiding in his sleeves pamphlets and leaflets to be distributed among the people. Also with him were 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa and Muḥammad Nagîb al-Ghârâblî.⁸⁷ They were members in the Lawyers' Committee of Tantâ and would play a prominent role in the Wafd later. An account of an eyewitness who saw Nahhâs at that time described him as full of enthusiasm, and as one who took the whole situation as a challenge which he welcomed and enjoyed, rather than a confrontation which should

85. Like Noḡrâshî for example, bear in mind the role he later played in electing Nahhâs as president and if there was any link. } ?

86. Hilbawî, p. 135.

87. al-Sayyid Marsot, pp. 320-323.

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be avoided.⁸⁸ His enthusiasm became so well known that later Saád Zaghlûl used Nahhâs' name as a code (when he was in exile for the second time) indicating that general morale was high in Egypt.⁸⁹ Eventually Nahhâs was dismissed from his job as a judge in Tantâ and became secretary of the party until his return to Cairo from Paris in December 1919,⁹⁰ when he opened his own law office.⁹¹

For the Wafd, the unanimity of the Egyptian people in supporting it was an essential matter, and it managed to achieve this by its own skill and the convergence of some historical factors. The aim behind that was to incorporate everybody in the national movement, in other words, to nationalize, or monopolize, the national movement. Anybody outside the Wafd would be considered as being outside the mainstream of Egyptian Nationalism. Thus the state apparatus, as an Egyptian apparatus, had no option but to follow suit (the strike of the employees) in order to separate itself from British policy. What made this more significant was the fact that the composition of the state apparatus tended towards conservatism and the status quo. Its upper echelon, at least, belonged historically to the establishment. It was not easy, therefore, to force its support for the Wafd unless the latter had monopolized the national movement, otherwise it would have formed another Egyptian political force to associate with, or at least have adopted a neutral political stand. Had a dissident group emerged, competing with the Wafd as the leader of nationalism and Egyptianism, the British could have used it in implementing their policy. That was why the Wafd insisted on not being a party, since a party represented a

88. Ibid. p. 332.

89. al-'Aqqâd, p. 408.

90. Gorgî, p. 48.

91. 'Alluba, p. 87.

segment of the population, but a delegation or deputation with a mandate to represent all of the Egyptian people. And that was why Saád Zaghlûl was keen to keep the Wafd programme as broad and simple as possible, focusing only on two items, independence and democracy, considering them to be the bond which held all Egyptians together.⁹²

The later split in the ranks of the Wafd can be understood along these lines. The new leaders of the Wafd, emerging from the rising urban middle-class effendis who sought political power and a greater share in the state apparatus, feared the coalescence as a substitute to them of other moderate elements, satisfied with the status quo and certainly much more amenable to British policy than they were. Thus the split of 1921, between those who supported 'Adlî and those who supported Zaghlûl, was not due simply to the disagreement over who would preside over the official delegation, but over who would inherit political power and enjoy the fruits of the revolution - the old aristocracy and the big landowners who had dominated Egyptian politics for the previous one hundred years, or the rising middle class which became more vigorous and daring despite its failure once before in 1882. It was the continuation of the battle over who should preside over the legislative assembly in the absence of the appointed president, the elected or appointed deputy.

I. The First Split: Traditional versus New Elements

This split did not occur immediately. It took from 1918, when the Wafd was first formed in November of that year, to April and June 1921, when the split was obvious and official. Even the cleavages were not clear-cut as they developed. It was not the lawyer against the landowner, for among the landowners too there was a split, since they

92. Târiq al-Bishrî, Saád Zaghlûl Yufawidu al-Isti'mâr 1920-1924 Hai'at al-Misriyya al-'Ammah li'l Kitâb Cairo 1977, pp. 24-25.

were the ones who benefited most, in whatever camp they placed themselves. After complete political domination and a monopoly of power for a century, the aristocracy and the Palace were on the decline, fighting to preserve whatever they could, on their own or through an alliance with either the British or the strong competing big landowners. On the other side was the professional middle class, completely hostile to the British, Palace, the aristocracy, and big landowners, but not yet strong enough to dominate the society at large, or compete alone without any allies against their enemies. In between these two extremes, the landowners, who were also competing with the Palace and aristocracy for a greater share of power, but who were not ready to alienate the British under whom they gained most. They were the winners at the moment, but also the most disillusioned. Some segments were contented with what they had achieved, and were ready to play the role assigned to them by the British of inheriting or at least sharing in power.⁹³ Some others, however, were influenced by the events of 1919 and understood their significance and, as a result became more radical by demanding complete independence, and allied themselves with the professional middle class, who they realized was a rising social and political force to be reckoned with.

This process could be seen taking shape from the first day, when 'Alī Sh'arawī advised the students who came to visit him after the deportation of Zaghlūl and his friends to remain calm and not complicate matters further. At the same time Zaghlūl did not believe that the people of Egypt could rise against the British or do anything. This was clearly evident from the secret plan of the Wafd which was to accept the protectorate and ask only for self-government in case the British refused their demand of complete independence,

93. Would be later explained when the Liberal Constitutional Party would be discussed and the 1923 Constitution.

which they expected. But things began to change, and the people moved, an unexpected factor which had not been foreseen. The first reaction was fear, and on 24 March, two weeks after the arrest of Zaghlûl and the beginning of the disturbances, the same Wafd officers who were collecting petitions from the people supporting them to ask for independence on behalf of Egypt, were now asking the people to stop their anti-British activities.⁹⁴ But the trend was stronger than anticipated, bringing about the release of Zaghlûl and his friends, and allowing the rest of the Wafd to join them and go to the Peace Conference in Paris. Zaghlûl appreciated the change in the Egyptian situation, and understood that he owed his release to this new popular factor, but not everybody shared his opinion.⁹⁵

A look at the composition of the Wafd at that juncture explains that development. At the start, the original seven, three of whom met Wingate on 13 November, acted on the basis of the ideas of the old Umma Party, and therefore their objectives did not exceed that of self-rule. Eventually, as the circumstances developed, new elements joined the Wafd mostly from the intelligentsia, merchants, and medium landowners, and naturally differences arose between the original old group and the expanded group of followers.⁹⁶ A closer look at the central committee offers a partial explanation: it comprised forty-three members, thirty-six of whom were large landowners, 83.31 percent.⁹⁷ The President was Maḥmûd Pâshâ Sulaimân, ex-President of the Umma Party and father of Muḥammad Maḥmûd, while Ibrahîm Sa'id was

94. al-Râfi'i, pp. 248-250.

95. Ahmad Baha' al-Din. Ayâm laha Tarikh, Rose al-Yûsuf Cairo 1954, pp. 111-112.

96. Girgis, p. 135.

97. 'Assim al-Dessûkî, Kubâr Mulâk al-A'rd al-Zirâya wa Dowruhum fi al-Mogtamâ al-Masrî 1914-1952 Dar al-Thaqafa al-Jadida Cairo 1976, p. 224.

his deputy. It also included Faḥallah Barakât Pâshâ, 'Abd al-Rahmân Fahmî Bey, Morcos Hannâ Bey and many others from the Legislative Assembly notables, lawyers, doctors, engineers, merchants, and farmers.⁹⁸ This broad coalition, which represented the Wafd at home, ran parallel to the Wafd in Paris, with Maḥmûd Sulaimân against Faḥallah Barakât, and Muḥammad Maḥmûd against Saâd Zaghlûl, father and son on one side, uncle and nephew on the other. Although all were big landowners, with the exception of Zaghlûl, whose lands were less extensive, one side decided to continue the struggle and stick to the letter of the deputations, while the other, with less imagination, stuck to the letter of the original plan.

The first major open split occurred over Milner's proposals - whether to accept them or not. Some members of the Wafd thought that they should abandon their present policy of demanding Egypt's independence at the Versailles Peace Conference. They thought they should follow the plan laid down by the Umma Party members before the revolution of 1919, which was to seek self-rule through direct negotiations with the British.

On 9 December 1919, Zaghlûl sent a letter to Lord Curzon, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, saying

The whole world knows that Egypt has been ready, since the armistice, to go more than halfway to meet the demands of Great Britain concerning the Suez Canal and other minor interests. When the Wafd met with Milner, the draft proposal they presented accepted a treaty between the two countries, a British military presence in Egypt, a British financial advisor, and another for the judiciary, and the right for Britain to interfere in Egypt's foreign policy. The moderate demands reflected the prevailing mentality of the pre-1919 Umma Party's notion of gradual constitutional independence. So the proposals were not that different from the ones presented during the war, including those put forward by Saâd Zaghlûl himself, Aḥmad Lutfi el-Sayîd, and 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî.⁹⁹

98. 'Alluba, p. 86.

99. Lâshîn, p. 286.

Zaghlûl, however, was undergoing some kind of mental and psychological transformation, for it was he who gradually took a harder line. Thus, when they finally reached an agreement with Milner for a treaty between Egypt and Britain in London in 1920, Zaghlûl persuaded his colleagues to test public opinion in Egypt first before agreeing to it. Wafd emissaries from Paris came to Cairo where they were joined by three local members of the Wafd. In a letter to Muştafâ al-Nahhâs, Wissa Wassif and Hafiz 'Affifi dated 22 August 1920, Zaghlûl expressed his disapproval of the suggested treaty because it implied a veiled protectorate over Egypt. It included, he wrote, many aspects of the wartime protectorate, such as the continuing presence of a British military force in Egypt, intervention in the legislation concerning foreigners and their judiciary, interference in the financial and judicial apparatus through British employees, the special position of the British envoy, the restriction on Egypt's rights in signing treaties, and the fact that Britain, not Egypt, would conduct the treaties concerning the abolition of the Capitulations with other nations.¹⁰⁰

Nahhâs, who was in Egypt while Saád was in Europe, was supposed to present the terms of the treaty negotiated and agreed upon between Saád and Milner to the people in a neutral way. Most other members of the Wafd were in favour of the treaty and thus presented it in a favourable manner. Nahhâs, after receiving Zaghlûl's above-mentioned letter, presented the treaty to the people in a strictly neutral manner. After the seven members of the Wafd (four who came from Europe and three from Cairo) had assessed public opinion in Egypt, they returned to Saád and his colleagues of the Wafd in Paris. Nahhâs was able to persuade his colleagues first to write a minute of what they faced in Egypt; secondly, and most important, he was able to convince his colleagues

100. al-Râfi'i Vol. 2, p. 168.

who were in favour of the treaty, that the remarks and observations expressed by the people on the treaty, were not just "wishes" as they saw them, but "reservations", which meant that the treaty could not be accepted unless changed.¹⁰¹ Thus one could see that Nahhas was taking an increasingly active role in the affairs of the Wafd, not just as a close adherent to Zaghlûl, but as a personality on whom Saád could depend in dismantling the policies of his adversaries. This silent struggle between Saád and Nahhâs on one side, and the other members of the Wafd who favoured accepting Milner's proposals on the other. The question of the treaty came to a head when Nahhâs and Ahmad Nagib, correspondent of the al-Akhbar¹⁰² in Paris, telegraphed to his newspaper that 'Adlî was obstructing the way of the Wafd.¹⁰³ On 21 January 1921, Nahhâs telegraphed once more to Amin al-Rafi'i that "'Adlî was a catastrophe for the Wafd".¹⁰⁴ At the same time Nagib and Nahhâs telegraphed to the local committee accusing 'Adlî of splitting with Zaghlûl and protesting against his course of action. This was followed by a campaign in the al-Akhbar newspaper, against 'Adlî.¹⁰⁵ When Nahhâs was asked by other members of the Wafd to explain his action, his answer was that they were secret telegrams to direct the policy of the newspaper. But later 'Alî Mâhir said that Saád had directed Nahhâs to take this action.¹⁰⁶ Saád later denied any knowledge of these telegrams (he could have telegraphed nullifying the

101. Hâfiz, pp. 325-320.

102. Al-Akhbar was founded in 1920, edited by Amin al-Rafi'i of the Watani Party, and pro-Saád at the beginning, pp. 142-143.

103. Yûsuf al-Nahhâs, Dhikrayat Saád, 'Abd al-'Azîz, Mâhir wa Rifaqh fi Thaurat 1919 Cairo 1952, p. 46.

104. 'Abd al-'Azîm Muḥammâd Ibrâhim Tatawwur al-Harakah al-Wataniyya fi Misr min Sanat 1918 ilâ Sanat 1936, 1937-1948 2 Vols. Dâr al-Kâtib al-'Aralî Cairo 1968. Ramadan, p. 307.

105. FO 371-4981 E14451/6/16 From Lord Allenby to Earl Cuzon (No. 111), Cairo 19 November 1920.

106. Fahmî, p. 109.

previous ones, but he did not, which indicates his knowledge of them, or at least that he consented to them). In the same month 'Abd al-'Aziz Fahmī, Aḥmad Lutfī al-Sayyid, Muḥammad 'Alī 'Alluba, Muḥammad Maḥmūd, Hamad al-Bāsil returned to Egypt, and Saād telegraphed to the Central Committee saying that some people (meaning the aforementioned) were ready to enter negotiations without any conditions, so beware of them.¹⁰⁷

Whether Zaghlūl had directed Nahhās to send these telegrams against 'Adlī or not remains an open question, but surely Nahhās was in line with Zaghlūl's policy and was responsible for the campaign against 'Adlī. Of all the fifteen members of the Wafd at that time, only four stayed with Saād Zaghlūl. They were Muṣṭafā al-Nahhās, Sinnūt Hannā, Wissa Wassif and Wassif Ghālī.¹⁰⁸ All the others had defected by June 1921. Of those who stayed with Zaghlūl, three out of the four were Christians, while among the defectors only one out of ten was a Christian. Among the pro-Zaghlulists Nahhās had been identified as the representative of the rising urban middle class of effendi lawyers.

One could also argue that the Copts represented the urban middle class since a large portion of the lawyers were Copts¹⁰⁹ and a large number of the government officials were Copts. One of the reasons given by the British for the siding of the Copts with the Muslims in the National Movement against the British, was the policy adopted by them (British) to employ Syrian and Lebanese Christians in the Egyptian government's service, thus alienating large sections of the Copts. So it was no surprise that Copts not only joined the Wafd, but also sided with Zaghlūl and Nahhās. Wissa Wassif was the President of the Bar

107. al-Nahhās, p. 47.

108. FO 371-6313 E9612/431/16 Mr. Scott to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston (No. 707) 12 August 1921.

109. Barbra Lynn Carter: 'Communalism in Egyptian Politics: The Experience of the Copts, 1918-1952' S.O.A.S., University of London 1983, p. 90.

Association for mixed courts;¹¹⁰ Sinnût Hannâ, another Copt, besides being a friend of Muṣṭafâ Kâmil, was also a member of the Legislative Assembly of 1914, and sided with Zaghlûl in the debate over who should preside; George Khayat, a prominent Copt, who sided with the moderates, was a Protestant and a wealthy notable in Assyiut;¹¹¹ and Wassif Ghali was a Coptic lawyer who may have been trying to overcome his father's murder as a suspected traitor.

The Egyptian historians Ramadan and Lâshîn have tried to explain Saád's behaviour by suggesting that Saád's legal mind perceived a contract between himself and the people. No other person, therefore, had the right to represent them.¹¹²

Saád was also transformed by the revolution, it was the revolution, that is, the people, who set him free from the hands of the British, and he strongly believed in the power of the people due to his own personal experience. It was an experience which Adly did not share, hence his incomprehension of the power of the masses.¹¹³ Zaghlûl realized that his power base depended on the masses, and that the masses only supported him for his uncompromising attitude towards the national issue.¹¹⁴

It is interesting to note here the view of Nahhas on the question of resolving differences of opinion between the president of the Wafd and a member of the Wafd. Zaghlûl wrote in his diary that on 14 November 1920, he presented a motion to the Wafd that any member who differed in opinion with the President in a dramatic and unresolved way would be expelled, otherwise he would hinder the President's and his own work. Nahhâs, who was his closest associate at that time, objected

110. Selîm Thaurat 1919, p. 170.

111. Ibid. p. 152.

112. Ramadan, p. 314.

113. Ibid. p. 303.

114. Lâshîn, pp. 288-289.

because it meant "despotism".¹¹⁵ This would be denied by Nahhâs later when he becomes the President of the Wafd. Nahhâs was no longer that young judge who joined the Wafd in 1919, about whom a report by the Ministry of Interior in May 1920 remarked in front of his name as being of "No special prominence".¹¹⁶ In July 1920 he would be appointed temporary secretary of the Central Committee of the Wafd in Cairo in place of 'Abd al-Rahman Fahmî, who was arrested. The British described him as an "extreme nationalist".¹¹⁷ After he joined Saád in Paris to present to him the opinion of the people on Milner's proposals with the role he played,¹¹⁸ he accompanied him to London in October 1920 with 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî and 'Alî Mâhir.¹¹⁹ In July the following year, 1921, Zaghlûl thought of publishing a newspaper entitled the "Wafd" and Sinnût Hannâ asked Tharwat, who was Interior Minister at the time, for a licence, with the intention that Nahhâs would be responsible for it. Tharwat refused.¹²⁰ Saád in the meantime was depending more and more on Nahhâs and both were getting closer to each other. It was said that Zaghlûl judged Nahhâs as stubborn, hasty, and lacking in manners but that Saád admired Nahhâs' talent for getting things done efficiently.¹²¹ On another occasion, Zaghlûl was quoted as having said that Nahhâs was

a man with a white heart, a steady principle, tends to talk a lot but has a sense of humour; he is active and imaginative; he loses his temper quickly, but does not change with the

115. Lashîn, p. 319, Quoting Diary of Saád, No. 39, p. 2371.

116. FO 371 E5311/1641/16 From Mr. Ingram to Mr. Murray, 26 May 1920.

117. FO 371 E9281/93/16 Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby to Earl Curzon (No. 808), 19 July 1920.

118. As indicated on p. 35.

119. Ramadan Vol. 1, p. 299.

120. Lashîn, p. 340, Saád's Diary, No. 50, pp. 2859-2860.

121. ^{al-Sayyid - Marsat} ~~Asaf - Butfi~~, p. 74.

circumstances; a nationalist, poor, extremely intelligent, faithful, who has a special place in my heart.¹²²

So it was not strange that Nahhâs should be arrested with Zaghlûl when the latter was arrested for the second time. None of the three others who were arrested with him the first time, Muḥammad Maḥmûd, Hamd al-Basel, and Ismail Sidqî, were with him on the second occasion. The leadership of the national movement had gone to another group, and they, Maḥmûd, Basel and Sidqî, were, by now, the moderates.

Zaghlûl, together with Nahhâs, and Maḥram, a lawyer and a government official, Sennût Hannâ, Faḥallah Barakât, and his brother 'Attef Barakât, Director of the School of Sharia Judges,¹²³ were exiled from Egypt by December 1921. As can be seen from the composition of this group, only Faḥallah Barakât differed dramatically in his social and educational background from the rest of the group. For he was both a rich landowner and without any high education who did not speak any foreign language.

The effect of exile on Nahhâs was twofold. First being exiled with Zaghlûl naturally added to his prestige and reputation as an ardent nationalist; second, he struck up his friendship with Makram Ebeid which was to have a tremendous impact on his political life. For instance, when Maḥram contracted malaria, it was Nahhâs who stayed with him in the hospital and nursed him.¹²⁴ Nahhâs not only established a close relationship with Maḥram, but also with the rest of the group, except for Fathallah. It is interesting to note how they lived with each other. Nahhâs, Hannâ, Makram and Zaghlûl took up residence in one house, and they joked that Zaghlûl assigned Nahhâs with the housekeeping as he was interested in cleanliness. Meanwhile,

122. Selim, Thauret 1919, p. 12.

123. Selim, Thaurat 1919, p. 154.

124. Hafiz, p. 339. Mustafa el-Feki, Makram 'Ubayd: A Coptic Leader in the Egyptian National Movement S.O.A.S. University of London 1977, pp. 92.

the Barakât brothers lived in a second house nearby.¹²⁵ It was not surprising that in the future Nahhâs would have very strong relations with Zaghlûl, Maḡraḡ, Hannâ, but not with the Barakât brothers.

Before exile, Nahhâs had already expressed his feelings about Saâd when the latter wanted to go to the United States to campaign for Egypt during the Peace Conference in 1919 and he opposed the project on the grounds that Muḡammad Maḡmûd would occupy the presidency of the Wafd while Zaghlûl was absent.¹²⁶ This relationship was deepened in exile, and after their return a police report in 1925 recorded that Saâd's closest adherents were Maḡraḡ and Nahhâs.¹²⁷ This must be contrasted to the relationship with the Barakât brothers which was always tense and far from cordial. Nahhâs would later accuse them during the elections in 1924 of pocketing election money with both hands.¹²⁸ This is not to mention Faḡhallaḡ's rivalry with Nahhâs over the leadership of the Wafd. Sinnût Hannâ, on the other hand, would sacrifice his life when saving that of Nahhâs later in 1931.

J. The February Declaration of 1922 and the Challenge to the Wafd from the Liberal Constitutionalist Party

The conflict between the two factions of the national movement, the so-called extremists under Saâd Zaghlûl and the moderates who formed their own party, was whether or not to accept Milner's proposals. When these proposals were rejected by the people, thanks to the efforts of Nahhâs, both the British and the "moderates", now called the Liberal Constitutionalist Party, agreed that the best way to strengthen

125. Terry, p. 142.

126. Terry, p. 115.

127. Mahafiz 'Abdin, Taqarir al Ahzab-Maktab Wazir al-Dakhliya 19 July 1925. *Dâr al-Waḡāfiyya al-Qawmiyya*

128. FO 407-198 E193/193/16 Allenby to Foreign Office (No. 891) Cairo, 29 December 1924.

the latter's position in the country and weaken that of Saád, Nakhâs and others, was to grant Egypt some concessions which would satisfy the minimum demands of the national movement without jeopardising British interests in Egypt. Thus Tharwat accepted the premiership and the exile of Zaghlûl in order to facilitate what was later known as the Declaration of 28 February 1922, by which the British Protectorate over Egypt was abolished and Egypt was granted its independence, provided Britain reserved for itself four points. These were to be known as the four reservations: imperial communications, the defence of Egypt, the protection of minorities, and the Sudan.

For the Wafd, this declaration did not differ from Milner's proposals, since it meant the recognition of the four reserved points which contradicted their aim of complete independence. Before the declaration was made, the Wafd was demanding the abolition of the Protectorate and the evacuation of the British troops from Egypt. In return, the party offered to accept a British garrison in Egypt in exchange for independence, as can be seen in Saád's counterproposals to Milner on 17 July 1920.¹²⁹ Thus, the Wafd's objective was not fulfilled, because independence without evacuation was meaningless, and it was due to the Wafd's pressure on the British that they were able to achieve even this nominal independence. The party felt that with further pressure on the occupying power, it could squeeze more concessions out of it.

The other reason the Wafd refused to recognize the 28 February Declaration of Egypt was that they realized that the mood of the people was still very much affected by the events of the 1919 uprising, and that the general atmosphere did not favour the moderates. If they wanted to retain their national leadership they should not think in terms of what the British could give, like the Liberal

129. Al-Bishrf, p. 168-169.

Constitutionalists, but of what the people wanted, even if the British were not ready to concede much. Moreover, they had nothing to lose by insisting on their demand for complete independence. First, the present stage of "independence" would not be affected, second, they could outbid their opponents in any future elections, since it was understood that a parliamentary system was to follow that "independence".

As things went on, the defectors, now called the Liberal Constitutionalists, played into their foes' hands. For the British, the Declaration of 28 February 1922 was the most they could concede at that point in time; and they conceded it with two objectives in mind. The first was to give the Liberal Constitutionalists, or the moderates, some gains which could boost their standing against the extremists, the Wafd, thus satisfying and at the same time curtailing the objectives of the national movement within the terms of the Declaration. The second was that the moderates, by outbidding the extremists, whose policy was portrayed as leading nowhere, would win the next elections and formally legalize the Declaration of February 1922 with its four reserved points. Thus for the Wafd the struggle against the British was not only a national struggle against an external enemy, but also an internal struggle against a domestic enemy in the elections. For he who would take power, would decide the future of the British presence in Egypt.¹³⁰ Thus Allenby, the British High Commissioner, found himself compelled to identify the Residency with the 'Adli-Tharwaṭ faction of Egyptian politicians, and consequently alienated their rivals, including the King.¹³¹

130. Ibid. pp. 66-67.

131. Elie Kedourie, The Genesis of the Egyptian Constitution, Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt, P.M. Holt (ed.), London 1968, p. 354.

A Commission to draw up a constitution was appointed consisting of thirty members. Two or three members of the Wafd were asked to join, but they refused on the grounds that their representation was not commensurate with their size and that an elected constituent assembly should promulgate the constitution.¹³² Zaghlûl's and the Wafd's stand can easily be understood: on the one hand they were rejecting a body created by their opponents, on the other they were confident of controlling an elected constituent assembly.

This led Rushdî, the President of the Commission, to give some powers to the King so that if it came to a contest between the Liberal Constitutionals and the Wafd, as happened between 'Adli and Zaghlûl in the spring of 1921, a monarch with some effective constitutional power could exert his influence in the Liberal's favour.¹³³ The Constitution that was promulgated gave the monarch the right to dissolve Parliament (article 38), adjourn its meetings (Article 39), issue decrees in the absence of Parliament (Article 77), and appoint and dismiss ministers (Article 49).¹³⁴ Moreover, anyone wishing to stand in the elections had to pay a deposit of £E150.¹³⁵ Thus the political system was designed in such a way as to hinder the Wafd from the start, and the Wafd with its legal approach to power and politics had no choice but to work through that framework. The result, as will be seen in the following chapters, was the crippling of the Wafd by the King.

132. Ramadan, p. 373.

133. Kedourie, p. 354.

134. Shuhdî 'Atiya al-Shafâi Tatawwuar al-Harakah al-Wataniyya fi Misr 1882-1956 Manshûrât Salâh al-Dîn Jerusalem n.d., pp. 55, 56.

135. Ramadan, p. 393.

K. The Consequences of the 1923 Constitution:

The Wafd abides by the Rules

Strangely enough, the enmity between those two rival factions, with the deal struck between the Liberal Constitutionalists and the Residency--the former to deliver the goods and the latter to support them into power--brought a temporary alliance between the King and the Wafd. It was a short-lived one which was not to be repeated except in the early 1950s. The reasons for this alliance were conditional upon the circumstances of the day. As already noted, the Liberal Constitutionalists, the supposed inheritors of the Umma party, threw their lot with the British in order to achieve their dream of sharing power with the monarchy. This alarmed the King who traditionally looked at them with suspicion.

Although the ideologies of the Wafd and their Liberal opponents were not all that different, at least to the extent that both were for a negotiated approach to the national question and for a constitutional government, yet the Wafd had a sweeping victory. This can be attributed to three factors: the charisma of the leader of the Wafd, the role of the King, and the social background of both parties. The Wafd did not comprise big landowners, but was made up mainly of an aspiring middle class of urban lawyers, and depended more on organization. On the eve of the elections, a British report noted that the Wafd was the only political party organized for the electoral struggle, while the Liberals seemed not to have attempted any organization at all. The same report described how the Wafd used a students' electioneering committee, and how supporters were urged to register, but all the Liberals did was to wait until delegates for every twenty people were elected as the electoral law stipulated under a two-stage election procedure, and then went to these delegates to win their support. It was already too late since the Wafd supporters were

elected as delegates in the first place.¹³⁶ The total percentage of people who were registered to vote was 58.04 per cent.¹³⁷

Zaghlûl had his first long talk with King Fuâd, in which he aired his opinion about it the next day to Delany, Reuter's correspondent in Cairo. "I knew of course the King would be difficult, but I did not find him impossible, he told Delany. It is quite beyond my power to do anything with him, I am not a revolutionary, but we need a strong arm to help us." Delany asked if he meant the strong arm of Great Britain, and Zaghlûl nodded his head in agreement.¹³⁸ Thus the policy of the Wafd was henceforth shaped along more or less the same lines of the Liberals, but with a popular flavour and a real sense of political sensitivity towards the people as a whole.

Nahhâs was sworn in as Minister of Communications, with other persons like Nagîb al-Gharablî and Wassif Ghali. The three were effendis and lawyers, which added a popular flavour to the cabinet. Faḥallah Barakât and Morcos Hannâ were also included.¹³⁹ What was significant about the new Wafd government was that the monopoly of the old establishment had been broken and the middle class was now sharing power for the first time, but naturally the old order had still some members like Muḥammad Sâid, Aḥmad Mazlûm and Tewfiq Nessîm, who had been instrumental in healing the rift between Zaghlûl and the King.¹⁴⁰

The most serious incident during this government's tenure was the resignation of Saâd in protest to the King's attitude towards it. In the row between the King and the government over the right to appoint

136. FO 371-8974 E10253/351/16 (No. 691) Mr. Scott, 5 October 1923.

137. FO 371-8963 E10383/10/16 (No. 710) Mr. Scott, 14 October 1923.
See also Appendix 1.

138. Gerald Delany, Saâd Zaghlul, Middle East Centre, Oxford, p. 3.

139. 'Abd al-Qâdir, p. 57.

140. 'Azabawî, p. 230.

members of the Senate, Saád was supported by Baron du Bouch, Public Prosecutor of the Mixed Courts, who acted as a mediator.¹⁴¹ But then another row erupted when Hassan Nash'át, the deputy of the Royal Chamberlain, was decorated by the King, without the knowledge of the cabinet, or its approval. Inspired by the King, Tewfiq Nessím resigned on 15 November.¹⁴²

Once again Nahhâs played a vital role in the affairs of the party and the government when he advised Saád to resign if his demands were not met.¹⁴³ On the same day Saád tendered his resignation to the Parliament for health reasons, but let it be known that it was really prompted by the "intrigues" of the Palace.¹⁴⁴ At the same time he went to the King for a private audience at which he insisted that the King should not bestow ranks or titles or appoint Palace employees without the government's approval.¹⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the Parliament took a vote of confidence in Saád's government and a parliamentary delegation went to meet the King. For two days the students, led by Hassan Yasín, demonstrated outside the Palace shouting "Saád or the Revolution",¹⁴⁶ a show of force on behalf of the Wafd. Eventually the King had to concede, and bitter relations between the two prevailed from then on, since it was also the policy of the Wafd to safeguard what possible and limited gains they had achieved in the new constitutional and parliamentary system.

This peculiar approach of the Wafd in its struggle against the

141. Ramadan, p. 373.

142. Ibid. pp. 235-237. Al-Kashkûl 9 January 1925, p. 12. Lashin, pp. 417-418.

143. Rose al-Yûsuf, 6 October 1927 No 100 p. 6. Hafiz, p. 356.

144. Lâshîn, pp. 417-418.

145. 'Azabawî, pp. 235-337.

146. Lâshîn, pp. 417-418. 'Azabawî, pp. 235-237.

Palace was to be tested more than once later, when Zaghlûl resigned after the assassination of the Sirdar, in the hope that history would repeat itself.¹⁴⁷ Saád was to learn his lesson and pay a visit of respect to the new High Commissioner for the first time,¹⁴⁸ while Nahhâs along with others assumed the responsibility of defending Ahmad Mâhir and Nokrashî in what was to be one of the most exciting court cases of the time.¹⁴⁹ There is no doubt that the bonds of friendship between the three were strengthened, especially with the vital part played by Nahhas in bringing about their release, and his courage in accusing the authorities of plotting to assassinate them.¹⁵⁰

By 1925 Nahhâs was regarded by the British as "Zaghlul's most prominent associate in Egypt"¹⁵¹ and the one responsible for the success of the extreme faction in the Wafd, due to his activity and influence among the students. In addition, he acted as a watchdog among his colleagues for the protection of Zaghlûl's interests.¹⁵²

L. The Struggle between the Urban and Rural elements inside the Wafd

For the purpose of this study, the years between Saád's resignation and the formation of 'Adli's second cabinet are not dealt with. What is important here was the role of Faṭhallah Barakât whom Muḥammad Maḥmûd had approached about a coalition government. According to 'Abbâs Hâfiz, Saád did not approve of this contest until after he had consulted Nahhâs who agreed to the idea.¹⁵³ Fathallah, as will be

147. Mahafiz 'Abdin Taqarir 'An al-Ahzab Dâr al-Wathâ'iq al-Qawmiyya p. 1.

148. Ramadan, p. 602.

149. Hâfiz, pp. 364, 365.

150. Fatma al-Yûsuf, Dhikrayat Dâr Rose al-Yûsuf Cairo 1954 p. 106. Difâ'a al-Nahhâs 'An Mâhir wa al-Nokrâshî p. 262.

151. FO 371-10906 E4003/431/16 Albenby to Curzon 24 March 1925.

152. FO 371-10906 E2111/431/16 Mr. Scott to Curzon 4 February 1925.

153. Hâfiz, p. 373.

seen later, was to represent the more moderate landowners' wing in the Wafd, whereas Nahhâs represented the more radical lawyers' wing. Both personalities would fight for the leadership of the Wafd in 1927, and over the general policy of the party in 1932, a contest which reflected their social differences.

Some argue that an extreme faction inside the Wafd had already been formed, and it was this faction which brought the downfall of 'Adli's government, and enabled Nahhâs to succeed Saâd Zaghlûl as leader of the Wafd. That extreme faction may well have been none other than the lawyers' wing.

One can find ample proof for this contention. The British opposed the inclusion of Nahhâs in 'Adli's cabinet: "The only name in his ['Adli] original list to which I took radical exception was that of Nahhâs."¹⁵⁴

'Adli thought that Barakât, Zaghlûl's nephew, would be a useful means of exerting pressure on the latter, and was therefore included in the cabinet. So, while Barakât was seen as someone who could be used as a moderating influence on Zaghlûl, the inclusion of Nahhâs in the cabinet was vetoed by the British. There is no doubt that the Wafdist militants were unhappy about the banning of Zaghlûl from the premiership, and if they could not have it otherwise, the only alternative was to embarrass the government.

Nahhâs as vice president in the chamber encouraged the deputies by his own example to be as irrelevant as they wished to the point of discussion. While Zaghlul was avoiding sensitive topics like the Sudan.¹⁵⁵

And it seems that all the signs of a possible conflict between those elements in the Wafd and 'Adli were visible at the time, for the

154. FO 407-11583 J1540/25/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 228) 8 June 1926.

155. FO 407-11584 J2142/25/16 Henderson to Chamberlain (No. 509) 24 July 1926.

the session tried in vain to persuade 'Adlî that the defeat of the motion did not mean a vote of no confidence in his government.¹⁶² Now a militant wing had proved its existence, and it was rumoured that its leaders were Noḡrashî and Aḡmad Mâhir.¹⁶³

Throughout the nights of 21 and 22 April, the Wafd held meetings in the House of the Nation (Bayt al-Umma) under Zaḡhlûl's presidency. There were two factions: one wanted to pursue the policy of hostility towards the British, whereas the majority, backed by Zaḡhlûl, did not. On the other side of the political divide Tharwat agreed to form another cabinet, but on the following conditions:

1. Deputies should not attack him sharply;
2. Discussions concerning new legislation for Mayors and the Army be postponed;
3. Any provocative questions concerning Anglo-Egyptian relations be eschewed, and
4. Government ministers should not be pressed into any act which would lead to a conflict between the government and the British High Commissioner.

Zaḡhlûl only just managed to get the approval of the Wafd after assuring them that it was only a temporary agreement and that the programme of the Wafd would remain intact.¹⁶⁴ He was clearly losing his grip over the party, due partly to illness and partly to the intransigence of the militant wing. He became seriously ill and died on 23 August 1927. His death marked the end of an era, and whatever conflicts or contradictions were kept in abeyance by the sheer force of his charismatic presence, they now came rushing to the surface.

162. Ibid.

163. Rose al-Yûsuf 5 May 1927, p. 4, Issue 78.

164. Yûnân Lubîb Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizârât al-Misriyya al-Ahrâm Cairo 1975, pp. 305-306.

possibility of 'Adlī's resignation was discussed between the British High Commissioner and the King only one month after the formation of the government. The British High Commissioner reported to his government that

In an audience with King Fuád at Alexandria on the 27th, possible candidates for premiership if 'Adlī resigned were discussed. Wafd would insist on Saád Zaghlûl, if not accepted another Wafdist would be chosen, the King was reported to have said. Morcos Hannâ, Fathallah Barakât on Nahhâs, Barakât is the most intriguing and dangerous.¹⁵⁶

The militant elements inside the Wafd were already accelerating their campaign and ignoring the lesson of 1924, which it was believed was only an act of momentary anger by the British. They argued that Egypt would not obtain anything unless it used violence as it did in the period between 1919 and 1922.¹⁵⁷ This view was becoming widespread among the deputies, and they began to criticize the government, especially the fact that the British High Commissioner performed his duties without presenting his credentials to the King.¹⁵⁸ Another source of embarrassment to 'Adlī was the issue of the Army. He had no wish for the new legislation regarding the Army to be put through Parliament and asked Zaghlûl to help him delay it, whether the British agreed or not.¹⁵⁹ The final blow came when fifteen members of Parliament suggested a motion to thank the government for its assistance to Bank Misr. 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmī Gomâa objected and the motion was defeated.¹⁶⁰ 'Adlī considered the defeat of the motion as a vote of No Confidence and resigned.¹⁶¹ Nahhâs who was presiding over

156. FO 407-11584 J2218/25/16 Henderson to Chamberlain (No. 523) 31 July 1926.

157. That was what was written by Amin el-Râfi'i in al-Ahrâm on 19 February 1927.

158. Ramadan, pp. 620-621.

159. Rizq, pp. 305-306.

160. Madâbit Majlis al-Nûwwab al-galsa 47, 18 April 1927, pp. 756-785.

161. Ibid., pp. 779-789.

M. The Emergence of Nahhās and his Election as Leader of the Wafd

With the death of Zaghlūl in August 1927, a power struggle over the leadership of the Wafd was imminent. For the extremist faction inside the Wafd, which had brought about the resignation of 'Adly's cabinet, it was a new opportunity for a show of force. This time they were not looking for anything less than the position of the successor of Zaghlūl, and their candidate was Nahhas. In fact, at the beginning no one took him seriously, as can be seen from the report

Barakāt and Thaṭṭā are possible successors, King could benefit, extremists could rally around Abd al-Hamid Bey Sāid. Nahhās is a candidate for popular favour but is discounted as he is mentally unbalanced. Barakat is a past-master of organization and intrigue, enjoys something of Zaghlul's success with simple folk but without appeal to cultured or decent-minded people, he is unpopular with Parliament and not in very good odour with the country at large.¹⁶⁵

It is possible that at first Nahhās was not one of the contenders, since it seems that Madame Zaghlūl (Saād's widow) had her own ambitions, but was obstructed by Barakāt who "used Saād's study room and behaved as his successor sitting on his chair. There was also a dispute over inheritance."¹⁶⁶ An article had already been published about how Madame Zaghlūl occupied her husband's place when he was exiled in 1921, and then spoke of electing her as an honorary President of the Wafd.¹⁶⁷ Faṭḥallah Barakāt's opposition alienated her, but Nahhas who was in favour of her co-operation, unofficial or otherwise, won the support of Madame Zaghlūl. 'Alī al-Shamsi was a possible candidate, but he favoured Nahhās.¹⁶⁸ The situation developed as

165. FO 407-205 J2450/8/16 Henderson to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 500), 27 August 1927.

166. Jacques Berque, Egypt: Imperialism and Revolution Translated by Jean Stewart, Faber and Faber London 1972 p. 395.

167. Kawākib al-Sharq 17 September 1927.

168. FO 371-12359 J27301/8/16 Mr. Henderson to Mr. Patrick Cairo, 24 September 1927.

follows: "Faḥallah Barakât, Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs and Wissa Wassif were to comprise an executive committee of three with Madame Zaghlûl as "Honorary President". Extreme elements preferred Nahhâs and relations between Madame Zaghlûl and Faḥallah Barakât were strained. When Nahhâs alighted from the train in Cairo many deputies ran and kissed his hands as an acknowledgment of his leadership. The King's Ittihâd Party, seeing in Nahhas's election an early parliamentary crisis and an obstacle to their return to power, published an article in their paper Al-Ittihâd¹⁶⁹ supporting the claims of Fathallah Barakât. But this only identified Barakât as the palace's choice. Madame Zaghlûl approved Nahhâs with the reservation that everything published by the Wafd must be approved by her. On election day, Nokrashî, Saâd Zaghlûl's parliamentary secretary al-Grudeilî (convicted in the 'Abd al-Rahman Fahmî trial), and Sheikh al-Gezîni organized between 200 and 300 students outside the House of the Nation shouting "Long Live De Valera of Egypt". Nokrashî also buttonholed each member as he came in with the words "Don't forget Nahhâs with his past record." Fakhry 'Abd al-Nûr, despite having sworn a life-time devotion to Faḥallah Barakât, changed his mind, and Madame Zaghlûl was talked out of being president on the principle that negotiations with England would be difficult for her.¹⁷⁰

What Wafdist sources stress was that Nahhâs accepted the leadership reluctantly and only upon Madame Zaghlûl's insistence.¹⁷¹ There is no doubt that his abstention at the beginning from the leadership election led to the collision between Madame Zaghlûl and

169. Issued in 1925 as the organ of the Ithihadists party which was pro-King.

170. FO 407-205 J2715/8/16 Henderson to Chamberlain (No. 554), 24 September 1927.

171. Hâfiz, p. 379.

Barakât, thus winning her to his side, and strengthened the campaign of Nokrashî on his behalf. But other factors also came into play, confirming the view that the "extremists" had a real stake in Nahhâs's election. For it seems that the prevailing idea was that of electing Barakât, in view of his relationship with Saád and his wealth which could help him in his new position. It was the older and bigger landowners who supported him. But the majority, who were the young intelligentsia and middle class, like 'Alî al-Shamsî Pâshâ, Wissâ Wassif, and Morcos Hannâ, saw that the reasons for electing Barakât were the same reasons not to elect him. Besides, he was not educated and he knew no foreign languages to help him in his contacts with foreign representatives. He was considered to be a snob to boot. It has also been rumoured that Fakhry 'Abd al-Nûr and Makram Ebeid played a role in electing Nahhâs.¹⁷² The Copts, too, sided with Nahhâs the lawyer against Barakât the landowner as they did with Saád in 1921 against 'Adlî.

Rose al-Yûsuf confirmed the presence of a debate over the choice of Nahhâs as a leader and commented that he was chosen because he was nearer to their hearts than Barakât, whom they feared for his strong personality.¹⁷³ Two other factors had contributed in the election of Nahhâs, the first being his position as Party Secretary, the second his personality as contrasted to that of Barakât. As for the first factor, there is no doubt that as Party Secretary he was able to get in contact with everybody in the Party. It was his job. By doing so, he knew and was known by everybody, an advantage his rival did not have. People naturally elect the face they are acquainted with.¹⁷⁴ The other

172. Hashshish, p. 90. Interview with Ibrâhîm Faraj, Dr. Muḥammad Salah al-Din 24/4/1968, Haykal Vol. 1, p. 279.

173. Rose al-Yûsuf 1 September 1927 (No. 95) p. 5.

174. Another example, although remote but similar is that of Stalin and Trotsky. Look at the experiment of some psychologists which prove this theory in Leadership C.A. Gibb (ed.), Penguin Books, 1969.

factor is the personality in a group. In each group with a purpose, they elect the man under whom this group functions, who could lead it to its objective, and get the job done. Usually there is a task-oriented man, who might be a genius, but with no human touch, like Barakât, and another one with good human relations but not as good in his task-orientation. This could have been Shamsî Pâshâ. Then there is a middle-of-the-road man, who is not brilliant at either, but has enough qualifications for both. Surely this was Nahhâs?

Chapter Two

The Golden Age of the Wafd under Nahhâs, 1927-1936

It is worthwhile noting how both Wafdist and anti-Wafdist papers commented on Nahhâs' election. The Wafdist Rose al-Yûsuf¹ wrote:

There is no one among those who have been nominated as President who is more pure and honest than Mustafa el Nahhâs. His history is known, and his positive actions with Muṣṭafâ Kâmil and then Sáad Zaghlûl are well known to everybody. Muṣṭafâ is above that very honest, very difficult to shake from what he considers to be right and just, very frank, and as they say, his words are from his heart. But they also say that he is very hasty, and the word which the political circles use to describe it is impulsiveness. Thus they say, it is not impossible that the conflicts between himself and the government and the Wafd itself would increase. But we think that the Nahhâs of tomorrow would be different from the Nahhâs of yesterday. The heavy burdens of the Presidency which have been put on his shoulders, will contain his impulsiveness. The grave responsibilities he has taken on, would make him think twice before he speaks!²

On the other side al-Khashkûl³ printed a cartoon of Nahhâs sitting on a big chair with a frock coat which was too large for him.⁴

The choice of Maḳraṃ Ebeid as Secretary-General was in line with Zaghlûl's policy of including Copts in order to strengthen national unity. Thus, Wissâ Wassif, a Copt, was chosen as the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, and Wassif Butrus Ghali, another Copt, became Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both Maḳraṃ and Nahhâs were exiled in the Seychelles, and both had been fiercely loyal to Zaghlûl.⁵ It was not,

1. A literary weekly in 1925 which then turned to politics and pro-Wafd ('Abd al-Latif Hamza Qissat al-Sahafah al-'Arabiyyah fi Misr Matba'at al-Mârif Baghdad 1967, p. 16).
2. al-Yûsuf, pp. 111-112.
3. A satirical weekly magazine published in 1921 as independent, then turned anti-Wafd (Hamza, p. 114).
4. FO 407-205 J2867/8/16 Henderson to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 576), 6 October 1927.
5. el-Feki, pp. 104-105.

therefore, odd that Maḳraṃ should support Nahhâs, for surely, Makram's background placed him on the side of Nahhâs, and he personified the role played by the Copts in supporting Zaghlûl against the moderates. Moreover, Maḳraṃ's cultural and educational background was important. He was a government employee with legal experience; he sided with Mâher and Nokrashî, and joined the urban professional politicians of the Wafd, rather than the landowners. As an Egyptian scholar has written:

The political adroitness of Makram Ebeid, his ability as a negotiator, his facility in foreign languages and his experience in dealing with European political style because of his visits to London and Paris on political missions as a man of propaganda and a party spokesman were to complement the character of Nahhâs who was well known as a man of honesty and dignity, but who was not qualified as a statesman or as a clever negotiator and was not in direct touch with foreign cultures.⁶

The interview Nahhâs gave to al-Ahrâm⁷ on the eve of his election, indicated his policies. When asked about the Wafd's internal policies, he said

The domestic policies of the Wafd aim at safeguarding the constitution, and consolidating the coalition. As shown by the published Party Manifesto the protection of the constitution against those who may wish to override it will be our first priority. Since we regard it as the first achievement of our struggle we must consolidate it. And we consider it a practical means to consolidate the authority of the people and a means by which we could gain our true, complete independence. This does not mean that we are abandoning our demands for complete independence, which is our main aim and our avowed commitment.

When Nahhâs was asked if he would trust the strength of the coalition, he answered that the present coalition among the Egyptian parties was stronger than ever. As for his plans on external issues, Nahhâs stated that the Wafd's foreign policy would aim at a friendly relationship between the Egyptian people and other nations of the world including the British. He pointed to the Party manifesto which stated that

6. Ibid.

7. An independent daily published since 1875 by two Lebanese Selîm and Bishara Taqlâ (Hamza, pp. 43, 66).

Egypt's relationship with Britain was one of friendship. He was then asked whether it was feasible to reach an agreement with the British. Nahhâs replied that they would like to have an agreement with Britain based on the respect of mutual rights and the lawful interests of others which did not conflict with their independence.¹²

Reading this interview, it was obvious that Nahhâs was as mild with the British as he was tough with the Palace. He sent conciliatory signals to the British, assuring them of the respect of their interests in Egypt, in an attempt to moderate his image as an extremist. At the same time, warning signals were sent to the Palace when he spoke about his first priority, which was protecting the constitution, which had been, as he indicated, undermined once before. But as Nahhâs himself showed in his interview, the Constitution was not only the first prize of the Wafd's struggle, but also the means by which to achieve independence. For not only had they to protect what they had already gained, lest it be lost - and this was possible after the experience of 1925 - but also the Wafd, and Nahhâs had already confined themselves to a certain structure from which they could not withdraw. This comprised the second and third articles of the Wafd law for seeking Independence by legal means, that is, the Constitution, for it was that Constitution which legalized them in the first place as the representative of the nation as against the Turko-Egyptian aristocratic establishment of the Umma, the Liberal Constitutional Party and others. Without the Constitution independence became meaningless, as it would not be negotiated by representatives of the nation, and thus its outcome not shared by the people. As Zaghlûl described it, it would be tantamount to George V negotiating with George V.⁸ And so the whole struggle deviated from its original course of fighting the British to achieve

8. Armad Shafiq, Hawliyat Min al-Siyasiyah Tamhid Vol.2
Matba'at Shafiq Pasha Cairo 1926-3 - p.62

date

independence in 1919, and developed into fighting the Egyptian Monarch in order to protect the Constitution which was a necessary condition in order to fight the British for independence. Nahhâs was caught in the trap of the Constitution.

The occasion came on 3 October, forty days after Zaghlûl's death. The Wafd still considered the country to be in a state of mourning and a memorial meeting was held by the Students' Committee on 5 October, while the Wafd held another important memorial gathering on the 7th. Al-Balâgh⁹ (the Wafdist organ) saw in the King's celebration of his accession to the throne on the 9th a deliberate affront to the country's mourning.¹⁰ A campaign against the King was launched and Tharwat asked Nahhâs to suppress it. Nahhâs said he would do so, but was unable to fulfil his promise.¹¹ Tension between the two adversaries was apparent when no representative of the King attended the 7 October ceremony, and all Wafdist notables and deputies boycotted the King's celebration of 9 October, except the ministers. The Parliament building was not decorated.¹² At the same time the King replied to Nahhâs' congratulatory telegram for the accession ceremony by addressing him personally, ignoring his position as President of the Wafd, even though Nahhas had sent his telegram to the King in his capacity as President of the Wafd. Tewfiq Nessîm, Royal Chamberlain, had also sent a telegram to Nahhâs as president of the memorial committee and not as President of the Wafd, apologizing for not being

9. Issued by 'Abd al-Qâdir Hamza in 1923, defected in 1932 (Hamza, pp. 140-141).

10. Rif'at Al-Sâid, Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs al-Siyasi wa al-Zaa'im wa al-Munadil, Dâr al-Thagafa al-Jadidah Cairo 1976 p. 56.

11. FO 407-205 J2872/8/16 Henderson to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 585), 7 October 1927.

12. FO 407-205 J2936/8/16 Henderson to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 600), 15 October 1927.

able to attend the memorial ceremony.¹³ The reply came swiftly; Nahhâs in his speech on 17 November upon his election as Speaker of the Chamber said,

I demand in the name of you all, and my name, of the constitutional government to which we gave our trust, to fulfill its promise which the constitutional affairs committee referred to in its report on the 2nd of August 1926 concerning the decrees promulgated by the executive authorities during the suspension of Parliament and approved by the two chambers which state that: To prevent the recurrence of issuing such decrees they must be prompt as per the law referred to in Article 68 of the Constitution, which also includes an article regarding the punishment of any government minister in the future who desires to issue such decrees by law. And it is agreed that the government will present to the chamber as quickly as possible the drawing up of such a law.¹⁴

According to a British report, however,

Nahhâs support to Tharwat, although not informed of details of negotiations, (which he was conducting with Chamberlain in what was later known as the Tharwat-Chamberlain negotiations) might either be a seal for settlement or that such blind support they could easily withdraw or less knowledge means less responsibility.¹⁵

But

Tharwat showed drafts of the treaty to 'Adlî, other Liberals and one Wafdist, Barakât.¹⁶ At the same time it was reported that the Wafd was regretting having elected Nahhâs, and that his visit to Alexandria in order to persuade Muḥammad Sa'id to join the Wafd, boycott the arrival of the King, but he failed.

Only Nokrashî and Maḳraḡ Ebeid visited him, while Fakhry 'Abd al-Nûr had begun a campaign against him.

The executive committee dominated by the so-called extremists favoured rejecting a Tharwat treaty as Labour had won municipal elections in England and they hoped to get a better agreement from

13. Rose al-Yûsuf, 20 October 1927, No. 102, p. 6.

14. Madâbit Majlis al-Nûwwab, 17 November 1927, p. 9.

15. FO 407-205 J2944/8/16.

16. FO 407-205 J3026/8/16.

them.¹⁷ Nahhâs, in fact, was facing a battle on two fronts. On one side there were the sceptics inside the Party who had been opposed to Nahhâs' election from the beginning. When Nahhâs was elected, al-Ahrâm wrote that, according to its correspondent in London, an article was published in the African World newspaper in which its writer claimed that he knew from two well-informed sources that the more reasonable elements inside the Wafd found themselves in a muddle as a result of participating with Nahhâs in raising him to glory. "But they say and believe that Nahhâs will soon be shaken thus giving them a strong excuse to get rid of him. But they cannot expel him without giving him every opportunity to prove his disability."¹⁸ This was already proving to be the case. An account of his handling of Parliament showed him to be an inept leader, especially when compared to his predecessor, Zaghlul. Nahhâs lacked firmness and direction in dealing with the deputies, allowing Parliament to degenerate into a sorry show of partisan obstruction. He was too much influenced by the men who had furthered his candidacy as leader of the Wafd to be able to control them.¹⁹

On the other hand, there was the coalition, in which it was generally understood that if he was to be elected Tharwat would resign, and the coalition with the other main rival party, the Liberal Constitutionals, would come to an end. One can hardly deny the possibility of that being also the aim of the extremists, especially after taking into account an earlier incident in which they were responsible for the fall of 'Adli's cabinet, of finally forming a purely Wafdist government. The tense relation between the two parties

17. FO 407-205 J3215/8/16.

18. Al-Ahrâm, 25 September 1927.

19. al-Sayyid-Marsott, p. 115.

was reflected in an exchange of acrimonious articles which was sparked off by the Liberal students who wanted to give a tea-party in honour of Tharwat which the Wafdists opposed. On 20 December 1927, al-Siyassa²⁰ (organ of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party) published an article entitled "We want a sincere coalition founded on frankness." It amounted to a reprimand of Nahhâs and the Wafd for claiming the undivided allegiance of the official student organization, and indeed for taking students from their studies into politics, and challenged Nahhâs to remind some of his friends of the loyalty to a coalition Premier which the coalition implied. Nahhâs told al-Ahrâm he was on the best of terms with the Premier and that the al-Siyassa article would not disturb relations between the two parties in the coalition. He told Al-Moqattam²¹ that the coalition had never been stronger and that his relations with Tharwat were cordial. He denied anyone the right to interfere in the affairs of the Wafd or in its relations with the students.²² Yet the undeclared twisting of arms between the two partners continued despite talk of how strong the coalition was. For Nahhâs and his extremist clique (as described by the British report) wanted to get rid of Faḥallah Barakât who was kept by Tharwat as a pro-treaty element in the Wafd. Thus, in a meeting of the Liberal Constitutionalist the article in al-Siyassa was not attacked, but a declaration of the desire for the maintenance of the coalition was issued. Nahhâs refused this and demanded that the Party refute the article. Tharwat later made several concessions in Parliament in order

20. Published in 1922 edited by Dr. Muḥammad Hussein Haykal (Hamza, pp. 141-142).

21. A pro-British daily first issued in 1888 owned by Yâcûb Sarûf and Fairṣ Nimr (Hamza, pp. 96-97).

22. Al-Ahrâm, 25 September 1927.

to win Nabhās over to the treaty.²³

Another point of tension was the new Assembly Law. Nabhās and Tharwat agreed on what should not pass except for one point, the right of the police to take preventive action in stopping demonstrations before they began, or for guiding and directing them. Tharwat knew that if he opposed these laws his government would fall and the treaty negotiations would collapse.²⁴ Eventually the cabinet was divided between supporters of Tharwat, such as Faḥallah Barakāt, Osmān Muharam, Muḥammad Nagīb al-Gharablī, G'afar Walī, and those of Nabhās, like Zakī Abu al-Sáūd, Aḥmad Khashaba, Morcos Hannā, and 'Alī al-Shamsī, according to the Watanist newspaper al-Akḥbar.²⁵ It was obvious that Tharwat's cabinet had only a few more days of life left. When the correspondent of al-Ahrām asked Nabhās about British insistence to stay in Cairo he answered "Then there is no chance for an agreement." Previously he said that he had no details or information concerning Tharwat's negotiations as these were secret.²⁶ The expected finally happened, for it was impossible for the militant faction in the Wafd Party to remain under the leadership of a minority party. Being certain that as a majority they could always get better terms from the British, the proposed treaty was categorically rejected and Tharwat's government was brought down.

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23. FO 407-206 J200/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 12), 6 January 1928.
24. FO 407-206 J270/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 46), 19 January 1928.
25. FO 407-206 J289/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 26), 5-11 January 1928.
26. FO 407-206 J377/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 53), 19 January 1928.

A. The First Nabhâs Government

The King then invited Nabhâs to consult him on who should be the next Prime Minister, and whether the new government should again be a coalition or purely Wafdist. Nabhâs replied that the government would continue as a coalition but that the Prime Minister should be a Wafdist.^{27,28} With a majority in the Parliament, Nabhâs showed his spirit of national co-operation by including Liberal Constitutional Party members in his cabinet.²⁹ And on 16 March 1928, Nabhâs formed his first government. It included, besides himself as premier and Minister of Interior, G'afar Wali for War and Marine, Wassif Ghali for Foreign Affairs, Muḥammad Nagib al-Gharablî for Waqfs, 'Alî al-Shamsî for Education, Aḥmad Muḥammad Khashaba for Justice, Muḥammad Mahmûd for Finance, Ibrahim Fahmy Bey for Public Works, Muḥammad Safwat for Agriculture and Maḥram Ebeid Effendi for Transport.³⁰ At the insistence of Muḥammad Mahmûd, three of the Wafdist ministers in the previous cabinet were excluded: Fathallah Barakât, Morcos Hannâ, and Osmân Muharam. Zakî Abu al-Sâûd was also excluded at the King's wish, and Khashaba replaced him, while Makram Ebeid took Khashaba's place.³¹

27. FO 407-206 J917/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 166), 13 March 1928.

28. It was reported at that time that when Tharwaṭ showed Nabhâs the draft treaty he had negotiated with Austin Chamberlain, British Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nabhâs commented on it saying that the only place for that draft was in the water-closet.

29. P.J. Vatikiotis, History of Egypt, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 2nd 1980 p. 284.

30. Fûâd Karam al-Nizârât wa al-Wirzarât al-Misriyya p. 312 al-Waqâa al Misriya No. 25, p. 192.

31. Rizq, Tarikh al Wirzarat, p. 314.

FO 407-206 J1126/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 265) 23 March 1928.

FO 407-206 J1546/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 275) 9 May 1928.

FO 407-206 J1934/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 324) 23 June 1928.

In his first speech in Parliament Nahhâs declared

It is a matter of sorrow that these negotiations (Tharwaṭ-Chamberlain) did not lead to a proper basis for negotiations between the Egyptian and British governments, but we are sure that the mutual interests of both countries would ensure a solution that achieves our independence and safeguards the British government over its interests which do not affect our independence.³²

In his audience with the King, Nahhâs said that the Assembly Law would not proceed.³³ The law was regarded with suspicion by both the King and the British as endangering public order. An article which prohibited the police from breaking public demonstrations was regarded as a constraint on the police, thus encouraging civil disorder, and there was no way either the British or the King would accept the passing of the law, upon which the fate of Nahhâs' first cabinet depended. He tried to win over the British on other matters, and when he visited Lord Lloyd,³⁴ the latter expressed his displeasure should Aḥmad Mâhir be elected Vice President of the Chamber. Nahhâs answered that this could not happen at the last minute. Yet it happened.³⁵ In all his visits to the British Residency he expressed friendliness to Great Britain without, however, going beyond vague generalities. As the British noticed, the Wafd's attitude was to avoid open conflict with them.³⁶ But it seems that that could not be avoided. When Nahhâs met Lord Lloyd on 6 April, he explained why he could not withdraw the Law of Assembly after both Chambers had voted it: he could only postpone it for a time while other laws were discussed,

32. Madâbit Majlis al Nūwwâb, 19 March 1928, p. 552.

33. FO 407-206 J953/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 173), 16 March 1928.

34. A conservative member at Parliament then Governor of Bombay (Marlow 288).

35. FO 407-206 J1012/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 182), 21 March 1928.

36. FO 407-206 J1126/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 265), 23 March 1928.

before presenting it to Parliament.³⁷ At the same time, the King met Nahhâs on the morning of 29 April and asked him to shelve the law for a year or resign. Nahhâs answered that it could be shelved only until November and that he had no intention of resigning.³⁸

It seems that Nahhâs had underestimated his rivals' power and overestimated his own and was carried away by the euphoria of his fellow militant Wafdists who had finally won the battle of regaining the premiership, and not only that, but with their man, Nahhâs, as premier. Nahhâs asked Mr. Delaney, Reuter's representative in Cairo, to go to London and inquire if he himself could go to England that summer to negotiate the evacuation of British troops, while keeping some garrisons in certain parts of the country for a limited period under discussion.³⁹ He did not care what other provisions were inserted in the treaty, but he did not wish it to cover the Capitulations.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, he proceeded with the Assemblies Law until he was able to reach a compromise with the British to postpone the discussion of the Law. This gave him a breathing space, but the problem was only postponed. The British, the King, and Nahhâs had to act sooner or later. Nahhâs even thanked the British for their conduct during what had become known as the "Assembly Law Crisis" and was questioned in Parliament about it. He had to defend himself by saying that was because of the spirit in which the British Government had met his peaceful intentions, namely not to carry out its threat, although he did not agree with the British point of view, and commit himself in

37. FO 407-206 J1187/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 208), 7 April 1928.

38. FO 407-206 J1409/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 253), 29 April 1928.

39. FO 407-206 J1856/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 311), 15 June 1928.

40. It is worth noticing here that Nahhâs stand on that issue was different from that of Zaghlûl who accepted them, and that Nahhâs would keep his stand on that issue until he finally got rid of it

a written document that the Assembly Law would not be ever discussed in Parliament.⁴¹ At the time the British High Commissioner reported on that crisis, Nahhâs made no effort to establish cordial relations with him, but the reverse, and did not invite the High Commissioner to the official celebration of the King's birthday. However, Nahhâs' use of Reuter's correspondent as an intermediary between himself and London, his ignoring of the official letter of the appointment of a new Judicial Advisor, and his refusal to sign the Financial Advisor's contract, had serious results on British trade, etc.⁴²

It was soon assumed that the two Liberal Constitutional ministers were going to resign,⁴³ and Nahhâs responded by saying that he would not hesitate to substitute them with Wafdist ministers.⁴⁴ When the affair of Sayf al-Dîn became public,⁴⁵ Nahhâs received a telegram from London, in which its sender revealed that he had met with a British high official who made it clear that unless Nahhâs withdrew the Assembly Law, he would be kicked out of office.⁴⁶ Following the resignation of the three ministers, two Liberal Constitutionalists and a Wafdist, Nahhâs received a letter dismissing him on 25 June 1928, in which it was stated: "That since the coalition on the basis of which the government had been established, had been severely broken, we saw fit to dismiss you. We thank you and your ministerial colleagues for

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41. Madâbit Majlis al-Nûwwâb, 14 May 1928, p. 978.
42. FO 407-206 J1987/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 508), 22 June 1928.
43. Marcel Colomb Tatawwur Misr 1924-1950 Tarjamit Zoheir al-Shayib Maktabit Saâd Ra'ft 1972 Cairo p. 87.
44. Mahafiz 'Abdin Hizb al-Wafd Dâr al-Wathâ'iq al-Qawmiyya. 16 June 1928.
45. Nahhâs as lawyer of Princes Sheuikar, ex-wife of King Fûâd and sister of Prince Sayf al-Dîn agreed to take the case of her brother against King Fûâd for the mismanagement of the latter of the estates of the former during his custody in a mental hospital.
46. Gorgi, p. 62.

your services for the country." This was Nahhâs' first and shortest government, and one could understand why he later mistrusted coalition governments. On the other hand, as Dr. Ramadan remarks, "Since Nahhâs was able to get out of the crisis without withdrawing the Assembly Law from Parliament as Britain asked, and without acknowledging the 28th of February Declaration, he had strengthened his position both as leader of the party and with public opinion."⁴⁷

Undoubtedly Nahhâs was regarded by many at that time as a hero and sympathized with him. By not capitulating to British pressure over the Law of Assembly and to the King over the law regarding the prosecution of ministers, he appeared as a hero.

Nahhâs' dismissal saved him from a critical situation which could have turned into an embarrassment for him. He had shelved the Assembly Law bill for the time being, but on the opening of the new session of the Parliament, he had to make the difficult choice of either risking another crisis and confrontation with the British and the King with unforeseen consequences, or capitulating in the eyes of the public. The latter choice would deal a severe blow to his new status as leader of the Wafd which he was trying to strengthen inside the Wafd, despite internal party criticism. The dismissal not only saved him from all these problems, but gave the impression, at least to the public, that he was punished for not yielding to British demands. What more credit would a national leader desire than the credit of the uncompromising champion of the people's cause? So Nahhâs proved to be faithful to Zaghlûl's uncompromising policies, and his charisma was gradually taking shape. As an Egyptian scholar wrote later, there was no doubt about Nahhâs' honesty and integrity. Nahhâs knew quite well that no person could lead the Egyptian people if his ethics were questioned.⁴⁸

47. Ramadan, Vol. 1, p. 674.

48. Al-Sâid, p. 43.

The acquittal of Nahhâs in the Seif al-Dîn case, also added to his prestige. Hassan Sabri⁴⁹ remarked to Mr. Smart⁵⁰ that everyone knew that Nahhâs was an imbecile, but that he had a general reputation for honesty. The government tried to destroy this reputation, but failed. The case did for him what exile in Malta had done for Zaghlûl. "It made him appear in the eyes of the mob as a patriotic victim of an anti-national and oppressive government, and his vindication by the court was his consecration as a popular hero."⁵¹

What followed was to become the pattern of Wafd policies under Nahhâs' leadership at least for most of that time. First, following Zaghlûl's practice, he sent Maḳraḡ Ebeid to London to agitate against Muḥammad Maḥmûds' negotiations there in 1929. Maḳraḡ had done the same against 'Adli in 1921.⁵² This would not be the only parallel with a previous policy. Secondly, it was rumoured that Nahhâs was dominated by a stronger character, that of Makram, and an article in al-Siyassa on 8 September 1929, and a report by the British on 12 November 1929, both bore the same implication,⁵³ that Nahhâs seemed to be dominated by another figure, and that the policies of Nahhâs, that is, the Wafd, would be attributed to that figure, or his influence on him.

The Wafd under Nahhâs, however, would act according to the following general policy. The British could not negotiate a treaty unaccepted by the party with the largest mass following. For the British sought the legitimacy and durability (implementation, in other

49. A Wafdist who later joined Sidqi then became Prime Minister in 1940.

50. Oriental Secretary.

51. FO 407-208 J592/5/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 165), 23 February 1929.

52. El-Feki, p. 106.

53. Ibid., p. 112. FO 371/13849 Sir P. Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson, 12 November 1929.

words) of the anticipated settlement. A small party without mass support could not insure or guarantee that. In other words, it was only the Wafd which commanded the loyalty of the vast majority of the masses, and without the Wafd's support, no settlement would secure the approval of the people. This made the Wafd the key to any British settlement with Egypt, and the British had no choice but to abandon any other party negotiating in the name of Egypt, as it did not represent Egypt. That was Maḳram's message in London. Behind that argument lay the old dispute which erupted between Zaghlūl and 'Adlī over which social and political force should lead Egypt to independence. The landowners, as represented mainly in the Liberal Constitutional Party, now under the leadership of Muḥammad Maḥmūd, or the urban-middle class, as represented mainly in the Wafd now under the leadership of Nahnās. In other words, only the Wafd could deliver the goods, that is, a treaty with Britain. This policy with its inherent contradiction passed unnoticed, although not by the majority of the people. On the departure of Maḳram to London, al-Khashkūl published a caricature of two Egyptians engaged in the following conversation.

First person: This means that Nahnās is demanding from the British to form a government.

Second person: And he says he wants to get the British out, as if he is saying give me the stick with which to hit you.⁵⁴

The Wafd in a very skilful way deprived Muḥammad Maḥmūd of the success he hoped to gain by his negotiated treaty, and turned the issue from that of the treaty to that of the suspended constitutional life in Egypt. And the message was quite clear to London: the Wafd would not endorse any treaty as long as it was out of power.⁵⁵ The British, therefore, had to end their support for Muḥammad Maḥmūd and facilitate

54. Al-Khashkūl, 5 July 1929, p. 12.

55. Ramadan, p. 705.

the return of Parliament, which meant the return of the Wafd to power, if the British wanted their treaty to be endorsed by the Wafd. This was understood; if they had agreed to Muḥammad Maḥmūd's treaty, what would have been left for them? Besides, realising they had a much stronger bargaining power in their command of the mass support of the majority, especially with a Labour government in office in London, they were naturally inclined to believe they could extract better terms than those of Maḥmūd. Nakhās became so convinced of this policy, allegedly under the influence of Maḥram, that he ignored any other tendency of moderation in the Wafd regarding acceptance of the British proposals as advocated by Noḡraḡhī.⁵⁶ His bitterness against the King was also unabated, and he refused any suggestion of reconciliation by refusing to send a delegation to His Majesty when that was suggested in a Wafdist meeting in Alexandria.⁵⁷

Nakhās' optimism regarding the success of his, or Maḥram's, policy was confirmed with the appointment of a new British High Commissioner, Sir Percy Loraine,⁵⁸ to succeed the much hated Lord Lloyd. Nakhās expressed his ideas in a speech on 21 August 1929, when he said,

For it has been proven from the statements made by the British Foreign Secretary that he was implementing a policy which Lord Lloyd insisted upon, with stubbornness although Sir Austin Chamberlain disapproved of it as being dangerous.

Then he added in another part,

Therefore it [British government] paved the way by sacking the High Commissioner [Lord Lloyd] who constructed the policy of the present government [Muḥammad Maḥmūd] and backed it in its coup against the constitutional system and against the authority of the Nation. Thus this action was a right step

56. FO 407-209 J3132/5/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson, (No. 451) Confidential, 12 November 1929.

57. FO 407-209 J2350/5/16 Mr. Hoare to Mr. A. Henderson, (No. 238), 16 August 1929.

58. Formerly British ambassador at Ankara, a career diplomat (Marlow 288).

on the part of the British government to clarify the relationship between Great Britain and Egypt, which we met by what it deserved in consent.⁵⁹

Finally Nakhās had his way when the British informed Muḥammad Maḥmūd that they would only recognise a treaty with Egypt which had been ratified by a freely elected Parliament.⁶⁰ Maḥmūd had no choice but to resign in order to make way for new parliamentary elections. An interim cabinet under 'Adlī was formed and elections were held which resulted in a sweeping victory for the Wafd.⁶¹

B. The Second Nakhās Government

The Cabinet of 1930 and Negotiations with the British

Nakhās' second government was formed on 1 January 1930, its most important feature being the exclusion of 'Alī al-Shamsī and Faṭhallaḥ Barakāt. Noḳrashī was appointed Minister of Communications, and Bahie al-Dīn Barakāt (son of Faṭhallaḥ Barakāt) Minister of Education. In this way Nakhās excluded his ex-rival Faṭhallaḥ Barakāt and one of his supporters, 'Alī al-Shamsī, in a bid for more political power between the two rival factions of the Wafd. It is interesting to note that Barakāt complained in his memoirs that Nokrashī became the strong man of the Wafd.⁶² At the same time, 'Alī al-Shamsī was reported to have said that Nakhās, Maḳram, Ebeid, Noḳrashī, and Aḥmad Māhir formed the real Wafd.⁶³ As can be seen from the composition of the

59. Al-Balāgh 22 August 1929, p. 4.

60. John Marlow, Anglo-Egyptian Relations 1800-1956, The Crescent Press, London 1954, p. 284.

61. Al-Rafi'i V2 pp. 95-97. See Appendix 1.

62. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot 'Egypt's Liberal Experiment 1922-1936', University of California Press Los Angeles California 1977, p. 131. Quoting Faṭhallaḥ Barakāt Memoirs 1930 (12:91).

63. FO 407-210 J148/4/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 12), 4 June 1930.

government, the seeds of the 1932 split (in which both Faṭḥallah Barakât and 'Alî al-Shamsî defected from the Wafd) were sown by the policy openly expressed by Maḡraḡ Ebeid in a conversation with Mr. Watson after the failure of the negotiations at the British Embassy in Cairo, and which consisted of a hard line against the King and a better understanding with the British.⁶⁴ This same policy was enunciated by Nahhâs in his "Speech from the Throne" at the opening of the Parliament on 11 January 1930

And it is our dearest wish that the nation should continue to uphold the Constitution, benefiting from what it guaranteed of rights and freedoms; that the Constitution itself should remain immune, defended by legal measures which would insure its existence and continuity. The government will present to you the necessary legislation to achieve that goal.⁶⁵

This was a clear indication of the intention to introduce legislation for the protection of the Constitution, aimed more directly at the King than the British. Yet whenever Nahhâs seriously tried to curtail the power of the King, he was opposed by the British.⁶⁶ For the next two decades at least, and despite his efforts to appease the British, the latter would never unleash him against the monarchy as he wished. The British logic for that was the maintenance of a delicate balance of power between the two rivals.⁶⁷ The question is, Was Nahhâs aware of that policy, and was he trying to extract the maximum out of his allotted zone? Or was he trying to upset the whole balance as he had tried more than once - in 1936 and 1937 for example - by using his Blue Shirts Youth organization. Nevertheless, it seems at that moment he

64. al-Feki, p. 112 FO 371/14615 J2127/4/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 594), Cairo 21 June 1930.

65. Madâbit Majlis al-Nūwwâb, 11 January 1930 p. 3.

66. FO 371/J497/130/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 92), 12 February 1930.

67. Muḡammad Saâd al-Dîn, Zâim Misr al-Khâlid Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs Matbâat Tuma Cairo 1977 p. 70.

did not appreciate the danger he constituted to the British as the events of June of that year clearly showed.⁶⁸

Mr. Henderson in his opening speech on 31 March stated that they had met to achieve a great purpose.

Firstly, to bring a contribution, and an important one, to strengthen the great organisation which is being built up by the nations to establish peace between the peoples of the world. I refer to the League of Nations. Secondly, to seal by a treaty a friendship between two peoples whose interests are in so many respects identical.

To which Nakhâs answered in French that Egypt, which held firm to its constitutional liberties, had expressed its desire to conclude a treaty with Britain.⁶⁹ Thus Nakhâs in his answer emphasized that he was the representative of the people, and could argue therefore against previous agreements that were not negotiated by properly elected bodies.

In the first session of the negotiations a general discussion was held. The principles to be deduced from the British proposals were summarized by Nakhâs as follows:

1. The termination of the British occupation.
2. The alliance: The principle was accepted...Egypt was ready to prove her goodwill by allowing Great Britain to assist her in defending the Canal, and for this purpose would allow Great Britain to maintain a military base (Nakhâs was careful to use the singular) near the Canal until the time had come when Egypt had proved herself fit to hold it until British reinforcements could arrive....
3. Protection of foreigners was the right of Egypt, only as restricted by the Capitulations. The Capitulations were destined to pass away, but for some time and until they had passed away Egypt accepted the existence of the competency of the Mixed Courts as proposed, subject to modifications.

68. Al-Mufawadat al-Rasmiyah bayn al-Hikumatayn al-Misriyya wa al-Britanaiyya Sanat 1930, Mufawadat al-Nakhâs-Henderson, Magmûât al-Watha'iq wa al-Mahâdir al-Rasmiyah Cairo 1936, pp. 9, 13.

69. FO 407-210 J1067/4/16 Mr. A. Henderson to Mr. Hoare (No. 339), 2 April 1930/al-Mufawadat p. 19.

4. Until this question was settled by a definite agreement in the future, the administration of the Sudan should be carried on jointly.

Mr. Henderson summarized the points which both sides had agreed upon. These were the termination of the British occupation of Egypt, the principle of an alliance between the two countries, and Britain's assistance in helping Egypt to become a member in the League of Nations. Nakhâs added that in all previous negotiations between Egypt and Britain, it was agreed that Egypt would help Britain as an ally in any war but only on Egypt's territory.⁷⁰ By that Nakhâs was expressing his own fears of repeating the experience of World War One when Egyptian volunteers were sent to Palestine. Nakhâs wanted to stress that this experience could not be allowed to be repeated under any pretext. Nakhâs would remain faithful to this principle when he opposed any collective defence pact for the Middle East in the early 1950's as it implied Egypt's involvement in other countries. Nakhâs would also apply that principle in the Second World War when he would argue that as long as the territory of Egypt was not affected by the course of the war, then Egypt should not get involved. Thus one could see how Nakhâs was trying to give the British the minimum of their demands in order to get the maximum of his own demands.

During the second session of the negotiations Mr. Henderson commented on the Egyptian proposals, stating that there were ten points of very marked difference between the British. Five of these proposals were of a serious nature, one of which was the Sudan. Nakhâs replied that his proposals regarding the Sudan did not depart from Mr. Henderson's when he mentioned the 1899 convention. However, he had to defend himself in Parliament, and convince his country that the concessions he had made were given for an agreement in the interests of

70. FO 407-211 J1026/4/16 Record of Proceedings at First meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 31 March 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 21-25.

both countries.⁷¹ In that sense it appeared as if Nahhâs was telling Henderson that if he could make some concessions on the issue of the Sudan, then Nahhâs would be able to accede to some of the British demands in other respects.

On 3 April, a private conversation took place between Nahhâs and Henderson, of which I found no trace in the British version of the negotiations. The most important aspect about it was that it was almost entirely devoted to the question of the Sudan. According to this Mr. Henderson refused to accept Nahhâs' interpretation of joint rule of the Sudan.⁷²

In the third session Nahhâs objected to the British proposal of article 6 which stated that "His Britannic Majesty recognizes that the responsibility of the lives and property of foreigners in Egypt devolves henceforth upon the Egyptian Government," because, as he later indicated after some debate, "the mere mention of the part of the article implied that Egypt would be responsible before Britain, and that the latter were still responsible for the lives and property of foreigners." After further discussions about whether Britain had the right as an ally to at least consult with the Egyptian government concerning that issue, a compromise was reached: "His Britannic Majesty recognises that the responsibility for the lives and property of foreigners in Egypt devolves exclusively upon the Egyptian Government who will ensure the fulfilment of their obligations in this respect."⁷³

On the fourth meeting Nahhâs demanded the omission of the eighth

71. FO 407-211 J1088/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Second meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 3 April 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 29-30.

72. Al-Mufawadat pp. 31-35.

73. FO 407-211 J1107/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Third meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 4 April 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 36-44.

clause in the British proposals which stated, "The Egyptian Government will, by exchange of notes demand the presence of a British Military mission, for a definite period, with a view to be responsible for the instruction and training of the Egyptian Army", and suggested it be a footnote as it was of a temporary nature; retaining it in the treaty would place the Egyptian army in a position of inferiority and imply that Egypt is a tributary state. Lord Thomson answered that it was merely advisable to retain the British proposal in the treaty, namely that "this was a permanent alliance". (Here it is quite obvious that while Nakhâs was thinking of decreasing the presence of the British in Egypt gradually until the final evacuation of British troops from the country, the British were not following his line of thought and were merely interested in legalizing the status quo.) Nakhâs reported that he could find no precedent for the British proposals in any international treaty and that he wanted the treaty to have the appearance of a treaty between equals or two independent sovereign states. Then the British side proceeded to ask why imperial communications had been omitted, and Nakhâs argued that the main object was the defence of the Canal which was mentioned (referring to the defence of the Egyptian army with the assistance of Britain).⁷⁴

The fifth session was devoted to the defence of the Canal and the location of the British troops. Naturally Nakhâs insisted on the participation of the Egyptian army in protecting the Canal, rather than leave it exclusively in the hands of the British forces. In that, Nakhâs, like Zaghlûl before him, accepted a British force on the Canal zone.⁷⁵

74. FO 407-211 J1132/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Fourth meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 7 April 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 45-49.

75. FO 407-211 J1157/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Fifth meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 8 April 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 51-59.

In a private conversation on 8 April, Nabhâs suggested that for each British head of department in the Sudan, there should be an Egyptian deputy who would replace him on the former's retirement. In order to finance these extra Egyptian employees Nabhâs offered to maintain the annual subsidy which the Egyptian government paid to the Sudan and which the Egyptian Parliament was thinking of cancelling.⁷⁶ In the sixth session certain rules concerning agreement over the Capitulations were discussed.⁷⁷ In the seventh session the position of the British Ambassador in Cairo was discussed. Nabhâs objected to the British demand of granting the Ambassador any special position which would imply Egypt's inferior position vis-à-vis Britain. When Nabhâs was told that his predecessors had agreed to that, he answered that he represented the people and defended their rights and therefore knew what was acceptable to them. Finally Nabhâs agreed that the British Ambassador would have precedence over any other foreign representative since he was going to be the first Ambassador appointed in Egypt, as the diplomatic code said.⁷⁸ The eighth session dealt once more with the defence of the Canal,⁷⁹ while the ninth session considered the period of time to be covered by the treaty.⁸⁰ The tenth session tackled the Sudan again and the location of British troops. At first Nabhâs tried once more to adopt the 1899 formula which the British categorically refused. As for the second matter Nabhâs insisted that the troops would be stationed in one place only.⁸¹

76. al-Mufawadat pp. 59-60.

77. FO 407-211 J1189/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Sixth meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 10 April/1930 al-Mufawadat pp. 62-69.

78. Ibid. pp. 70-74.

79. Ibid. pp. 75-83.

80. Ibid. pp. 86-89.

81. Ibid. pp. 90-95.

In, the eleventh session on 15 April, Mr. Henderson threatened to break the negotiations after the Egyptian delegation had omitted the clause "with the agreement of both sides" in the ninth article concerning the presence of the British troops in the Canal and whether they were necessary any longer or not. At that point Nakhâs asked to be given time to consult with his colleagues in Egypt, and in order to brief them about the Sudan clauses.⁸²

Finally in the fourteenth session (thirteenth in the English version since the Egyptian minutes consider the meeting of Wednesday, 16 April in the afternoon a separate one from that held in the morning). Nakhâs started by saying that the Egyptian delegation had made concessions which his party had never envisaged. (Referring to the location of British troops on the Western side of the Canal.) All that he asked for was an agreement that conversations should take place after a year with regard to the application of the provisions of the treaty in the Sudan. Nakhâs ended by stating that the Egyptians had acceded to British demands on the issue of the Canal which were less important and vital to Britain than the Sudan to Egypt, and that they could not face public opinion in Egypt if they left the Sudan matter that way. It was clear that this was Nakhâs' last bid to save the negotiations from breaking down over the Sudan issue, but it seemed not to be to the satisfaction of the British who insisted on a complete admission by the Egyptians of the British point of view, which would have been tantamount to political suicide for Nakhâs.⁸³

Mr. Henderson then spoke for the first time about how he had refused to sign a treaty with Muhammad Mahmûd, and insisted on

82. al-Mufawadat pp. 96-98.

83. FO 407-211 J1298/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Thirteenth meeting with the Egyptian Delegation held at Egyptian Legation at midnight 16-17 April 1930/al-Mufawadat pp. 109-111.

negotiating with a constitutional government; how His Majesty's Government proceeded to create an agreeable atmosphere (referring to the appointment of a new High Commissioner) and negotiated with the Wafd party when a large section of British public opinion was not in their favour; and how the Wafd had refused to comment on the draft of the treaty submitted to Muhammad Mahmūd, but insisted instead on coming to London first, and how their conditions were met. Yet, despite all of that, and with the agreement on the main issues of the relationship between Britain and Egypt, the Wafd was ignoring an opportunity to sign a treaty, and it was doubtful whether such an opportunity would present itself again. The Wafd were risking all that for a position unacceptable by the British Government at the moment. Then Mr. Henderson referred to Tharwat who dissociated the Sudan question from the Egyptian one, and asked Nabhās to do the same. It was quite clear that the British were getting impatient, and subtly hinted that had it not been for them the Egyptian Constitution would not have been restored.⁸⁴

After the fifteenth session which took place on the 17th of April 1930, Nabhās proceeded to consult with his colleagues. A week earlier Rose al-Yūsuf published the story that Muhammad Salah al-Dīn (a member in the secretariat of the delegation) flew back to Cairo from London to consult public opinion in Egypt as to what was happening in London. On his way back to London he carried with him the reply of the King, 'Adlī Yaken, President of the Senate, Wissa Wassif, President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Cabinet's opinion, the Wafd committee's opinion and the general drift of the public opinion. In its next issue Rose al-Yūsuf said that every one of the abovementioned elements supported the Wafd's stand on the Sudan issue, and that whatever was said about a

84. Ibid.

division among the Wafdists concerning that issue was absurd.⁸⁵ At the same time the British report said that Nahhâs, Maḡraḡ, and Nokḡraḡhî favoured a rupture, while Wassif Ghali, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was hoping to reach an agreement.

Nothing better than Mr. Henderson's words could explain the situation as it developed around the Sudan clause on the meeting of 5 May 1930.

The article dealing with the question in his proposals of last year had been negotiated during the present conference, and would have been introduced to safeguard Egypt's rights. He now found that that article, as laid before the House of Commons and the country last summer, had been omitted, and that the only words which remained of the draft which had been agreed on the 16th April were the words which the Egyptian delegation had asked to be inserted. Nahhâs Pâshâ had said that he understood that the Sudan clause in his proposals implied co-administration. How had he understood? He had never given Mr. Henderson an opportunity for explaining the proposals. Mr. Henderson was aware of the answer which Nahhâs Pâshâ would give, but his Excellency knew full well that Mr. Henderson had done his best to obtain even privately from Nahhâs Pâshâ before he came to London a statement of his position. Nahhâs Pâshâ had said that it was in the interests of the treaty that he should say nothing before he came, and that it would be best to await his arrival in London. Look at the position in which that attitude has landed us now. If Nahhâs Pâshâ had wanted to negotiate on the position of the Sudan vis-à-vis Egypt, he should have apprised Mr. Henderson, but he did not do so, and he now asked for what it was quite beyond the power of the British Committee to give.

With this statement, Henderson made further negotiations unlikely. In fact the negotiations did not last longer than four more sessions, at the end of which it was decided to terminate the discussions. Nahhâs issued a statement in Parliament on 20 May 1930 to this effect. He attributed the failure of the negotiations to the Sudan question, but expressed the hope that negotiations would be resumed in the near future.⁸⁶

85. Rose al-Yûsuf May 6, No. 121 p. 12 and 13 May (No. 122) p. 4, 1930.

86. FO 407-211 J1514/4/16 Record of Proceedings at Sixteenth Meeting with the Egyptian Delegation on 5 May 1930.

The failure of the Anglo-British negotiations occurred for various reasons, but it also had an undisputed impact on the Wafd as an organization and Nahhâs as a leader. As for the reasons of failure, the British claimed that they had committed the error of not letting the Egyptians know from the start that they regarded the Sudan as a "potential independent state". Among the Egyptians, Barakât believed that the Wafd had put too much faith in the Labour Government, whose aims were supposed to be different from that of a Conservative one.⁸⁷

Nahhâs had gone as far as he could without jeopardizing his own constituency. He played his cards very shrewdly, for he knew that any further concessions would not be accepted without losing his own public stand as an uncompromising national leader. Thus came his famous sentence "My hands could be cut but not the Sudan", implying that he was ready to loose his position as a national leader but not the Sudan. There is no doubt that his stand was well received by the public if the warm reception he was given when he returned to Egypt is any indication.⁸⁸ On the other hand, Nahhâs hoped that, by his previous compromising attitude (except for that of the Sudan over which the British wanted him to commit what would had been his own political suicide), he had convinced the British of his willingness to become their ally in Egypt. This was not only what he hoped; he was convinced he had achieved it. For

Nahhâs was convinced that though he had failed to negotiate a treaty, he had never the less forged such strong links of friendship with the members of the British government that they would render him their full support.⁸⁹

The fact that Nahhâs himself conceded that he had lost the treaty but gained the friendship of the British supports this notion. It also

87. al-Sayyid-Marsot p. 132 Barakat memoirs 1930 16:25-26. Ibid 4:28.

88. Al-Yûsuf, p. 137.

89. al-Sayyid-Marsot. p. 136 FO 371/16109 J1796/14/16 Sir P. Loraine to Sir J. Simon. (No. 558) 27 June 1932.

explains Nahhâs' conciliatory attitude and his moderation when he explained what happened in Parliament by saying

In fact, both parties exerted their energies in order to reach a just and honourable solution in the matters concerning Egypt, except for few things which remained under consideration, but unfortunately we did not reach a settlement on the issue of the Sudan which would safeguard the sacred rights of the country and its vital interests ... and the negotiations were terminated in a very friendly way in which both parties departed with a general belief that the near future would resolve what they had missed on that vital issue, and that the intention for reaching a just solution would not be hindered by the termination of the negotiations, but would be strengthened and continued.⁹⁰

There is no doubt that Nahhâs was also preparing the ground for another attempt to negotiate a settlement. His statement, "We lost a treaty but won the friendship of the British", came as a disappointment for many people who were thrilled by his early defiant stand against the British over the Sudan. Rose al-Yûsuf started preparing public opinion for the resumption of the negotiations. It wrote that some of the senior negotiators said in a conversation about the resumption of the negotiations that if the negotiators had suggested about fifteen different formulas for Article 13 on the Sudan, then there was no doubt that they could reach a formula which would be acceptable to both sides. This was particularly the case, considering the fact that some of these formulae had been accepted by both sides, including four British ministers, and they were about to agree on them if it had not been for the stubbornness of the British government. British stubbornness could not be understood unless what was rumoured about the pressure applied by the Liberal Party and their leader Lloyd George was true. Rose al-Yûsuf continued writing that one of the members of the delegation told them that he personally believed that if it was not for the urgent necessity for Mr. Henderson to travel to Geneva, the negotiations would not have been terminated. "And thus we asked him

90. Madabit Majlis al-Nûwwâb 20 May 1930 p. 981.

frankly" reported Rose al-Yūsuf, "whether he believed the negotiations would be resumed in the near future, and he answered Yes".⁹¹ By taking into consideration that Rose al-Yūsuf was a leading Wafdist organ at that time, one could conclude that either they sincerely believed that they were going back to the table of negotiations since the British were now their friends as indicated by Nahhās, or that they were trying to justify to the people their conciliatory mood towards the British on the grounds that as agreement was in the offing it was pointless to return to a period of struggle against the British.

The impact of the failure of the 1930 negotiations was not to stop here, but was to extend to inter-Wafdist leadership relations. For according to Barakât, Wassif Ghali and Nagib al-Gharablî were to accuse Nahhās of changing his story of the reasons for the failure of the negotiations after making everybody believe the opposite to suit his political needs.⁹² According to Barakât, it led to the growing rivalry between Makram Ebeid and Dr. Ahmad Mâhir. Cecil Campbell described Ebeid as trying to undermine the treaty negotiations and playing a despicable role, while he praised Mâhir for his efforts and superior intellect.⁹³

All this was to be overshadowed by the events which took place immediately after Nahhās returned to Cairo. There is no doubt that Nahhās felt the time was ripe for a showdown with the King. He was sure of British support (though he was mistaken in his assumption, for the support soon proved to be a mirage) and had to compensate for his failure in the treaty negotiations. However, Nahhās was not acting impulsively, but on the basis of his long-term objectives of curtailing

91. Rose al-Yūsuf 20 June 1930. No. 173.

92. al-Sayyid-Marsot p. 133 Quoting Barakat 1930 15:7.

93. Ibid p. 131 Quoting Barakat 14:119 Gordon Waterfield, Professional Diplomat Sir Percy Loraine Wavel London 1973 p. 176.

the powers of the monarchy and safeguarding the party's constitutional rights.

The King for his part seemed to have grasped the situation at that moment and calculated that the time was ripe to dismiss the Nahhâs government. Only a bill dealing with tariff reforms to encourage industry was approved by the King in February. All others were delayed, including for example a bill aiming at founding a Court of Cassation, a list of nominations to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and President of the Court of Appeal.⁹⁴ By the beginning of June 1930, Nahhâs presented to the King the law for the prosecution of ministers who attack the Constitution. For two weeks the King refused to sign it, while at the same time another issue of conflict arose over the nomination of some members of the Senate. But before Nahhâs took any further steps, he had to be sure of the British position, and to this end he had a conversation the same week with Sir Percy Loraine in which the latter told him that the British government was not concerned with the constitutional issue, and that he had made this clear to the King. Nahhâs tried to press Loraine to make his position publicly known, but the latter refused on the grounds that Nahhâs would use it for party purposes. As for the Bill for the prosecution of ministers, Loraine argued that his government was concerned only indirectly if the measures produced had an internal shock whose reaction would reflect unfavourably on the friendly atmosphere between Britain and Egypt.⁹⁵ Nahhâs interpreted this exchange as a go ahead.

The last episode came when the King made overtures to Muḥammad Maḥmūd (leader of the Liberal Constitutional Party) and granted him an

94. Ibid p. 135.

95. Saád al-Dīn, p. 75.

audience that lasted for two hours.⁹⁶ On 17 June Nahhâs presented his resignation to Parliament saying,

When the present cabinet assumed office it took an oath to defend the Constitution and to surround it with a fence of legislation which would afford it a long life (referring to 1925, 1929). I pointed that out in the letter I sent to the King on accepting the premiership of that cabinet, and in the speech from the throne which you heard. But the government was not able to present to the Parliament that legislation which is stipulated in Article 68 of the Constitution. Thus the government considered it its duty to present its resignation to His Majesty the King.⁹⁷

That was in the morning, and on the same day Parliament renewed its confidence in the Nahhâs government. On Wednesday, 18 June, the Wafd Parliamentary Committee held a meeting in the Nation's House (Zaghlûl's house) to discuss the situation, while masses of people stood outside shouting "Long live Nahhâs and the Constitution". The general council of the union of government officials too held a meeting at which they decided to support Nahhâs and publish another protest against his resignation in all the newspapers. Soon they were followed by other organizations and individuals all over the country. On Thursday the 19th, the Central Committee of the Wafd in Cairo held a meeting to declare its support for Nahhâs and register its protest against the formation of any government by unconstitutional means. Al-Ahrâm that morning published in big headlines "The Arrangement of a Public Demonstration next Friday", and then wrote that a big popular demonstration composed of several thousand would take place on Friday, 20 June, through the streets of Cairo on its way to 'Abdin Palace Square where it would shout slogans in support of the Constitution and ask the King not to accept Nahhâs's resignation. It appears that the Wafd's desire to mobilize the greatest number of supporters was the

96. Al-Sayyid-Marsot, p. 134. Quoting Barakat 1930 14:59.

97. Madabit Majlis al-Nûwwâb, 17 June 1930, p. 1181.

reason for delaying that demonstration to Friday.⁹⁸ So far, the Wafd had succeeded in portraying the conflict between Nabhâs and the King as one over the constitutional rights of an elected government.

C. The Siḡqī Interlude

Twice before the constitution had been abrogated, and only for one or two years, but never completely abandoned and abolished for five years. Now the battle for the Constitution was not merely part of the Wafd's struggle, but its whole struggle, for without it, no independence could be achieved. It was the same old story of Adly versus Saád, the autocracy of the Palace and the large landowners against the "people", that is, the urban class. This can be seen clearly through the provisions of the new Constitution. If the old Constitution, the 1923 Constitution, had given a chance to elements outside the establishment to come to power, the new 1930 Constitution did its utmost to avoid that situation. It did so on two levels; first by changing the electoral laws, secondly by changing the functions of Parliament, thus blocking any possibility of undesired elements entering Parliament, and even if they succeeded, rendering their membership ineffectual.⁹⁹

It was a condition for a member of the committee of fifty comprising the electoral college that would elect the deputies to satisfy some financial prerequisites. In the 1923 Constitution elections were conducted directly, not in two stages as in the new Constitution. For example, it was necessary to be either the owner of untransferable money tied with taxes on property for the government, or to be the inhabitant of a house whose annual rent was not less than

98. Rose al-Yūsuf, 24 June 1930, p. 4.

99. Ramadan, pp. 720-721.

Ef12, or to be renting agricultural land whose tax was not less than Ef2 annually, and to have the primary school certificate, or its equivalent. Finally, it was prohibited to nominate for Parliament any member of the free professions living outside Cairo. This actually meant prohibiting lawyers, physicians, journalists, engineers, and merchants from all over Egypt who were the backbone of the Wafd except Cairo from becoming members of the Parliament.¹⁰⁰

Some might argue that Sidqi's intention in curtailing the powers of the legislature was to increase the power of the executive in order to give him a free hand for his administrative and economic reforms. Nahhâs, the Wafd, and large segments of the population did not accept this argument. Others saw Sidqi's measures as a setback to the process of political development which had started in 1919, was consolidated by the 1923 Constitution, and confirmed by the 1924 cabinet of the Wafd. Sidqi was simply turning the clock back to the pre-1919 situation when political power was concentrated in the hands of the Palace and its Turkish aristocracy. This antagonised not only the Wafd with its power base among the professional middle class--that was only to be expected--but it also put up the backs of the landowners, especially in the Liberal Constitutional Party, who were inspired by the democratic principles of the 1923 Constitution. Now they had to struggle all over again to reinstate a Constitution they once regarded as unsatisfactory.

But some sections of the lower or petty bourgeois class were now starting to question the whole policy of the Wafd and its futility, and whether the constitutional way was their only means to achieve independence and a share in political power. Although still at an incipient stage, and with their ideas not yet clear or formulated, two new political groups and various others began to appear, which would

100. Ibid., p. 739.

play a significant role in attracting the urban middle class away from the Wafd. These were the Muslim Brotherhood (1928) and the Young Egypt Society (1933), and their activities among students in the 1930s.

D. The Emergence of Nabhâs as a Charismatic Leader

Yet it was at this time that the image of Nabhâs as the persecuted national leader was at its sharpest. The Wafdists appeared, rightly or wrongly, as victims of a British plot, in which the King and Sidqî were British pawns out to punish Nabhâs for his refusal to abandon the rights of Egypt in his negotiations with Henderson.

Nabhâs on his part, with the rest of the Wafdist leadership, resorted to political propaganda. When they decided that members of the dissolved Parliament should go out on a demonstration headed by Nabhâs to Parliament, Sidqî let it be known that the police would open fire at the demonstration with the intention of shooting Nabhâs. To the disappointment of the people the demonstration was substituted by a petition to the King.¹⁰¹ Yet that implicit threat later backfired, for when Nabhâs visited the city of Mansoura on 8 July, and Sinnût Hanna was wounded by the bayonets of the soldiers who were dispersing the demonstrators, it was easy to believe that Nabhâs had escaped an assassination attempt. ^(X) On the following day, Nabhâs went to pray in the al-Husseïn mosque in Cairo, and shouted "Allah Akbar 'Alâ Men Ta'anani Min al-Khalf Wa Takabar" three times,¹⁰² and Sidqî was allegedly paralysed the next day.

Naturally for the masses, these incidents were not isolated,¹⁰³ and by that time Nabhâs's popularity was on the ascendency, and Sidqî's

101. al-Yûsuf, p. 142.

102. Al-Balagh, 9 July 1930, p. 7, No. 2219.

103. Ibrâhîm Faraj Dhikrayat, Al-Ahrâr 12 April 1982 Number 3.

(X)
refs.

policy was doing its best, albeit unintentionally, to present Nahhâs (who did not miss a chance) to the people as the persecuted leader. Another opportunity came when he started out to visit the city of Asyout on 6 April 1931; he was not allowed to leave the train at the station and remained there for twelve hours. A picture of him was published sleeping on one of the benches. It had a great impact on his image as the simple popular leader as compared to the other aristocratic politicians,¹⁰⁴ thus enabling the ordinary man to identify more closely with him. Fatma al-Yûsuf in her memoirs characterized Nahhâs at that time as a very simple man with a good heart and friendly features. In his presence there was nothing of that which characterized the social meetings of other VIPs. On the contrary, in his behaviour he was as any other ordinary Egyptian person. She also described him as almost the only person who did not speak badly about other people including his bitterest opponents. The utmost he would say was that he was not a patriotic man. Even when he was about to get married, he was very angry that Rose al-Yûsuf published an article about his private life protesting that he was not one of the 'Roses of Society'.¹⁰⁵ An eyewitness described how Nahhâs in the midst of his speech would scold a person for interrupting him even by shouting "Long Live Nahhâs". This was to have a magical effect on his listeners.

An account of Nahhâs' visit to Port Sáid gives a fair idea of his personality and the style of the campaign which gained him such popularity. He started on the agreed route into the city, then the car turned to the Arab quarter (the city had an Arab and a European quarter) and he was then persuaded by his companions to proceed on foot

104. Saád al-Dîn, p. 75.

105. Al-Yûsuf, pp. 117-120.

through the narrow side streets, collecting a number of boys around him. A British police officer attempted to disperse the boys with his cane, but struck Nabhâs' hand. This infuriated Nabhâs, who aimed a blow at the British officer, spat in his face and cursed him and his religion. This incident was typical of all Nabhâs's visits; first the local Wafdist committee would accept the police programme, then comes Nabhâs's breach of faith which would be followed by disturbances, and a furious tirade by Nabhâs, with the remainder of the programme passing off in relative calm.¹⁰⁶

E. The Defection of 1932: The Complete Triumph of the Lawyers' Wing

The failure of Nabhâs' previous policy in confronting the King was leading to some dissension among the members of the Wafd who were in any case ill-disposed towards him from the beginning. For Nabhâs had told his colleagues in the 1930 cabinet that the Residency would not support the King against his government and that the British were therefore favourable to his policy. Apparently Nabhâs had misinterpreted a statement made to him by Sir Percy Loraine of his neutrality towards the constitutional issue.¹⁰⁷ To make matters worse for himself, he had informed the Wafd committee that the British had no choice but to support him against the King, holding to his belief that it was only he who would be able to negotiate a treaty.¹⁰⁸ However, time was passing and Nabhâs' authority was waning. In a Wafd meeting to discuss the best policy to be adopted towards the British, his proposal for a boycott of British goods commencing 19 March 1931

106. FO 407 Sir Miles Lampson to Sir J. Simon (No. 698), 3 August 1934.

107. FO 407-213 J1933/26/16 Sir P. Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 560) Cairo 6 June 1931. FO 407-210 J1848/4/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 258) Cairo 9 June 1930.

108. al-Sayyid-Marsot p. 150. Quoting Barakat 16b:20, 28, (1931) 22:1.

(Independence Day) was opposed as being premature.¹⁰⁹ Now he thought that if the British were not interested in his policy, he should make them believe in it. Thus in addressing the nation on 13 November 1931 (on the anniversary of the visit to Wingate in 1918 by Saád, Shárawi, and Fahmí) he stated that the British however they tried to hide their position under the pretext of neutrality, were responsible, for they were the power on which the present system depended on, as they controlled the army and the police.¹¹⁰

On 30 December 1931, the Wafd committee held a meeting to discuss the matter of a National Government. The twelve moderates who also controlled the majority, argued that the British would intervene to secure such a government. They were hoping to be endorsed by the British, as happened in 1923 over the issue of the Constitution when the British sided with the Liberal Constitutional Party against the King. These were Faṭhallaḥ Barakât, Hamad al-Basil, Fakhrî 'Abd al-Nûr, 'Alî al-Shamsî, George Khayat, Muṣṭafâ Bekir, 'Alwî al-Gazzar, Murâd al-Shari'ai, 'Atta Afiffi, Raghib Iskander, Salama Mikha'il and Muḥammad Nagîb al-Gharabli. Nahhas accused them of following a will-o'-the-wisp of British assistance. He was supported by Sinnût Hannâ, Aḥmad Mâhir, Maḥram Ebeid, Hassan Hassîb, and Maḥmûd Fahmî al-Noḡrashî. This group argued that the government should be exclusively from the Wafd,¹¹¹ on the basis that their party represented the nation. It was the same argument which raged between Saád and 'Adli years earlier. On 6 March 1932 in a Wafdist meeting Nahhâs repeated his demand to boycott British goods, arguing that the Wafd would lose popularity if they did not act

109. FO 407-213 J682/26/16 Sir P. Loraine to Mr. A. Henderson (No. 60) Cairo 4 March 1931.

110. Al-Balagh Mulhaq al-Misa' 13 November 1931 p. 3.

111. FO 407-215 J178/14/16 Sir Pl Loraine to Sir J. Simon (No. 26) Confidential Cairo 8 January 1932.

against the British. It would be thought that they were flattering the British in order to return to power. Nahhâs contended that it was only Zaghlul's method of acting resolutely without consultation that was responsible for his success.¹¹² Nahhâs' instinct was correct, for the support of the masses was derived more from the Wafd's anti-British stand than any other issue. It was this understanding of the popular mood of Egypt which both Nahhâs and Zaghlûl cleverly played on whenever it was necessary. The trick was never to play against it or to abstain from it. That was the source of their strength.

The Liberal Constitutionals were eager to dissociate themselves from any hostile activity towards the British and, in contrast to the Wafd, that was why they had no popular appeal. The Wafd always contended that the Liberals' social composition would not permit an anti-British policy, whereas their own following among the more militant urban middle class did, and not only for purposes of propaganda, but because their interests were more in conflict with the British than those of the large landowners.¹¹³ A ministerial report indicated that the latter advocated a policy of friendship towards the British while the Wafd, in remaining hostile, could at the appropriate time mediate between them. The moderates in the Wafd including Shamsi and Ghali, agreed while Nahhâs objected. Another report showed that the moderate elements inside the Wafd were considering (along with the Liberal Constitutionals) the idea of accepting the 1930 Constitution and fighting the government within its limits. Nahhâs refused such an idea categorically,¹¹⁴ and not surprisingly so because it could have

112. FO 407-215 J786/14/16 Sir P. Loraine to Sir J. Simon (No. 247) Cairo 12 March 1932.

113. See Chapter 1, p. 234.

114. FO 407-215 J1181/14/16 Sir P. Loraine to Sir J. Simon (No. 373) Cairo 23 April 1932.

meant his political suicide. This suggests that the conflict between the Sidqi regime and the so-called moderates was of a compromising nature, and had it not been for the 1919 revolution and the democratic ideas which penetrated the political consciousness of the elite, the intellectuals and some segments of the population alike, the alliance between the Palace and the big landowners would have been very strong.

Barakât described in his memoirs how Nahhâs lost his temper in a Wafd committee meeting in which they refused to issue a call to the nation declaring Britain their main enemy and inciting the people to rise against it. He threatened to issue the call alone, and said that the people were sneering at him for doing nothing and that he would not commit political suicide. By that time 'Atta 'Afifi and Wassif Ghali had stopped attending these meetings.¹¹⁵ It was obvious to Nahhâs, as well as to his predecessor, Zaghlûl, that the only action to restore his position in the heart of the nation was to take an uncompromising stand against the British.

The rift between the two factions was healed by a compromise solution, that of a national government to be formed to conduct elections based on the 1923 constitution, as a result of which the majority party would form the government.¹¹⁶ Yet the split had its impact, for the moderates were headed by Barakât, and it seemed as if the section of the Wafd which did not favour Nahhâs in 1927 was heading for a new confrontation based on the same lines as the confrontation between the two factions in the 1927 election over the Presidency of the Wafd.

The crisis erupted once more over an issue between Gharablî and Maḡraḡ Ebeid, when the former refused to associate himself with the

115. al-Sayyid-Marsot p. 159. Quoting Barakat 1932 26:70.

116. FO 407-215 J451/14/16 Sir P. Loraine to Sir J. Simon (No. 128) Secret Cairo 5 February 1932.

latter in withdrawing from the bombs' case. This was the case in which several persons were accused of illegally possessing and manufacturing explosives for the purpose of using them in a terror campaign against the government. Already one bomb had exploded in the Ministry of Justice on 19 July 1931, and another had exploded in the house of the Deputy Minister of the Interior on 27 July 1931. Other prominent figures in the Sidqi regime received threatening letters, and there were such acts of sabotage as derailing public transport or cutting telephone wires. Since the accused were regarded by the Wafd leadership as fighting Sidqî's dictatorship, it found that it was its duty to send some of its most prominent lawyers, such as Maḳraḿ and others, to defend them.¹¹⁷

Nahhâs criticized Gharablî for his previous stand vis-à-vis Maḳraḿ, but members of the Wafd urged Nahhâs to give him a chance to withdraw his resignation, which Nahhâs did and Gharablî obliged. But in the letter withdrawing his resignation, Gharablî said that he did it in accordance with the opinion of the majority of the Wafd. This meant that he was returning to the Wafd despite the opinion of Nahhâs and Maḳram who were mistaken in their stand against him in the first place. Naturally Nahhâs considered the letter an insult to him and a challenge to his own judgment. He conferred with Madame Zaghlûl (Saâd's widow) and expelled Gharabli. The others, Hamad al-Basil, Murâd al-Shari'ai, Salama Mikha'il, 'Atta 'Afifi, Faḥallah Barakât, Fakhray 'Abd al-Nûr, 'Alwî al-Gazzâr, Raghib Iskander, and Mustafâ Bekîr signed a letter protesting at Nahhâs' action and sent it to the press.¹¹⁸ Even when the political split did coincide with the social split it did not correlate with it.

117. Ramadan, Vol. 1, pp. 750-751.

118. FO 407 J 3014/14/16 Mr. R.I. Campbell to Sir J. Simon (No. 969) Cairo 28 October 1932.

Gharablî was a lawyer by training and profession,¹¹⁹ whereas Barakât was a wealthy landowner¹²⁰ who played a role in every approach between the Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalists, and who was the candidate of the landowners for the Presidency of the Wafd in 1927 against Nahhâs. Barakât could have headed the faction which defected in 1932 and formed a new party but he died on 17 February 1933. 'Alî al-Shamsî was the son of one of the wealthy cotton merchants whose interest was mainly in agriculture.¹²¹ This lends some support to our thesis of a social split, especially now that the actual leadership of the Wafd was left wholly in the hands of the urban middle class, or the "gang of four", consisting of Nahhâs, Maḡraḡ, Mâhir, and Noḡrashî.¹²² It is true that Nahhâs appointed to the Wafd Committee twelve new members, eight of whom were large landowners,¹²³ yet the balance of power was in the hands of the four previously mentioned whose history, prestige, and capabilities added to their power and position.

F. The Decline of the Wafd

This period saw the beginning of the decline of the Wafd as the militant national movement it had been in the early and late twenties, only a decade after its formation. The Wafd leadership was entirely in the hands of one faction, without any internal frictions which could hinder its leadership's ability for free movement. Yet at the same time, they were facing an entirely new situation. The Constitution which had given them a degree of political mobility within the

119. 'Azabawî p. 334. Al-Ahrâm 29 January 1924.

120. Rose al-Yûsuf, 1 August 1932 Number 233, p. 20.

121. 'Azabawî p. 100. Quoting 'Abd al-'Azîz Al-Bishrî pp. 109-110.

122. Anîs, al-Usûl al-Tarikhiyya, p. 149.

123. Al-Sâid, p. 110.

political establishment was abolished, and the British remained silent. With no friction between the Palace and the British at the moment, the Wafd was at a loss.

Thus one day in February 1933, Nahhâs paid a visit to Dr. Novacan, the Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires, Nahhâs told him that he was not a revolutionary, and that his esteem for the British High Commissioner was still the same although every type of relation had ceased, and that the British should not pay attention to what he said in the heat of political conflict. Nahhâs also added that the failure of the treaty negotiations was due to an insignificant divergence on one or two details connected with the Sudan. Nahhâs asked Dr. Novacan to convey what he said to Sir Percy Loraine and inform him of the result. The following day, the Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires met Sir Percy Loraine, and then telephoned Nahhâs to tell him his impressions as agreed on the previous day. The message was clear: Sir Percy Loraine blamed Nahhâs for the present situation and felt it was up to him to redeem the situation. Nahhâs could call on him at the Residency, continued Sir Percy Loraine, and cease anti-British propoganda and the call for the boycotting of British goods.¹²⁴

The seeds of the events of 1935 and 1936 were sown during these days. Nahhâs understood that the British were determined not to change their course, and youth discontent which was to erupt violently later was reflected in the emergence of Aḥmad Hussein and his Young Egypt Society that year. The "Wafdist Young Men's Committee" was founded, organized on the initiative of Nokrashi, and warmly sponsored by Nahhâs. Members were educated in the "spirit of 1919" and were to be used on 13 November celebrations. Nahhâs's own speeches were increasingly directed at the youth urging them to fight for the Wafd

124. FO 407/217 J438/29/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Sir John Simon (No. 26) Cairo 11 February 1933.

cause.¹²⁵ That organization was the first sign of the forthcoming Wafd Blue Shirts.

The year 1934 saw two other developments which had a profound significance later. To the arrival of a new British High Commissioner Nahhâs responded by doubling his efforts in visiting the provinces to impress him by the extent of the Wafd following and strength.¹²⁶ The second was Nahhâs' marriage on 12 June to Zainab al-Wakil, two days before he reached the age of fifty-five, and thirty years older than her. She was the daughter of one of the leading Wafdists from the Buheira province.¹²⁷ Much was said about this marriage, to the daughter of a once wealthy Pâshâ, who had become bankrupt. It was also rumoured that the marriage had been arranged by Makram and his wife.

Two reasons were given for Nahhâs' marriage. It was said that it was intended to stop a rumour that Nahhâs was having an affair with a married woman. One writer described it as an innocent friendship which developed between Nahhâs and a woman from Alexandria who was seeking his legal advice in order to get a divorce from her husband. Nahhâs was not known to have a reputation as a womanizer; on the contrary, he was known for his strict moral codes regarding himself and his family. The affair could have been used by his opponents to attack his personal life, especially after charges of corruption had no effect. It could have been Nahhâs' first love, or just a friendship. The other reason, which most writers emphasize, was a law decreed by the Sidqî regime at the time, depriving the family of a retired official from his pension if he was not married at the age of fifty-five. It was said that

125. FO 407/217 J2571/25/16 Sir Percy Loraine to Sir John Simon (No. 926) Cairo 20 October 1933.

126. FO 407/217 J334/9/16 Mr. Yanchen (Acting High Commissioner) to Sir John Simon (No. 75) Cairo 26 January 1934.

127. FO 407-225 Leading Personalities in Egypt (No. 697) 22 July 1941.

Nahhâs was the main target of that law, and that he had to get married before reaching that age.¹²⁸

The same year saw also the end of the Sidqi regime. Simultaneously, the British had decided on a policy of reconciliation with the Wafd, since they saw no further need to alienate Nahhâs. It also seems that the appointment of Tewfiq Nessîm as Prime Minister came as a response to Wafdist wishes or at least did not contradict them. Nahhâs told Mr. Peterson that his party would not object to British interference to form a cabinet headed by Nessîm.¹²⁹ The latter however had the support of the Wafd for not endorsing the 1930 constitution.

Although Nahhâs' attitude towards the British was softening with the arrival of the new High Commissioner, his views towards the constitutional issue were discussed with Mr. Peterson, the Acting High Commissioner. He said that his party would not take part in any elections unless they were conducted according to the 1923 Constitution, which he described as the "Magna Carta" of the people against the throne, whereas the 1930 Constitution was the opposite.¹³⁰

The Acting High Commissioner reported that since his arrival the Wafd wanted to contact him but did not wish to be the first, and when the Acting Oriental Secretary enquired about the health of Nahhâs during a minor indisposition which confined him to his room, Nahhâs answered by visiting him on 8 October. Nahhâs said that they were

128. Hâfiz Maḥmûd, al-Ma'arik fi'l-Sahafah wa'l-Siyasah w'al-Fikr bain 1919-1952 Kitâb al-Jumhuriya Cairo 1969 p. 34 Terry p. 278.

129. Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizarat, p. 372. FO 407/217 J2431/9/16 (No. 867) Peterson to Simon 5 October 1934. FO 407/217 J2502/9/16 Peterson to Simon (No. 879) 12 October 1934.

130. FO 407/217 J 2502/9/16 Mr. Peterson to Sir J. Simon (No. 879) Ramleh 12 October 1934.

prepared to seek a settlement with Britain once they returned to power as a result of the impending elections. He also added that since British forces were present they gave automatic support to the Sidqi regime, regardless of their neutrality, and that now they expected something more than neutrality to redress the wrongs done before. He then likened Nessim's ministry to that of 'Adli's in 1929.¹³¹ In effect, Nahhâs was asking the British to help him return to power. Fatma al-Yûsuf wrote that the Wafd's policy was one of moderation towards the new British High Commissioner, who they hoped would not support the Sidqi regime and would restore the 1923 Constitution, whereas their policy towards the Palace remained the same, that is as hostile as ever.¹³² At the same time, added Fatima al-Yusif, Sir Miles Lampson, was, contrary to all his predecessors, ready to meet the Wafd's demands half-way and not antagonize them.¹³³

By that time Nahhâs was pressing Nessim for an announcement as soon as possible concerning the return of the 1923 Constitution. It is interesting to note that while Nahhâs was losing patience, Mâhir and Nokrashî wished him to wait and make a last representation to Nessiem.¹³⁴ At the same time 'Alî al-Shamsî told the Oriental Secretary that the quarrel between Nahhâs' and Maḡraḡ Ebeid's faction with Mâhir's and Nokrashî's was getting acute, and that if the Wafd was left to its own desires -- i.e. ignored -- it would have yet another split.¹³⁵ On 1 June Nessim and three ministers had a two-hour

131. Ibid.

132. Al-Yûsuf, p. 152.

133. Ibid.; p. 222.

134. FO 407/218 J1731/110/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Sir John Simon (No. 201), Cairo 6 May 1935.

135. FO 407/218 J1455/110/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Sir John Simon (No. 368), Cairo 6 April 1935.

meeting with the "Gang of Four" who ran the Wafd, namely, Nahhâs, Makram, Mâhir, and Nokrashî during which they were taken aback when Nessîm informed them of his intention to resign. They begged him not to do so. They noted that the British were not opposed to a constitution though not that of 1923 or 1930 as Nessîm told them. They agreed not to oppose him on the basis of his new programme. Nessîm impressed upon Nahhâs that the new constitution would only be brought into force en temps opportun. Nahhâs jibbed, but then finally agreed,¹³⁶ a policy that cost him the defection of Rose al-Yûsuf and the leading Wafdist writer 'Abbâs Mahmûd al-'Aqqâd.¹³⁷ Two incidents clearly represented the Wafd's attitude, the first when Rose al-Yûsuf published an open letter to the King demanding the restoration of the 1923 Constitution. Makram, Fatma al-Yûsuf wrote, said that people are mistaken to think we want to approach the King.¹³⁸ The second incident was when Nahhâs asked Fatma al-Yûsuf why she opposed the Nessîm government, and then interrupted her by asking her if she preferred Muhammad Mahmûd or Sidqî to return to power, and told her that he and the Wafd have had enough.¹³⁹

But the bombshell came on 9 November when Sir Samuel Hoare, the British Foreign Secretary, said in a statement to the House that he was against the Constitutions of both 1923 and 1930.¹⁴⁰ The reaction was severe, especially among students.¹⁴¹ Memories of the days of 1919

136. FO 407/218 J2166/110/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Sir John Simon (No. 246), Cairo 2 June 1935.

137. Hafiz Mahmûd Asrâr al-Madi min 1907-1952 fi al-Siyasah wa al-Wataniyah Dâr Rose al-Yûsuf Cairo, 1973 p. 131.

138. Ramadan, Vol 1 p. 772.

139. Al-Yûsuf, p. 176.

140. al-Balâgh, 8 January 1935, issue 3710.

141. al-Ahrâm, 10 January 1935.

revolution were revived, and on 7 November, Muḥammād Maḥmūd, on the occasion of the 13 November annual celebration, gave a speech in front of 20,000 in which he attacked the Nessīm government for not restoring the 1923 Constitution and demanded that the people expel it.¹⁴² Once it became evident that the British were against the return of the 1923 Constitution, its defence and the demand for its restoration became a national question, no less nationalistic than the demand for independence.

Muḥammād Maḥmūd was intelligent enough to take advantage of the situation and outbid Nāhhās as the defender of the Constitution and the sovereignty of Egypt. He was emerging as the leader of the country, not only of his own party, when all non-Wafdists began to rally around him. Nāhhās', as leader of the nation, was facing a potentially serious threat. The openly proclaimed British hostility to the 1923 Constitution and the rise of Muḥammād Maḥmūd to national prominence were no doubt behind Nāhhās' decision to withdraw his support from the Nessīm government.¹⁴³ That support had cost him the defection of one of the Wafd's major weekly magazines Rose al-Yūsuf, and the Wafd's main writer 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād. Surely Nāhhās was not against the restoration of the 1923 Constitution, for he fought for it, defended it, and made it his top priority. But Nāhhās was ready for a compromise at the end when public opinion was not. And he was clever enough to be the last to defend Nessīm's government, but the first to benefit from its fall.

A few days after Maḥmūd's speech, Nāhhās gave his annual speech on 13 November. He confessed that he, along with three other member of the Wafd, had a meeting with Nessīm and three of his ministers in

142. Maḥmūd, pp. 147-148.

143. FO 407/218 J7719/110/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Sir Samuel Hoare (No. 551), Cairo 12 November 1935.

Nessim's house. The latter read to him a statement concerning the promulgation of a new Constitution. Nahhâs then moved to the issue of the war between Italy and Abyssinia which it was feared might escalate and include Egypt. Thus it was necessary, he argued, to conclude a treaty with Britain so that Egypt know its situation in the eventuality of a war. He then issued a warning to Britain by saying that the situation in Egypt now was different from that in 1914, from both the legal aspects and the nation's mental attitude. In fact Nahhâs was expressing his and others' fears of the repetition of a situation like 1914. Britain had already moved the headquarters of her Mediterranean Fleet from Malta to Alexandria,¹⁴⁴ and a war between Britain and Italy seemed not far off. The fear of the imposition of martial law by the British army, control over the export of cotton and its cultivation, censorship of the press, war detainees, the voluntary work corps, and suspension of the Legislative Assembly, were all nightmares to any Egyptian which he or she would not like to see it repeated twice in their generation. An article in the Wafdist organ al-Jihâd (21 August 1935) argued that if a settlement was not reached soon, Egypt would face a situation as in 1914, and she would not be treated as an independent nation able and willing to defend herself with the co-operation of Britain, but would be regarded merely as an occupied country. Britain would exploit the crisis in Abyssinia to strengthen her hold over Egypt without giving any guarantee for the future. Britain might even enforce measures on Egypt which would ignore Egypt's status under the Declaration of Independence or even modify it.¹⁴⁵ Another factor was the traditional Egyptian fear over the continuity of the flow of the waters of the Nile and its security. Most of the Nile

144. Marlow, p. 294.

145. Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim, The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty Khartoum University Press Khartoum 1976 p. 58.

water came from Abyssinia, and Italian domination over that country was not reassuring to the Egyptians.¹⁴⁶ Bearing in mind the Italian presence in Libya, Egypt could be the scene of any future war between Italy and Britain. He then cited the Wafd decisions:

1. Non-co-operation with the British;
2. The resignation of Nessim's cabinet;
3. No support for the present government if it did not resign;
4. Any government which co-operated with the British or was formed outside the terms of the 1923 Constitution would be regarded as being contrary to the general will of the nation.¹⁴⁷

Then he ended his speech by stating that national unity should be based on the restoration of the 1923 Constitution.¹⁴⁸

Nahhâs was emphasizing the priority of the constitutional question over the national question. The irony lies in the fact that it was the Wafd which had condemned the 1923 Constitution when it was promulgated as it implied recognizing and legitimizing the Declaration of Independence of 22 February 1922, and the parliamentary system that was the outcome of that independence. The Liberal Constitutionals were criticized for adopting that Constitution which implied the acceptance of the four reserved points (as indicated in Chapter One). But because that Constitution proved to be an asset for the Wafd and a liability for the Liberal Constitutionals, their positions were soon reversed during the crisis of 1935. Nahhâs now believed that the road to independence was through the Constitution of 1923, which Muhammad Mahmûd was not that keen to see back, and tried to play the role of the

146. For arguments over the security of the Nile resources in Abyssinia under the Italians see Muhammâd Lutfî Jumâ; Bayn al-Asad al-Ifriqi wa al-Namir al-Itali, p. 34, al-Jihâd 4 April 1936.

147. Actually he was trying to revive the memories of 1919 when Egypt was without a cabinet for several months.

148. Al-Balâgh 14 November 1935 pp. 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11.

ardent nationalist after the liberal card had failed to bring him popularity and power (remember his role in 1928 when he suspended the constitution for three years). On 24 November, Muḥammâd Maḥmûd issued a statement to the nation stressing to his compatriots that the struggle for independence took precedence over any other issue, and suggesting that the constitutional issue was a secondary one. Since independence without the Constitution was meaningless to Nahhâs, the Wafd responded by issuing a statement on 27 November stating the conditions for setting up a national front with the Liberal Constitutionalists:

1. That all should declare the independence of the nation.
2. That all should demand the restoration of the 1923 Constitution immediately and without any delay, and that would be done by handing a petition to the King to that effect.
3. That all parties should abstain from forming a cabinet unless the Constitution was restored.¹⁴⁹

Nahhâs insisted on his terms to form a coalition, and his stand can best be highlighted in his own words

"Shall we overlook the blood of the martyrs which has been shed for the Constitution and that great upheaval until when God wishes and the conditions are appropriate and the British consent to sign a treaty with Egypt? No. The nation does not approve that and is not deceived by those who say Independence only. We rose in 1919 under the leadership of Saâd Zaghlûl demanding full independence, and in our struggle by the constitution, which makes the nation the source of authority, we achieved our wish and completed our independence. So shall we abandon our constitution to leave the rule to the British and some Egyptians who fight against the nation? No."¹⁵⁰

Nahhâs argued unequivocally that without the Constitution independence was meaningless, since rule would revert to pre-1919 conditions, only

149. Maḥmûd Sulaiman Ghannâm, al-Muâhadah al-Misriya al-Ingliziya wa Dirasatha minal Wigha al-'Amaliya Matb'ait Dâr al-Kutub al-Misriyya Cairo 1936 p.

150. Saâd al-Dîn, pp. 111-112, p. 11.

with a great share of power this time going to the large landowners, while the urban middle class would be deprived of its only means namely, the Constitution, for a share in governing the country.

Meanwhile, negotiations were taking place between Nahhâs and Miles Lampson. Lampson was pressing Nahhâs for a National Front to negotiate with Britain, but Nahhâs argued that the Wafd would definitely not participate in any negotiations or conversations before the elections, neither would it form part of a coalition government. This was in Britain's best interest, argued Nahhâs, because once the Wafd came to office constitutionally, they would be able to make concessions in the actual terms of a treaty which no coalition government could ever do, as the electorate would assume that any treaty negotiated by a constitutionally elected Wafdist government would have the approval of the whole country.¹⁵¹ Nahhâs was resuming his 1929 stand before the 1930 negotiations -- a constitutional government first, then treaty negotiations. Nahhâs was to urge Lampson to press his government to declare that they were prepared to conclude with the constitutional government of Egypt a treaty on the basis of the Nahhâs-Henderson draft of 1930, and to negotiate with the said constitutional government the remaining problems in the same friendly spirit as in 1930. That kind of declaration was what was hoped for and not immediate treaty negotiations. A declaration such as this, continued Nahhâs, had the advantage that in the interval before the new Parliament assembled, time would be afforded in which to explore outstanding difficulties in the hope of finding a mutually satisfactory solution to them.¹⁵²

The situation developed rapidly afterwards, as the British had to yield and the Constitution was restored. But what is noteworthy here

151. FO 407 J667/2/16 Miles Lampson to Eden (No. 25), 20 January 1936.

152. FO 407 JSS/2/16 Miles Lampson to Eden, (No. 701), 31 December 1935.

is first, the petition of the leaders of the parties to the British after the restoration of the Constitution demanding the resumption of treaty negotiations, and second, the British response to that petition. On 12 December 1935, the leaders of the "National Front"¹⁵³ with the exception of Hafiz Ramadan, leader of the Watanî Party whose political doctrine was against any negotiations with Britain, presented a petition to the British High Commission. In it, it was stated that Egypt was eager to reach a settlement with Britain, especially after the negotiations of 1930 which a last-minute dispute prevented both sides from signing a treaty. As a result some issues remained unresolved, such as the Capitulations, the European Department in the Department of Public Security, the matter of an independent Egyptian defence force, and Egypt's membership in the League of Nations. Furthermore, the lack of any settlement in the relationship between the two countries was one of the reasons for the instability of the various governments and the disruptions in public affairs. With the present international crisis arising from the dispute between Italy and Abyssinia, Egypt was convinced of the need of a treaty. For she saw that this crisis could lead her to taking part in it, especially now that the Egyptian government had responded to the League of Nation's decision to apply sanctions against Italy and boycott it. With Britain taking military precautions by preparing itself in Egypt, Egypt could be the scene of the war. It was necessary therefore to conclude a treaty based on the draft of the 1930 negotiations. Had that treaty been signed then, Britain would have had the full co-operation Egypt in the present crisis as between any two allies.¹⁵⁴ These were exactly

153. The National Front was formed from all parties in December 1975 for the restoration of the 1923 constitution and negotiating a treaty with Britain (al-Rafi'i Vol. 2 p. 204).

154. Majlis al-Wuzara' Mahfazat Mu'aâhadit 1936 Riââsit Maġlis al-Wuzara'.

the same issues that would be resolved in the treaty afterwards. It seems that the Egyptian side, understanding the situation as it existed at that time internationally, estimated that the British would not compromise on the military clauses, and so decided to press hard on the civilian ones. The answer came on 20 January 1936. The British were prepared to negotiate but not on the basis of the 1930 draft, and only after agreement had been reached on the military clauses. In case of failure, Britain might have to change its position towards Egypt,¹⁵⁵ a threat which did not pass unnoticed.

Nahhâs' response was that when the official letter answering the team of negotiators was sent to the British High Commission, it contained the stipulation that in no way should the relationship of the two countries alter if the negotiations failed.¹⁵⁶ This was in line with Nahhâs' legal mentality of registering his right in a case, and by doing so securing it.

On 13 February 1936, a Royal Decree was issued appointing the negotiating team, with Nahhâs as its President, Muḥammâd Maḥmûd Pâshâ, Ismail Siḍqî Pâshâ, 'Abd al-Fatâh Yehya Pâshâ, Wassif Butrus Ghali Pâshâ, Dr. Aḥmad Mâhir, 'Alî al-Shamsî Pâshâ, Osmân Muharam Pâshâ, Hilmî Issa Pâshâ, Mr. Maḥram Ebeid, Hâfiz 'Afîfî Pâshâ, Mr. Maḥmûd Fahmî al-Noḥrashî, and Aḥmad Hamdî Seif al-Nasr Bey, as members. The delegation had a majority of Wafdists as it included six others besides Nahhâs.¹⁵⁷ Thus Saâd's battle against 'Adlî was finally won by Saâd's successor, Nahhâs against Maḥmûd, Siḍqî and the others. On receiving the British reply, King Fuâd began consultations for a coalition government under Nahhâs, which the latter refused categorically. It

155. al-Rafi'i Vol. 2, pp. 210-217.

156. Mahafiz Majlis al-Wizara' Mahadir Galsat 6 February 1936, Wizarit 'Alî Mâhir, Riâ'sat Majlis al-Wizarâ'.

157. Al-Rafi'i V.2 p. 214.

was then decided that 'Alī Māhir should form a neutral government in order to conduct elections.¹⁵⁸ Nahhās knew well that in order to secure a treaty he needed a coalition with all parties, but he was resolute in his conviction of never giving in to a coalition government. He also knew well that by accepting a coalition to negotiate, and refusing a coalition in the government he would be killing two birds with one stone, as the King could not deny him a government after he had accepted to negotiate with the participation of other parties. Thus Nahhās had his way and elections were held. On 10 May 1936 Nahhās formed his third government.

G. The Third Nahhās Government

Besides the Abyssinian crises and the fear of a repetition of the experience of World War One, was the fear on the part of the Wafd of an alliance between its opponents and Italy. There is no doubt that some groups, like "Young Egypt", for example, were beginning to look to Italy for support. The threat of these new political groups did not come from their own strength, but from what support they could gain from the Palace and Italy at the expense of both the Wafd and the British, and so it was not only the external threat which drove the Wafd to sign a treaty with Britain. Although the latter was not so evident at that year, later in 1942 Nahhās accused the "Young Egypt" society of direct links with Italy, which could suggest that that type of thinking might have been present, or at least suspected during 1936, especially with the historical tradition of enmity between the Wafd and such groups not to mention the Palace. The co-operation between such elements as Ismail Siḍqī and 'Alī Māhir was not far off.¹⁵⁹ The other

158. Ramadan V.1 pp. 790, 791.

159. Ibrāhīm, p. 63.

main reason, which was not so apparent at that time, was to cement an alliance with the British at the expense of the Palace. There is no doubt that the absence of a strong monarch gave a chance to the Wafd leadership to court the British without being hindered by intrigues from the Palace or elsewhere. In the struggle among the three forces on the Egyptian political scene, any rapprochement between two of the three actors, was surely at the expense of the third. With the monarchy at its lowest ebb, the illness and then death of Fouâd, and with Fârûk not yet on the throne, surely it entered the head of Nahhâs and other Wafdists that an alliance with Britain at that particular moment, would ensure their complete control, that is, the monopoly of government at that moment at least, and a guarantee against any future threat from the monarchy. As will be shown in the following chapter, Nahhâs spoke his mind at that time when he commented in 1937 on hearing of his dismissal from power, by saying that he did not sign the treaty for that to happen to him.

Unlike the 1930 negotiations between Nahhâs and Henderson, the 1936 negotiations will be treated very briefly in this thesis, since they have been dealt with at length in two other theses.¹⁶⁰ The points to be stressed here are how Nahhâs approached the British, and the concessions he was able to extract from them. In the opening session, on 2 March 1936, Nahhâs tried to stress two points. Firstly, that the provisions of the 1930 draft regarding full facilities in case of war satisfied British requirements. Secondly, that there should be no compromise over Egypt's sovereignty.¹⁶¹ In a meeting on the

160. Also Muhammâd Farîd 'Abd al-Majid Hashîsh, *Muahadit 1936 wa Athani fi al Ailakat al Misraya al Britaniya Hata 1945* PhD. Thesis 'Aim Shams University Cairo, 1975 and Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim *The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty Khartoum University Press, Khartoum 1976* with the full text of the agreement.

161. FO 407-220 J1938/2/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 189), 2 March 1936.

morning of 17 March between Nahhâs and Lampson, the former tried to persuade the latter to take the 1930 clauses and discuss them, but failed. Nahhâs stressed that British soldiers should be stationed in the Canal zone only, and that from there they could reach any place in a few hours. If the British were dissatisfied with the existing means of communication, the Egyptian government would build adequate roads and railways,¹⁶² and Britain could increase the number of troops in the Canal area.¹⁶³ Thus Nahhâs agreed to the stationing of British troops in the Canal Zone, while at the same time refusing to sanction the British occupation of Cairo and Alexandria.¹⁶⁴ He then rejected the clause suggested by the British which read "to the satisfaction of both parties" concerning the ability of the Egyptian army to defend the Canal.¹⁶⁵ Nahhâs, who had earlier agreed to increase the garrison in the Canal, also agreed to increase the number of British troops from 8,000 as agreed in 1930 to 10,000 land forces with 400 pilots and ancillary personnel for administrative and technical duties. He also consented to Britain's right to send reinforcements not only in the case of war or imminent threat of war as in the 1930 draft, but also in the case of an apprehended emergency and before a state of acute crisis was reached.¹⁶⁶ Nahhâs also offered extensive training facilities south of Ismailia for the British army in the Suez Canal. Britain was given the right of passage for her troops across the Delta to manoeuvre in the Western Desert whenever necessary. The Royal Air Force would

162. FO 407-220 J2401/2/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 227), 17 March 1936.

163. Ibid.

164. FO 371/20102 J2351/2/16 (Tel. No. 295), Lampson to Eden 12 March 1936.

165. FO 371/20104 (Tel. No. 258), Lampson to Eden 31 March 1936, p. 83.

166. FO 371/20104 J3213/2/16 (Tel. No. 305), Lampson to Eden 16 April 1936.

have landing grounds in Egypt wherever it wanted and freedom to fly to them whenever it wished.¹⁶⁷ In addition, as Nahhâs had suggested earlier, the new communications, from the Canal Zone to the interior of Egypt, would be provided and the existing ones improved. Still the British were not content and Lampson had to fly to London to consult with Eden, to British Foreign Secretary, about the question of the Canal. Nahhâs then informed Mr. Kelly, the acting British High Commissioner on 4 June 1936, that even after the withdrawal of British troops from Cairo and Alexandria, Britain could send her troops back without limit in an apprehended emergency. On 6 June 1936, Makram repeated the same offer to Mr. Kelly.¹⁶⁸ Britain agreed that either country could refer the question of the Canal and its defence to the League of Nations after twenty years if at that time they disagreed on the subject.¹⁶⁹ In return, Britain agreed to add "international" to the "apprehended emergency" since it was harmless and assured the Egyptians of non-interference in their internal affairs. They also agreed on consultation in case of a threat of war only after Nahhâs assured them that it would be purely formal and that the British discretion as to the extent and nature of the reinforcements to be sent to Egypt would be absolutely unfettered.¹⁷⁰ Nahhâs also did not object to British soldiers defending the British Embassy, but suggested that British soldiers should be positioned inside the compound so as not to be visible to Egyptians, which they would be if they were

167. FO 371/20102 (Tel No. 245), Lampson to Eden 9 July 1936.

168. Ibrâhîm, p. 90.

169. Ibrâhîm, p. 95. Cab 24/262, C.P. 156/36. Memorandum by the Foreign Secretary on Anglo-Egyptian Treaty Negotiations, 8 June 1936, p. 91.

170. Ibrâhîm, p. 95.

stationed outside the walls of the Embassy.¹⁷¹ As to the question of who should build the new barracks for the British troops to move into, Nahhâs suggested that instead of Egypt doing so, the British should build them and Egypt would buy them when the British left.¹⁷²

It is interesting to note the role played by Muḥammad Maḥmūd in the negotiations. Whether it was in agreement with Nahhâs in advance, or on his own initiative, the result was to the benefit of Egypt. Mahmoud objected at the last minute to the military clauses on a number of specific points and on the general ground that they went into too much detail which showed Britain's distrust of the Egyptians. It was because of these differences that Nahhâs attempted on 6 July 1936 to secure modifications on almost every point on which agreement had previously been reached. On 12 July 1936 Makram and Amin Osmân went to see Mr. Beckett of the British delegation in order to convince him that if certain amendments were not made, Muḥammad Maḥmūd and other non-Wafdist members of the Egyptian delegation would break away from the negotiation.¹⁷³ Finally, Muḥammad Maḥmūd accepted the military clauses, after Britain did not show any sign of retreat from her position, provided that he was free to go back on his consent failing satisfaction over both the Sudan and the Capitulations.¹⁷⁴ Mahmud with Helmi Issa suggested breaking off negotiations if Britain refused Egypt's demand of abolishing the Capitulations.¹⁷⁵ The suggestion was accepted, and Britain pledged to assist Egypt in abolishing the

171. Miles Lampson Diaries, Nov. 11, p. 231.

172. FO 407-206 J1126/4/16 Lord Lloyd to Sir Austin Chamberlain (No. 265).

173. Ibrâhîm, p. 94.

174. FO 371/20115 J6571/2/16 Lampson to Eden (Tel. No. 738), 24 July 1936, p. 125.

175. Ibrâhîm, p. 126.

Capitulations. This meant that the Egyptian government could levy taxes on foreigners, which it had not been able to do before.¹⁷⁶ The question of the Sudan was also settled. Egypt no longer demanded that the Sudan should return to its normal position as an ordinary Egyptian province. The British view of the character of the administration in the Sudan was accepted, provided that Egypt had a share in it on the basis of the Condominium Agreement.¹⁷⁷ The result of the negotiations was, as one scholar put it, that

Of the four points reserved in the 1922 Declaration, one, the protection of foreigners and minorities had been conceded by Britain. But the other three, Imperial Communications, the Sudan, the defence of Egypt had been conceded by Egypt to Britain.¹⁷⁸

Despite that, Nakhâs was given an rapturous public welcome on his arrival in Cairo, after signing the treaty in London 26 August 1936. It was estimated that 600,000 Egyptians were in the streets of Cairo to welcome him.¹⁷⁹ Nakhâs called the treaty "The Treaty of Honour and Independence". When he was confronted by the fact that the role of the Wafd had come to an end with signing the treaty, since the Wafd had been established in the beginning for that express purpose, he replied that the Wafd's role does not end by signing the treaty, but by implementing it. He also added that the Wafd was not a political party, but a deputation of the nation to safeguard its rights and interests.¹⁸⁰ Yet, when Ahmad Mâhir's turn came to speak in the Chamber of Deputies before ratifying the treaty, he said "If you

176. Marlow, p. 310.

177. Ibrâhîm, p. 101.

178. Marlow, p. 302.

179. FO 407-219 J8251/2/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 98), 22 October 1936.

180. 'Alî al-Dîn Hilâl, al-Siyasah wa al-Hukm fi Misr 1803 - 1971 Maktabat Nahdat al-Sharq, Cairo 1975, p. 141.

consider that treaty a step towards our national aspirations, then accept it. But if you are looking for the full account of all our national aspirations, then reject it."¹⁸¹

H. Conclusion

Nahhâs' willingness to sign a treaty made his concessions the target of the opposition which must surely have detracted from his political capital. An allegation by Lampson later that Nahhâs told him in a private meeting on 20 July 1936 that he was prepared to give the British the substance if they could give him the form, can be verified by examining the draft treaty of 1936.¹⁸² It is true that Egypt secured the termination of the Capitulations as a real tangible gain out of the treaty, an achievement which should not be underestimated, but the military occupation remained and was further legitimized and rendered indefinite.¹⁸³

Nahhâs had now reached the peak of his popularity and achievement. He had reached a settlement with the British over the national question. The treaty was the utmost Nahhâs could have reached through negotiations and in those particular circumstances. Now he could devote his energy to more pressing domestic questions, the most important of which was the relationship with the Palace. Nahhâs, it could be argued, had faithfully complied with and implemented the political doctrine of his generation which was greatly influenced by, if not directly the product of, the pre-World War One Umma Party,

181. Hâfiz Maḥmûd Min Asrar al-Madi, p. 152.

182. Ibrâhîm, p. 25. FO 371/20114 J6452/2/16 (No. 713), Lampson to Eden 20 July 1936.

183. For the full text of the negotiations see FO 407-220 also Muḥammad Farid Abd al-Majed Hashîsh, Mouahadit 1936 wa Athar fi al Ailakat al-Misraya al-Britaniya Hata 1945 PhD. Thesis Aim Shams University Cairo, 1975 and Hassan Aḥmad Ibrâhîm The 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty Khartoum University Press, Khartoum 1976 with the full text of the agreement.

namely, that of reaching a satisfactory settlement with Britain. Now he could direct the nation's energy to domestic reform, and the curtailment of the power of the monarch. The argument was that national aspirations could only be achieved gradually, and each step was a prelude to the next. But was Nahhâs' treaty of 1936 a step in the right direction which was to be followed by other steps? His whole future career depended on an affirmative answer, but as later events were to show, this was not to be the case. Nevertheless, the 1936 Treaty was the most significant contribution of Nahhâs to the national struggle.

One of the first and major reforms undertaken by the Wafd government was the expansion of the military college in order to increase the size of the army. What Nahhâs and his fellow Wafdists did not realize was that these reforms produced their own dynamic to which they were the first ones to fall victims. By and large one could say that the direct result of the 1936 treaty was the revolution of 1952. For the generation of army officers who were admitted in this year and the following three to four years, came from the section of the urban lower middle class whom the Wafd represented at that time, but which later withdrew its support of the party. In his annual speech on 13 November 1937 Nahhâs boasted that the number of cadets admitted to the military college had been increased from fifty to nearly three hundred. In one sense, Nahhâs was the real father of the 1952 revolution, and to that extent, he was also right. By gaining one concession from the British, several reforms could produce the elements of another further step towards independence and constitutionalism. But he did not conceive the nature of these new elements or against whom they would be directed.

Chapter Three

Nahhâs, the Wafd and the Palace, 1936-1942

A. The Accession of Farouk

King Fûâd of Egypt died on 28 April 1936. At that time his son, Prince Fârûk, was only seventeen years old and ostensibly studying in Britain. The first act of the new Parliament was to open the late King's will. It was fourteen years old, written on 21 June 1922. As one of the three named Regents, 'Adlî Yaken, was already dead, the Wafd seized the opportunity to demand the appointment of new regents. They wanted Tewfiq Nessîm, as the will demanded, but failed.¹ The new Regency Council consisted of Prince Muhammad 'Alî as President, Sherief Sabrî (brother of Queen Nazlî) and 'Abd al-'Azîz Izzat, the last two of whom had good contacts with the Wafd. There was an attempt on the part of Prince Muḥammad 'Alî to raise the legal age for the coronation of the prince from eighteen to twenty-five. Nahhâs refused on the grounds that his attention was concentrated on the treaty negotiations with the British, and that this move demanded the amendment of the Constitution which he was not prepared to do.²

The idea was that it would be easy to control Farûk, and by doing so, they would win the young King to their side. People were very optimistic about the new King,³ though one doubts whether Nahhâs shared their optimism. Once he had agreed to Fârûk's accession, a very necessary step would have been taken, and that was to expel some

1. Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizarat, pp. 385-386.
2. Muḥammâd al-Tabî'i, Min Asrâr al-Sasa wa al-Siyasa Dâr al-M'aârif Cairo 1978 p. 60. Hashish, p. 151.
3. Aḥmad Baha' al-Dîn, Farûk Malikun Dar Rose al-Yûsuf Cairo p. 21.

of the employees of the Palace who were dangerous to Fârûk. Al-Tabî'i⁴ mentioned that Farûk's mother, Nâzîf, had asked her brother (Sabrî, a member of the Regency Council) to go to his Wafdist friends and tell them on her behalf to look after of Fârûk, for he was their son, and to advise them to dismiss the old team in the Palace, that is Sa'id Zû al-Fîqâr, Head of Protocol, Shawkî Pasha, the private secretary, and 'Abd al-Wahab Tala'at Pâshâ, Head of the Arabic Department. Sabri went to 'Abd al-Hamid al-Bannân who conveyed the message to Ahmad Mâhir and Nahhâs.⁵

Yet Nahhâs did nothing of that sort and 'Alî Mâhir, as Prime Minister at that time, proclaimed Farûk King after calculating his age according to the lunar calendar to be eighteen.⁶ The attempt made by Nahhâs to win over Farûk to his side by refusing Prince Muḥammad 'Alî's proposal soon met other obstacles which naturally led to conflict between Nahhâs, as representative of a constitutional government elected by the people, and Fârûk, representing a monarchial institution which refused to make any concessions.

That was what the Egyptian sources said, but a British report mentioned that the Wafd was of the opinion that Farûk should return to England as soon as possible, and his legal age for the assumption of his royal duties should be raised to twenty-one on the grounds that this was necessary to give him a proper education. The report continued that the British Residency in Cairo admitted that this argument had some weight, yet it felt that if the Wafd got all the power in its own hands during the four years before the King came of age, the Wafd might be tempted "to give an anti-dynastic turn to

4. Pro-Wafdist journal.

5. Hashish, p. 152. al-Tab'ai, pp. 177-178.

6. Ibrâhîm Abd al-Hadî Mudhakirat, Rose al-Yûsuf, 25 July 1982 No.13.

Egyptian nationalism".⁷ There is no doubt that some quarters of the Wafd might have thought so, but according to the Egyptian sources, it seems that if Nahhâs had thought of it and did not find the British receptive to the idea, he had not pressed the matter for fear of jeopardizing his treaty negotiations which was his first priority. Thus his excuse of an amendment to the constitution for which he was not ready because of the treaty negotiations can be understood in that light.

The first conflict came over the accession ceremony. A journalist working in al-Ahrâm newspaper picked up an idea from Prince Muḥammad 'Alī and began to publicize it. The idea was that the ceremony should be held in the Citadel and the Sheikh of al-Azhar would present the new King with the sword of his grandfather, Muḥammad 'Alī.

When Nahhâs first heard about this his comment was that the "game" had begun. Al-Misri⁸ (the voice of the Wafd) published under banner headlines that a high-level source had "leaked" the information that the cabinet had categorically decided not to hold a religious ceremony. As if to show the people that only the cabinet decided what was to be done,⁹ Nahhâs in Parliament stated his position clearly in answering a question concerning that subject.¹⁰ He also objected to a proposal of a crown, for which the nation would have to pay, to be placed on the head of the King by the President of the Senate at a party to which Kings and Presidents of other nations would be invited. He also objected to another proposal by Prince Muhammad 'Alī that

7. Ibrâhîm Hassan p. 26 (FO 371/20107 J4472/2/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 522), 8 May 1936.
8. al-Tâbi'i, pp. 89-90. Daily since 1936, edited by Mahmûd Abu al-Fath (Hamza, p. 151).
9. Madabit Majlis al-Nûwwâb, 21 July 1937, p. 2221.
10. Saâd al-Dîn, pp. 127-132.

Farûk should pray the Friday Prayer on the second day of his accession in the Al-Azhar Mosque where the Sheikh of al-Azhar would read a special prayer.¹¹

In his speech submitting his Cabinet to the Regents, Nahhâs stated,

With a view to strengthening the bonds of loyalty and confidence between the Throne and the Nation, and in order to establish the regime on democratic bases honoured in countries with old parliamentary traditions, the government propose to create a new Department to be called the Ministry of the Palace.¹²

As Dr. Rizq contends¹³

A post of Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Palace Affairs had been created (at British insistence). Nahhâs informed me that it replaces Minister of Palace. It would be attached to his own office instead of being in the Palace, and would function as a department of the Prime Minister's office. In substance this scheme achieved the objectives of the original scheme, without however threatening Royal dignity. Everybody, including the Regents, were satisfied, and he hoped, Miles Lampson would be too.¹⁴

In the period between Nahhâs' taking office and the King being sworn in, another battle was under way between himself and the King. This time it was over the control of the army. Nahhâs had a special interest in it for two reasons. One was that through the army, Egypt would finally gain her independence. According to Article 8¹⁵ of the

11. FO 407-219 J 4213/2/16 Miles Lampson to Eden (No. 413), Cairo 11 May 1936.

12. Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizarat, pp. 385-386.

13. FO 407-219 J 8676/2/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 584), Cairo 23 June 1936.

14. al-Sâid, p. 75.

15. Article 8:

In view of the fact that the Suez Canal, whilst being an integral part of Egypt, is a universal means of communication as also an essential means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire, His Majesty the King of Egypt, until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal, authorises His Majesty, the King and Emperor to station forces in Egyptian

(cont.)

Treaty, once the army became able to defend the Canal there would be no need for British troops to stay in the country; so strengthening the army was one of his long-term objectives, and it was therefore important to place it under his supervision. The second reason was purely political. Nabhâs was very suspicious of the Palace's autocratic tendencies. If the army could not be under the Prime Minister's supervision, then at least it must be neutralized. But it should by no means be under the control of the Palace lest the latter increased its autocratic tendencies. Thus, with the new King not yet crowned, Nabhâs issued Law Number 72 in the year 1937 for the establishment of a Higher Defence Council. In this law he removed from the King all authority over the army and transferred it to the Prime Minister. By so doing, he automatically cancelled the post of the High Commander of the Armed Forces which the King had occupied.¹⁶

The second incident was the oath the army was to swear during the coronation ceremonies. The Palace wanted it to read, "To be faithfully loyal to the King, obeying his orders." The Government wanted it to be: "Faithful to the King, obedient to the Constitution."¹⁷ The

(cont.)

territory in the vicinity of the Canal, in the zone specified in the Annex to this Article, with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal. The detailed arrangements for the carrying into effect of this Article are contained in the Annex hereto. The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt.

It is understood that at the end of the period of twenty years specified in Article 16 the question whether the presence of British forces is no longer necessary owing to the fact that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal may, if the High Contracting Parties do not agree thereon, be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for decision in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant in force at the time of signature of the present treaty or to such other person or body of persons for decision in accordance with such other procedure as the High Contracting Parties may agree (Hassan Ahmad Ibrahim, pp. 138-139).

16. Baha' al-Dîn, p. 28.

17. Majallat al-Shubban al-Wafdiyyin 16 September 1936 p. 16.

meaning was clear in both oaths and the difference needed no comment.

Nahhâs' intention was to encroach on the young King's prerogatives, and diminish the Royal power. This was attempted by several means, one of which was to reduce palace expenditure. In May, he and Maḡram visited the Palace and proposed that the new King should buy the Koubbeh and Montazah Palaces, or at least take on the cost of their upkeep. This was reckoned at Ef20,000 per annum at that time's rate of expenditure. Nahhâs also proposed to reduce the allowances of other members of the royal family by one third as King Farûk had already volunteered to do.¹⁸ Another attempt made by Nahhâs to reduce the Palace's prestige was to have detachments of the Royal Bodyguard go out to meet him (the Prime Minister), to have the National Anthem played for him on his return from Europe. The Ministry of War and Marine too ordered out to sea two coastguard vessels to escort Nahhâs' ship when it arrived at Alexandria. This incident greatly annoyed the Palace. Nahhâs also postponed the annual day ceremony of the Naval School at Alexandria on 18 October 1936 because he could not be there, although the King had already promised to attend.¹⁹

All these incidents were monitored by the British Residency in Cairo, and their significance was not underestimated. Lampson advised Nahhâs that he should be on terms of respect and, if possible, friendship with his sovereign. The Prime Minister listened sympathetically and Makram warmly supported what Lampson had said. Lampson wrote to Eden commenting on the conversation that he had had with Nahhâs and saying that, though he did not as a rule say much at the time, yet he more often than not subsequently acted in accordance

18. FO 407-219 J5095/2/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 54), 31 May 1936.

19. FO 407-219 J8253/2/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 102), 24 October 1936.

with the advice given.²⁰ But it seems that Nahhâs was more determined than ever to settle his dispute with the monarchy once and for all. He had secured the backing of the British through signing the treaty with them, and his archfoe, King Fûâd, had died. The new monarch was young and unexperienced, and no better opportunity would ever present itself again. His policy was two-fold: on the one hand to curtail the power and authority of the Palace as far as he could, and on the other, to increase his own power and prestige so as to render it very difficult for the Palace to challenge his authority. This he was intending to do through the "Blue Shirts".

Although the "Blue Shirts" were to become synonymous with the Wafd in general and Nahhâs in particular, the Shirst movement goes as far as 1933 and is of a non-Wafdist origin. As noted in Chapter Two, a new generation of students and young people were losing faith in both the constitutional system and the political parties. New political groups appeared, the most notable were "Young Egypt" and the "Moslem Brotherhood". "Young Egypt", influenced by both Italy and Germany, soon was to develop "The Green Shirts", as an Egyptian version of the "Black Shirts", as some scholars have argued.²¹ With the crisis of 1935, this trend which was confined to "Young Egypt", was soon to expand and acquire several other dimensions.

For the first time since 1918, students and young people would try to construct or organize a political power base independent of the established parties. They were not left alone for long, and political leaders started canvassing among them to win over these new recruits to public life. But this time, the political leaders were to follow the general trend of young people in order to use them. We have, for instance, Muḥammad Maḥmûd, who was able to rally the people for a

20. FO 407-219 J3402/20/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden, 25 July 1937.

21. See Yûnân Labîb Rizq Ashâb al-Qumsân al-Mulawana fi Misr al-Mijalat al-Misriyya lil Dirasat al Tarikhiyya Vol. 21 1974.

short time especially after his speech on 7 November 1935, and was to induce Prince 'Abbâs Halîm to form a new group among the students and unemployed. Subsequently, a new organization "The National Student Group" was founded under the leadership of Nûr al-Dîn Tarrâf, a Liberal Constitutionalist medical student. This organization included followers of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party, of the National Party, and Prince 'Abbâs Halîm himself. It was organized along military lines and its members had a distinctive uniform and badges. While Muḥammad Maḥmûd helped the group financially, Ismail Sidqî sympathised with it and allowed it to meet in his house.²²

Soon the Wafd was to join the fray when the incidents of November of that year gave notice to the Wafdist leadership that they were in danger of losing their hold over the youth of the country. The Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalist sections of this movement had already started to organize themselves into clear political groups which seemed to model themselves on the Fascist paramilitary organizations in Italy and Germany.

Although Nokrashî had begun forming Committees of Wafdist Youth in mid-July 1933,²³ only in December 1935 was the idea taken up seriously in order to counter the "Green Shirts". Thus they were organized on paramilitary lines, and their number by 1936 was estimated to be 8,000.²⁴ The purpose of the new organization was to create a strong Egyptian youth with military and athletic spirit who knew their rights and duties towards their religion and country under the leadership of the leader of the Wafd, Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs Pâshâ. Each member had to take the following oath before becoming a member "I swear by God, my

22. Ibrâhîm p. 22. FO 371/20098 (No. 102) 19/15/36 Memorandum by Farîd Bashatly Effendi, deputy assistant Director-General of the European Department 27 January 1936.

23. Rizq, Ashâb al-Qumsân al-Mulawana fi Misr 1933 - 1937, pp.205-206.

24. Ibid., p. 207.

country, my honour to be a soldier to the King, and the Country, and the Wafd, to fight for the sake of Egypt and abstain from what would contradict my principles.²⁵

What frightened the Wafd most was that their main rival among the students, the Green Shirts, gave their loyalty to the King and were opposed to the Wafd and liberal ideas generally. One could argue that such a group was not a real threat to the Wafd; but it was a potential one, especially if it had the backing of the Palace through 'Alī Māher, in addition to their links with the Axis.²⁶ One could say that at least the Italian Embassy in Cairo looked on them with favour and surely would have regarded them as a co-operative force in its propaganda activities in Egypt.

With the Italian invasion of Ethiopia constituting a threat to Egypt and world tension mounting, it is quite possible that Nabhās had these thoughts in his mind when he signed the treaty with Great Britain. Yet one could also argue that this might have been the primary reason for creating the Wafd's "Blue Shirts" and so discourage the youth from joining the "Green Shirts", but eventually it had a far wider purpose, which was to be used in any future conflict with the King.

Nabhās' object is not clear: maintain Wafd hold on youth, intimidate opponents as they fear that a coup d'etat is to take place after the ratification of the treaty by the Palace, following the strained relations arising out of the dispute on the "honours" and other questions. Nahas is not sure whether he can rely on the allegiance to him of the army and the police in case of such a conflict. He wishes to mobilize and train the youth into a force on which he can rely. He does not believe that this force could successfully oppose the army and the police, but he is sure that if there were a number of casualties amongst these youth, public opinion would veer overwhelmingly in his favour against the Palace.²⁷

25. Ibid., p. 240. Quoting Al-Jihād 20 August 1937.

26. Al-Sáid, p. 22.

27. FO 407-219 J 8299/2/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 1212), Cairo 24 October 1936.

Supporting this assumption is the question of why Nahhâs, as Prime Minister, did not promulgate a law proscribing the "Green Shirts" in the same way he had tried to get Tewfiq Nessim to do during his tenure of office. If even he had tried once more as Prime Minister, but failed due to pressure from the Palace, then the evidence needs no proof and the conflict is clear.

Once more Nahhâs expressed his fears of a Palace coup when the British expressed their reservations about the Blue Shirts.²⁸ It is interesting to notice how the Blue Shirts clearly became more and more a personal weapon in the hands of Nahhâs himself against the monarch, although he tried to accommodate the fears of the British by issuing new regulations forbidding members to carry sticks or any kind of weapons, and appointing an executive council to regulate and supervise them.²⁹ However, the oath had changed to

I swear by God to fight for my country under the leadership of Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs to the last drop of my blood, and remain faithful to the memory of Saâd as long as I live, and resist with all my strength every one who is not a patriot, and refrain from what may jeopardize my principles.³⁰

This time there was no mention of the King. Dr. Bilâl, one of the leaders of the group, spoke of an attempt by the King to have him issue a declaration in the papers about the loyalty of the Blue Shirts to the monarch and their allegiance to him,³¹ which indicated, if anything, that they had none. On the contrary, they were hostile to him. In a dispatch from Cairo to London, Miles Lampson wrote about a conversation between himself and Amîn Osmân, asking the latter to tell Nahhâs to

28. FO 407-219 J 8843/2/16 Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 123), Cairo, 26 November 1936.

29. Majallat al-Shuban al-Wafdiyyin, 16 December 1936 No. 7.

30. Yûnân Labîb Rizq Ashâb al-Qumsân al-Molauana fi Misr al-Migalat-al-Tarikhiya al-Misriya Vol. 21 1974 p. 240.

31. Muḥammad Bilâl, al-Musawer, 6 September 1979, p. 74.

disband the Blue Shirts in return for good faith from the King. Amīn Osmān answered that Nahhās would be surrendering his main weapon without any guarantee.³² One cannot but ask, what did Nahhās have in mind? A repetition of 1930 when he tendered his resignation expecting the people to support him as they did with Zaghlūl in 1924, but with the backing of the Blue Shirts? Why did he not use them in 1937-38? Or was he caught by surprise this time also?

The Blue Shirts were not only an issue of conflict between Nahhās and the Palace, but they seem to have created a division inside the party itself and became an issue of conflict and dissension. One of the reports had noticed that

The general tendency of the present development is to create a petit bourgeois party dictatorship of Nahhās and Maḵram Ebeid, and to exclude from the Wafd the former elements within it drawn from the same aristocratic families and the intelligentsia.³³

As it was later revealed by Nahhās himself in his speeches, long-standing differences between himself and Maḵram Ebeid on one side and Noḵrashī on the other caused him to exclude the latter with others from the cabinet over the Aswan issue in mid 1937. Noḵrashī had already resigned six times before, once because he objected to the dismissal of al-'Aqqād in 1935, who was accused of demanding a new leadership - that of Noḵrashī; another time when he objected to the presence of Nagīb al-Hilālī in the Wafd's Committee.³⁴ In his testimony before the Revolutionary Court in 1953 Hilālī said that Noḵrashī and Aḥmad Māhir were opposed to the Tewkiq Nessīm government. In support of his contention Hilālī cited the expulsion of Fatma

32. FO 407-221 J 5174/20/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 706), Cairo 13 December 1937.

33. FO 406-221 J 3978/20/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 1094), Ramleh 16 September 1937.

34. Al-Masrī, 18 September 1937.

al-Yûsuf from the party on 28 September 1935 when she was supported by them against Nahhâs and Makram Ebeid.³⁵ Even earlier, according to Hilâlî, Nahhâs accused Nokrashî of being the reason behind Britain's hardline stand in the negotiations of 1930. It was Nokrashî who favoured the continuation of the negotiations despite the Sudan clause which led to the British position. Ever since that time Nokrashî, according to Nahhâs, sought the leadership of the party, and he accused both Mâhir and Nokrashî of seeking to replace him. Nahhâs defended his friend Makram Ebeid by accusing the others of demanding special favours for their relatives and friends which the Minister of Finance (Makram) refused to grant. On the other hand Mâhir and Nokrashî accused Makram of deifying the leadership of Nahhâs and building a personality cult around him.³⁶ It also seems that the protagonists in the conflict had much more serious differences regarding the Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain and its implications. For Nahhâs it was an obligation to implement the provisions of the Treaty, especially as this would be in Egypt's favour when he would be able to get rid of the Capitulation system at the Montreux Conference in 1937 with British help. On the other hand, Nokrashî viewed the treaty as only a step towards the termination of the British presence in Egypt. He wanted to get rid of any British personnel working in the Egyptian government.³⁷ His stand on the Aswan issue can be understood from that perspective, for the issue was whether to put up the scheme to international tender or give it to a British firm, as Nahhâs, Makram, and Osmân Muharam, Minister of Public Works, wanted. It seems that this conflict was the last straw leading to the final break. From then on, the difference took other

35. Hashish, p. 118.

36. Al-Ahrâm 4/1/1938.

37. Rizq Tarikh al-Wizarat, p. 393. FO 407/221 J3520/20/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 902), Cairo 28 July 1937.

forms which led to the famous defection of Nokrashî and his friend Ahmad Mâhir. But it seems that Maqram for his part was helping to widen the gap between the leader, Nahhâs, and his one-time staunch supporters. Al-Tabi'i strongly implied this when he described in his book how Makram telephoned Nahhâs to congratulate him on his agreement with Nokrashî with whom he had shaken hands at a party that afternoon.³⁸

At the beginning "The Mother of Egyptians", the wife of the late Zaghlûl, tried to reconcile the four by bringing them together in a meeting on 5 September 1937, but finally she sided with Nokrashî, who was a kinsman, after threatening to close the "House of the Nation" against the Wafd.³⁹ Nokrashî published his statement in the newspapers on 7 September 1937 accusing Nahhâs of dictatorship.⁴⁰ On 13 September the Wafd expelled Nokrashî over Mâhir's objection.⁴¹ About sixty-eight members of the Wafd Committee joined Nokrashî: they were mostly from the cadres of the Wafd who had played a part in the nationalist movement.⁴²

There is no doubt that this split was the most severe blow the Wafd Party had suffered and the greatest challenge to the leadership of Nahhâs since 1927. He was forced to make a series of provincial visits with a view to rallying his followers and preventing further defections to Nokrashî;⁴³ for this reason he went to Damanhour, Tantâ, and Bani Sweif.

38. Al-Tabi'i, p. 164.

39. Hashîsh, p. 123. Al-Tab'ai, p. 165.

40. Al-Balâgh 7 September 1937.

41. Al-Masrî 14 September 1937, p. 8.

42. Al-Shâhid, p. 135.

43. FO 407-221 J 3891/20/16 Mr. Kelly to Mr. Eden (No. 1063), Ramleh 9 September 1937.

The challenge was more serious and different than when the majority of the Wafd high command defected in 1932. The kind of people who defected in 1932, and the issue on which the Wafd was divided, resembled the split of 1921 between Saád and 'Adif. The result was the strengthening of the leader of the Wafd inside his own party and outside with the people; inside the party by eliminating any challenge or opposing ideas, outside by appearing as the uncompromising leader. In both instances, Saád and Nahhâs assessed the situation carefully and were well advised of the general trend of public opinion at the time. It was their opponents who were outside the mainstream of the Wafd and the large section of the population which supported the Wafd. Finally, in both cases, the defectors were opposed to the leadership of the incumbent presidents, and some of them did not help them in their campaign for the presidency of the Wafd, especially in the case of Nahhâs. In 1937, however, the circumstances were different. First, it was to Madame Zaghlûl and Nokrashî's support that Nahhâs owed his presidency. These were the people on whom Nahhâs depended and who formed his inner circle. There is no doubt that they continued to feel that Nahhâs owed his position in the Wafd to them, and that he should feel obligated to them. Madame Zaghlûl gave her allegiance to Nahhâs on condition that she would be consulted on every major step taken by the Wafd: a promise which Barakât refused to give. With the blood relationship between Madame Zaghlûl and Nokrashî, and the friendship the latter had with Aḥmad Mâhir, the idea of managing without Nahhâs must have been thought of. Later allegations that Maḥram was to blame for dominating Nahhâs leads us to the second remark.

There is no doubt that Nahhâs, ten years after his election as president of the Wafd, during which he was Prime Minister three times, faced a challenge to his leadership from inside the Wafd which he was

able to overcome successfully. He concluded a settlement with Britain, something which others before him had failed to do. Throughout this time Maḳraḡ sang his praises as the "sacred leader". It was inevitable, in the face of these developments, that Nahhâs' relationship to his one-time supporters in 1927, would change. Noḳrashî's allegations against Maḳraḡ meant that Nahhâs no longer consulted him as he used to do. The fact that Nahhâs ignored Madame Zaghlûl's threat to close Beit el-Umma, the House of the Nation, in his face if he did not heal his rift with Noḳrashî, showed how Nahhâs was confident of his position, and felt that he no longer needed the support of those who once were vital to his primacy. This new dimension in Nahhâs' personality, contrasted with his early days when he was still under the control of those who helped him in 1927, was to have grave repercussions, which is our third comment. Not only did Nahhâs feel he no longer needed the services of those who once helped him in his early days, but, by removing them from his way, he was also destroying his own power base. With the defection of 1921 or 1932, those who followed 'Adlî or Barakât were not from the grass roots of the Wafd nor the power base of Saád or Nahhâs. But those who defected in 1937 were from the grass roots of the Wafd and from the same constituency on which Nahhâs depended for his political survival. The crack this time was in Nahhâs' constituency, and it weakened him. The process was to be repeated once more in 1942 with the defection of Maḳraḡ.

Aḡmad Mâhir who sided with Noḳrashî, had not yet been expelled from the Wafd, nor had he himself resigned from the party. It seems that he wanted to lead a coup from inside the Wafd itself to replace Nahhâs as a leader. Mâhir had his own reasons. Like Noḳrashî, he viewed the treaty as merely a step towards independence, and he urged that with the signature of the treaty, party politics should cease and

a new era should begin. At the same time, with his brother as Royal Chamberlain, the old idea returned of replacing Nahhâs as leader of the Wafd with another, thus defusing the tension between the Wafd and the Palace. Surely Mâhir must have thought that if he could persuade the majority of the Wafdist deputies to endorse him, he might become the next Prime Minister?⁴⁴

Personal ambitions were interwoven with real differences over policy, and the split was inevitable as there was no room for compromise. On 23 December 1937, at a meeting of the Wafd Parliamentary Committee, Aḥmad Mâhir with three others withdrew from the Wafd after he had proposed that Nahhâs should retire and that another Wafdist should replace him so as to resolve the conflict with the Palace. According to another version, Nahhâs spoke about the situation and his stand in the crises. He said that he agreed to dissolve the "Blue Shirts" and would not insist on the Constitutional Oath for the army. But he still opposed the appointment of 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî to the Senate. Mâhir recommended moderation. Only three members of the Wafd Parliamentary Committee endorsed him, and when a vote was taken, 228 voted for Nahhâs and three against him. There was also a vote to expel any Wafdist who accepted to form a government or participated in one or supported one which was not presided over by Nahhâs.⁴⁵

The two stories do not contradict, but complement each other. When Parliament met to hear of the dismissal of Nahhâs' government and the formation of a cabinet headed by Muḥammad Maḥmûd, Aḥmad Mâhir, who was the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, prevented anyone, including Nahhâs, from speaking. He subsequently went to the Saâdist club where

44. Hashîsh, p. 118. Heykal, Vol. 2 p. 48.

45. Rizq Tarikh al Wizarat, p. 407.

he made a speech attacking Nahhâs before withdrawing from the Wafd along with twenty-nine other deputies and senators.⁴⁶

On 28 November 1937, Ezz al-Dîn Tewfiq, a member of Young Egypt's society, fired four shots on Nahhâs while he was riding in his car in 'Abbâs Street. One shot hit the car, but Nahhâs was not harmed. Tewfiq was arrested, and on being questioned, he said that he had read the treaty signed by Egypt and Britain and was opposed to it. He was later sentenced to ten years imprisonment with hard labour on 28 March 1939. Nahhâs was convinced that the Italians were behind the attempt on his life, as the Minister of Justice had told him. Later he would accuse Young Egypt of direct links with Italy. He was irritated by the manner in which the King had widened the gulf between himself and the King. For Farûk had sent his second chamberlain to congratulate Nahhâs on his escape later in the morning.⁴⁷ That was the first attempt on Nahhâs' life from a member of a society directly opposed to his policies, showing that his hold over the public after signing the treaty was waning.

As for the conflict with the King, it developed into a more serious confrontation. Nahhâs in a statement published on 1 January explaining what had happened said

In the present reign, the cabinet was prevented from the right of submitting new legislation to Parliament.... The government has also been denied the right to appoint employees and remove them, or to recommend the appointment of senators, or the bestowal of titles and ranks to the notables and employees. The government, in short was unable to govern, and the control of Parliament over it was rendered meaningless. People in the Palace, without constitutional rights or responsibilities, took over.⁴⁸

46. Hashîsh, p. 123. Al-Balâgh, 5 January 1938.

47. Vatikiotis, p. 294; 'Abd al-Qâdir p. 105; al-Sâid p. 101; al-Balagh 29/11/1937; FO 407 J4965/20/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 677), 29 November 1937; Russell Papers, Oxford Private Papers.

48. Al-Ahrâm, 1 January 1938, p. 9, 14.

What Nahhâs was actually referring to were the following incidents:

When two seats in the Senate became vacant from among the seats appointed by the King, the question of who was to have the right of appointing the two fifths of the Senate was revived. It was in fact an old dispute between the monarchy and the government going back to 1924. At that time the dispute was resolved in Saâd's favour. The dispute was to emerge once more when Nahhâs nominated Maḥmûd Fahmî Pasha and Hassan Naf'a to occupy the vacant seats. The Palace objected to the nomination of Hassan Naf'a and insisted on the nomination of its own candidate 'Abd al-'Azîz Fahmî Pâshâ. The latter was known for his longstanding hostility to the Wafd and Nahhâs was left with no alternative but to refuse.

Another was when the King refused to sign a law increasing the budget of the secret expenses. The justification was that the money of that budget was spent on the Wafd's Blue Shirts which was contrary to the law. A third incident was when the King refused to sign a law which would lower the marks for entrance examinations in the universities. The reason given by the King for not signing the law was that it should have been first approved by the University Council before being signed by the King.⁴⁹ Yet another incident of friction between the King and Nahhâs' government was when some members of the cabinet, namely Maḥram and 'Alî Zakî al-Urabî, did not attend the royal celebrations of the Eid al-Fûṭûr, the end of the Ramadan feast, without giving a proper excuse. That led the Palace to ignore the congratulatory telegrams these ministers had sent to the King on that occasion.⁵⁰ A fifth incident was when the Palace expressed a desire that the army should take an oath of loyalty to the King. Contrary to

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49. Muḥammad Hussein Haykel, Mudhakhirât fi al-Siyasah al-Misriyyah Maktabat al-Nahdah al Misriyah Cairo 1951-1953, Vol. 2, p. 80.

50. Al-Balâgh 5/12/37.

the wishes of the Palace, the government wanted the occasion to include an oath by the army to uphold the Constitution. Naturally the Palace refused, as it implied that the army could intervene against the monarchy. Rumours were also spread of contacts between the Wafd and some high ranking officers in the army. Finally, the army officers were introduced by the Wafdist Minister of War to the King, which was unprecedented.⁵¹

As the relationship with the Palace deteriorated further, a big demonstration against Nahhâs took place at the university on 31 December 1937. This was the largest demonstration against the Wafd since the one by the students of the Azhar against Saâd thirteen years before. The King seized the opportunity and dismissed Nahhâs. Nahhâs was later to comment on the dispute between himself and 'Alî Mâhir as being a constitutional one. The issue at stake was who was to rule? The duly elected government or the Palace? The answer was clear in the mind of Nahhâs. Government matters were the responsibility of the elected government which was accountable to the representatives of the nation. But 'Alî Mâhir, continued Nahhâs, was of the opinion that Palace men should have the last word, which actually meant his last word.⁶⁰ Thus Nahhâs summarised the old historical dispute between the Palace as an unelected institution versus the Wafd as representative of the nation in Parliament and government. It was the same old battle over who should lead the country, who should govern, Saâd or 'Adlî, Nahhâs or Fârûk.

Nahhâs was not to enjoy the fruits of his new alliance with the British after signing the treaty for long. He thought that he would have their unlimited support for as long as he wished, but this, not unnaturally proved to be illusory, for the British, although satisfied

51. Al-Balâgh quoting Daily Telegraph on 14 December 1937.

with the treaty, were not content with his administration, and asked him to broaden his government to include more capable personalities like 'Alf al-Shamsi for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Aḥmad Māhir as Minister of War.⁵² This, of course, was not acceptable to Nabhās, but was this the price of support which the British were asking for as some writers have argued?⁵³ Nabhās was convinced that the King could not have dared to dismiss him unless he had known that the British had withdrawn their support from him. Therefore he blamed the British for his dismissal.

After Nabhās left office, Miles Lampson visited him and then reported the visit to London saying:

According to custom, I visited Nabhās to take leave of him. He put the blame upon me for having held him back when he wished to have the issue out in Parliament at the beginning of November. It had been a plot from the beginning by 'Alf Māhir, who had finally forced the pace after the attempt on Nabhās' life as he knew there was proof of his implication and was determined to stifle the enquiry. He also blamed me for not taking the strongest line with King Farūk. Short of using threats backed by force we could not have done more; as a nationalist he would hardly have benefited if we had kept him in by force even had that been feasible. The new government had strong Italian traits. It was a betrayal of the country that all secret defence arrangements made, at his urgent insistence should now have to be disclosed to such creatures as the new War Minister who was a Palace tool and everything would be known to Italy.⁵⁴

Was Nabhās inciting the British to bring him back to power lest Egypt turn to Italy?

In two lengthy talks with Mr. Chapman-Andrews, Nabhās said that his removal from power was like that of Mr. Eden, engineered by the British government in order to facilitate their change of policy towards Italy... The British government should follow the example of Mr. Henderson in 1929 and refuse to discuss any important questions with the present government as nothing which the Prime Minister did

52. Al-Sáid, p. 79. FO 407-221 J4966/20/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 679), Cairo 29 November 1937.

53. Al-Sáid, p. 79.

54. FO 407-222 J 50/6/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Mr. Eden (No. 158), Cairo 31 December 1937.

could be accepted at its face value by the people. Nabhâs added that his feelings towards the Palace were different. He would fight the Palace and Palace despotism by all the means in his power, even though it cost him his life. The Court was "sale" and all associated with it were ambitious, intriguing, self-seekers. He had fought the British, King Fûâd, and the whole combination of dishonest jobsters like Sidkî, 'Alî Mâhir, Muḥammad Maḥmûd and was not afraid to stand up to King Farûk.⁵⁵

Once more the same views were expressed.

Nabhâs had conversations with Mr. Kelly and Mr. Chapman-Andrews on May 1. First he refused to admit that after the conclusion of the treaty the Wafd could no longer claim to be the only national party in Egypt. Second it is impossible that King Farûk advised by 'Alî Mâhir could have dismissed Nabhâs if the British had really wished to stop him. Looking at it from another angle, he also feels that he could have taken the offensive and dealt drastically with the Palace if he could have obtained an assurance that the British would be prepared to see him through. Thirdly, the motive for his betrayal by the British is that they have already decided before the end of last year to reach a general agreement with Italy, felt that difficulties might be experienced in keeping the Egyptian Government in step if Nabhâs were in power on account of his violent anti-Italian sentiments. Having exploited these sentiments for so long as it served their turn, the British were not sorry to see him removed and placed by a weak and unrepresentative government.⁵⁶

As could be seen, Nabhâs was actually asking for British help, or at least he expected it. He tried to play the old theme of a weak unrepresentative government which would be of no use to the British, and a new theme, that of the Italian danger. In both cases, they had no choice but him. As time passed on and nothing changed, except for the worse to himself and the Wafd, his patience with the British was running out.

The new government under Muḥammad Maḥmûd dissolved Parliament and called for new elections, and for the first time the Wafd was not able to nominate candidates for ninety-eight constituencies.⁵⁷ The

55. FO 407-222 J 3354/6/16 Mr. Bateman to Viscount Halifax (No. 970), Alexandria 18 August 1938.

56. FO 407-222 J 1992/6/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Viscount Halifax (No. 513) Confidential Cairo 6 May 1938.

57. Ibrâhîm 'Abd al-Hâdî Mudhakirât Rose al-Yusuf 2 August 1982 No. 14, p. 37.

elections were held in March and the Wafd suffered a crushing defeat. Maḡraḡ Ebeid, the general Secretary of the Party, Maḡmūd Bassiūnī Bey, Speaker of the Senate, Zakī al-Urabī Pāshā, Nagīb al-Hilālī Bey, and Osmān Muharam, all lost their seats. Even Nahhās failed to get the necessary votes to win. Marcel Colombe concluded that six months of King Farūk's rule were enough to defeat a foe his father was not able to crush throughout his reign.⁵⁸

Naturally the administration had interfered in the elections with all its power and in every possible way. Only twelve Wafdists were elected to Parliament, whose seats now numbered 264.⁵⁹ In the elections of the Bar Association, Muḡammad 'Alī 'Alluba, a Liberal Constitutionalist, not a Wafdist, was elected President.

While this was happening, and the British stood unmoved, contact was made between Nahhās and 'Alī Māhir. There were two versions of the incident, one was by Nahhās and Amin Osman, the other by Aly Maher.

Nahhās' version to Mr. Chapman-Andrews was that he agreed to meet 'Alī Māhir after overtures from the latter. Nothing was to be told to the press or the Wafd. Aly Maher said that the King was not pleased with the government and asked whether Nahhās would improve relations with the King and join a National Government. Nahhās declined, it was the sole responsibility of 'Alī Māhir who advised the King to set up a committee to arbitrate upon the constitutional issue then raised. The only solution, Nahhās said, was to have free elections under a neutral government.⁶⁰

Amin Osman's version to Miles Lampson was that Aly Maher visited Nahhās at his house on 17 June, and said that the present government was unsatisfactory and asked on what conditions Nahhās would be willing to co-operate. Nahhās answered, only if a neutral caretaker government supervised elections from which the majority party would form the government. 'Alī Māhir suggested 'Abd al-Fatāh Yehya to whom Nahhās

58. Colombe, p. 108.

59. Rizq al-Ahzāb Qabl Thawrat¹⁹⁵², p. 52.

60. FO 406-222 J 3247/16/6 Mr. Bateman to Viscount Halifax (No. 145), Alexandria 16 August 1938.

had no objections. Nahhâs told Amîn Osmân that he did not mind if the matter were dropped as he wished to have no contact with 'Alî Mâhir.⁶¹ Yet 'Alî Mâhir's account is that it was Nahhâs who asked to see him, suggested the dismissal of the present ministry and demanded new elections. 'Alî Mâhir's response was that it was impossible owing to the cost to the country. Then they discussed the old question of an arbitration committee to decide points at issue between the King and Parliament.⁶² It seems that Nahhâs, after losing hope in any British move to assist him, began to distance himself from them and take steps to get closer to the Palace.

On 13 August 1939, in a speech given in Alexandria, he threatened the British, saying

between both of us there is a treaty. If it is implemented, on the basis of truth and equality, and giving each one his right, then you are welcome. Otherwise there should be no treaty or friendship, if what it brings is hunger and destruction to Egypt, and the booties and profits only to you [British].... O British, either friendship or enmity, so chose for yourselves what you want.⁶³

During these renewed contacts with the Palace another factor intervened, namely the outbreak of the Second World War. It was to change the political scene dramatically.

B. The Antecedents to the Palace Incident of the 4th of February 1942

In August 1940, Aḥmad Hassanein was appointed Royal Chamberlain to succeed 'Alî Mâhir who had been Prime Minister from 18 August 1939⁶⁴ until he resigned on 23 June 1940. On 1 April 1940, Nahhâs submitted a memorandum to the British Ambassador in Cairo demanding the following:

61. FO 406-222 J 2927/6/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Viscount Halifax (No. 383), Alexandria 24 June 1938.
62. FO 407-222 J 3070/6/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Viscount Halifax (No. 137) Alexandria 1 August 1938.
63. Ramadan Vol 2 p. 32.
64. Vatikiotis p. 346.

(1) that the British government promise to withdraw all foreign troops from Egypt after the war; (2) that Egypt have the right to participate in the peace conference following the war; (3) that Britain enter into negotiations with Egypt to recognize its complete sovereignty over the Sudan; (4) that martial law be terminated; and (5) that the embargo imposed on exporting cotton be lifted.⁶⁵ The memorandum was intended to show the British that as they had signed the treaty, they were the most qualified to rule. They were the representatives of the nation, and they could easily incite trouble. This argument proved its validity two years later when the British brought the Wafd to power in 1942.⁶⁶

The incidents of June 1940 were surely a prelude to 4 February 1942. As a matter of fact one could argue that the latter incident was a replica of the former, with one exception, and that was the political rivalry between the Wafd and other parties, which was given much more publicity by anti-Wafd parties. By June 1940 Lampson had come to the conclusion that a more loyal and friendly government was needed which could take a firmer stand towards Italy. Hassan Sabri and Hussein Sizzi were considered. Even the notion of deposing the King and replacing him with Muḥammâd 'Alî was entertained.⁶⁷ At the same time Lampson received despairing messages from Muḥammad Maḥmûd and Nahhâs urging him "to save the country from 'Alî Mâhir." Lampson comments that he was ready to accept a purely Wafdist government since Nahhâs, with all his faults, would work loyally with Britain, especially as he was genuinely convinced of the Italian peril and looked upon Great Britain as Egypt's only hope.⁶⁸

65. Anis al-Ahrâm 10 February 1967, p. 3.

66. Vatikiotis p. 394.

67. FO 407-224 J 1491/G Sir Miles Lampson to Viscount Halifax (No. 491) Cairo 11 June 1940.

68. FO 406-224 J 1588/G Sir Miles Lampson to Viscount Halifax (No. 525) Cairo 19 June 1940.

On 17 June 1940 at 3.30 pm, Lampson submitted the following ultimatum to Hassanein

It is plain that 'Alī Māhir has no heart to face difficulties and dangers which present situation inevitably involves for Egypt and that even when he complies with our requests he allows it to appear that it is against his will and judgment. This cannot continue. You therefore have my instructions to tell King Farūk that in time of war the worst policy is one of uncertainty and that attitude of Aly Maher is not in accordance with spirit of the Treaty nor representative of the feeling of Egypt and the Egyptian people nor conducive to Egypt's ultimate interests. It is therefore necessary for another Government to be formed.⁶⁹

Two days later a meeting was held at the 'Abdin Palace attended by 'Alī Māhir, the incumbent Prime Minister, Nahhās Pāshā, Aḥmad Zīwar, Ismail Siḍqī, 'Abd al-Fatāh Yahya, all ex-Prime Ministers, Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, President of the Senate, Aḥmad Māhir, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Muḥammad Sālih Harb, Minister of War, Muhammad Tewfiq Rifa'at, ex-Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Muhammad Hilmi Issa, President of People's Union Party, Maḥmūd Bassiūnī ex-President of the Senate, Muḥammad Bahy al-Dīn Barakāt, ex-Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Muḥammad Hāfiz Ramadan, President of National Party, Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Raziq, Vice President of the Liberal Constitutional Party, 'Abd al-Hamid Badawī, Head of the Royal Advisers, and 'Abd al-Wahab Tala'at, Deputy of the Royal Council.

It is interesting here to record what Nahhās had to say and to compare the whole situation with what happened two years later. Nahhās said that there was no doubt that there was no right for any foreign country to interfere in the appointment of a government in an independent country such as Egypt. The treaty between Egypt and Britain compelled both sides to implement it in the spirit of which it was conducted. As for the Egyptian government, he knew for sure that the Egyptian people would like to see a neutral government supported by

69. 'Abdin Archives Al-Khilāf Bain Misr wa Iinjiltira Bisha'n al-Matalib al-Iinjiliziya, Yūniyū 1940 Malaf Sirri 5611.

all parties to conduct elections when this was possible. That was the solution, in his opinion and that of the Wafd, to save the King from the awkward position he found himself in.

Nahhâs argued further that since the Wafd had not participated in the last elections they would not participate in a government supported by the present Parliament. Moreover, a coalition government was unacceptable. Rather a neutral government must dissolve the present Parliament and hold fresh elections. Lastly, he said, that Britain was in a critical position, and if any obstacles arose against her in Egypt during the war, she would take over and turn it into a British dependency without concern for the throne.⁷⁰ Was he signalling to the throne what was to happen later? Another meeting was held two days later with the same arguments and results.⁷¹

On 25 June, Lampson submitted another ultimatum

I take exception to the political activities of Aly Maher Pasha since he tendered his resignation, as they are complicating the situation. His work should be purely administrative until the formation of the new Cabinet. His Majesty should summon Nahhâs at once and accept his advice, i.e. to form a Cabinet, as he advises. Nahhâs's views are already known from the Compte-rendu, i.e., for a neutral Government. The proper execution of the Treaty in its letter and spirit requires in the present circumstances that the biggest popular Party, namely the Wafd, should be behind the Government. Should it prove impossible to form such neutral government, the alternative is a purely Wafdist Government. In either case, the responsibility for the fulfilment of the Treaty will thus lie with the President of the Egyptian Delegation which negotiated the Treaty.⁷²

Facing a clear determination on the part of the British to appoint Nahhâs as Prime Minister, the Palace dispatched 'Abd al-Wahab Tala'at to Nahhâs where he was in Kafr 'Ashma taking part in what were later known as the negotiations, or talks, of Kafr 'Ashma between Nahhâs and

70. Ibid. Khulasat al-Munaqashât allati Darat fi al ijtimâ alladhi Uqiâ Bi Qasr 'Abdin fi 22 Yuniyu 1940.

71. Ibid. Ijtimâ 24 Yuniyu 1940.

72. Ibid. Al-Tabligh al-Britani fi 26 Yuniyu 1940.

'Abd al-Wahab Tala'at. The full translation of the meeting, as recorded by 'Abd al-Wahab Tala'at gives us some insight into the thinking of Nahhâs.

When Tala'at met Nahhâs and showed him how his opinion differed completely from those of other parties, and asked him for his practical suggestions, Nahhâs answered: If the idea of a non-partisan government is to be adopted, then work should proceed as follows: (1) the cabinet should be composed from non-party elements; (2) the cabinet should be accepted by all parties; (3) the cabinet should be backed by those parties which are willing to support it, and they should meet with it regularly to help it in running the affairs of state and monitor its conduct; (4) the cabinet should pave the way to free elections. As for Parliament, it could be adjourned until the time decided for its meeting, and at that moment the Parliament should be dissolved before it meets; in any case, it should be dissolved two months before the next session; (5) As for the composition of this cabinet, the president could be Seif Allah Yûssrî Pâshâ because he would be acceptable to some of the parties. I ('Abd al-Wahab Tala'at) asked him if he would be prepared to form such a cabinet, he answered that he would refuse for the following reasons: (1) because his aim is the unity of the nation, and that would not be realized by him presiding over the cabinet since it would upset most of the parties if not all of them; (2) because he cannot work in the present circumstances with a state administration which, since the coup of the Liberal Constitutionalists had concentrated power in its hands by dismissing who was considered either a Wafdist or pro-Wafd and replaced them by promoting others via exceptional promotions. In these circumstances it would be difficult for him and futile to govern. As he mentioned in the 'Abdin Palace meeting, he did not want to lead a coup in the present situation so that he could govern with men loyal to him, the King, and the country. Were he to attempt such a coup, he would alienate almost all the parties. However, the critical stage of the war which was on Egypt's door step precluded such step. Thus it was prudent that a neutral government should take over, and it could work with this administration as much as possible. When Talâat asked Nahhâs if the King realized that it was inevitable for Nahhâs to preside over such a cabinet, he answered: in that case he would ask the King's permission to introduce all these changes - implying that the King would become involved in the matter. Nahhâs ended by saying that he was at His Majesty's service at all times.⁷³

Thus the conversation ended with Nahhâs putting forward, or laying down, his terms. He wanted a completely free hand, and would not accept anything less, and this was not, of course, to the liking of the Palace. While Nahhâs was preparing to go to Cairo, had gathered the

73. Ibid. Mudhakkira Bisha'n Muqabalat 'Abd al-Wahab Talâat Wa Mustafâ al-Nahhâs fi Kafr 'Ashma 26 Yuniyu 1940.

members of the Wafd, informed them of the latest development and pressed them to take a decision of what should be done, the Palace issued a royal decree appointing Hassan Sabrî as Prime Minister.⁷⁴ It was a blow to Nahhâs, as it was to the British, according to the statement of Lord Halifax in the House of Commons in which he said,

The King of Egypt shouldered his responsibility, and after consultation with his advisers invited Sabri Pasha to form a government. We should have been happy if it had been possible to associate with the new Government, the Wafd Party, whose leader was Prime Minister when the 1936 Treaty of Alliance was signed; but in wartime cabinet making is not always an easy matter. I am glad to say our relations with the present Government are completely satisfactory.⁷⁵

Later Nahhâs in his annual speech on 13 November that year described what happened. He said that he expressed his view in the negotiations at 'Abdin Palace and his interview with Abd al-Wahâb Talâat Pâshâ when the later visited him in Kafr 'Ashma. The solution which the Wafd would accept was the formation of a non partisan government which would dissolve the present Chamber of Deputies and conduct new free elections, by which everyone would submit to the will of the nation. At the same time he showed every possible way to facilitate matters in other details. He accepted that elections would be held when circumstances were suitable. A committee of all parties should be formed so that the neutral government could consult them concerning important matters, until elections were held. In case war developments prevented the holding of the elections at their appointed time, the Constitution permitted their postponement. The check on the government by the nation represented in its various committees and parties would be stronger, more effective and representative than the present Chamber of Deputies from whom the majority of the nation have been excluded. He also offered to agree on the distribution of the constituencies to

74. Al-Tabî'i, p. 210.

75. Ibid.

hold elections quietly under the present conditions. He also suggested reducing the time campaigning for elections to its minimum. Nahhâs concluded by saying that if the others had accepted what he had offered, there would have been no problem today.⁷⁶

C. The Incident of the Fourth of February 1942

On Bairam 1941 Nahhâs delivered a speech at Zaghlûl's monument attacking the government strongly over the food situation. Although directed in the first instance against the government, it involved the British at least by implication. Popular belief, formed by Axis propaganda which was difficult to eradicate, was that the shortage was due to British army consumption.⁷⁷ A food crisis was naturally exploited by the Wafd, who were in opposition in order to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the government. Hussein Sirri's government was not only facing the opposition of parties outside the government, but intrigues from the Palace, and especially 'Alî Mâhir who did not cease for one moment to plot the downfall of the cabinet. The incident of the Vichy affair was the climax which brought down Sirri's government, and a prelude to the events of 4 February.

On 5 January Salîb Sâmi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, informed Miles Lampson that the Council of Ministers had decided to break off diplomatic relations with the Vichy government of France. On 3 January the Prime Minister was urged to break off relations with the Vichy regime as soon as possible. Next day in the morning, Salîb Samî phoned Miles Lampson suggesting that Marshal Petain was adopting a stiffer attitude towards Germany and that consequently an Egyptian rupture of relations might be inopportune.⁷⁸ On 18 January, Miles

76. Al-Masri, 14 November 1940, p. 7.

77. FO 371-31566 J43/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 42) Cairo 4 January 1942.

78. FO 371 (No. 58) 5 January 1942. FO 371 (No 68) 6 January 1942.

Lampson received a report that the Palace was exploring with Nakhâs the possibilities of an agreement with a view to strengthening Egypt against the feared encroachments of a victorious Britain on Egypt's independence.⁷⁸ There is no doubt that this report, although as Miles Lampson has himself noted, it should be taken with reserve, together with the growing impatience of the people over food shortages and the Wafd's policy of exploiting the situation, must have alerted the British Embassy of a possible Wafdist-Palace agreement which they would have to do everything possible to break up.

At that time the King was on holiday in the Red Sea, and the decision of breaking relations with Vichy was taken in his absence. A row followed over whether this action was constitutional or against the royal prerogative. The King demanded the immediate resignation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but Hussein Sirri stood firm by his Foreign Minister and asked for Miles Lampson's help. The following report of a private talk between the Prime Minister and Lampson is of special importance and interest:

The Prime Minister said that the story of the King's action was true - (i.e. asking Salib's Sami resignation) and he had had a most stormy interview with him whom he had beaten into withdrawing his intervention in this matter. He added "the boy" (King) is an absolute coward: he has to be frightened from time to time and saved from himself." He added with a smile that the French Minister would not expect to receive decorations on departure. I observed that if he had I could assure him that the pot which was now only simmering would most certainly have boiled over. Meanwhile, the prospect did not seem encouraging: must we go on having to frighten the boy at periodical intervals? If so, I felt myself that our patience might very easily give out. Persia should surely serve as a reminder to the King of what happened if it was overstrained. The Prime Minister admitted it and added that he was having a "Hellishly" difficult time. But he hoped we would still be forbearing and help him in his task, I replied that, as to that, he certainly realised how forbearing and patient we had been up to date: we did not want to meet trouble half way, but if trouble deliberately came out to meet us, I personally had no shadow of doubt what advice I should give my government as to meeting it.⁷⁹

79. FO 371-31566 J281/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 240) Cairo 18 January 1942.

The Embassy was convinced that 'Alf Mâhir was behind this incident and that it was he who was inspiring King Farûk not only to sack the Minister of Foreign Affairs but also the whole cabinet for sacrificing the rights of the country to Great Britain, and that great pressure was being exercised upon King Fârûk to replace Hussein Sirri's government with one controlled by 'Alf Mâhir behind the scenes and whose motto would be "strict execution of the treaty but not complaisance towards the British".⁸⁰ Naturally that would be one of the reasons for Miles Lampson to get close to the Wafd and later ask for the arrest of 'Alf Mâhir.

For Miles Lampson, as he wrote in his report, it seemed that the moment for the final trial of strength with the Palace might be imminent. In addition to the expulsion of 'Abd al-Wahâb Tala'at, 'Alf Mâhir's tool, he was inclined to insist (with a time limit) on total elimination of all Italians of whom many still remained in the Palace employment and one of whom (though now technically Egyptian), the notorious Pulli, was particularly dangerous and obnoxious. Miles Lampson held a meeting of the War Council and discussed every possibility, including force saying "I am convinced that it is high time King Farûk had a lesson, and that if we do not pull him up sharply over this glaring case, we shall only be storing up worse trouble in the future." The situation got worse, especially on the military front; Benghazi fell to Rommel on 29 January, and students started demonstrated, shouting "Advance Rommel".⁸¹

On the first of February Hussein Sirri had already told Hassanein, Ahmad Mâhir, and Muhammad Hussein Heykal of his intention to resign on

80. FO 371-31566 J333/98/16 From Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 272) 20 January 1942.

81. FO 371-31566 J334/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson (No. 284) 21 January 1942.

2 February, or 3 February at the latest. He met Miles Lampson that day who asked him about his ideas about his successor and brushed aside names already mentioned, such as Barakât, Aḥmad Mâhir and Heykal as unsuitable for one reason or another. "What did he really think?" He at once replied "Force King Farûk to send for the Wafd". I informed his Excellency that that was precisely my own conclusion."⁸²

There is no doubt that some news might have reached Nahhâs of the intention of Sirrî to resign since he had already told Hassanein, Mâhir, and Heykal about it. What happened next is a mystery, or a matter of pure speculation. There are some who accuse Nahhâs of deliberately plotting with the British to precipitate the events of 4 February. Others accuse the Palace, especially Hassanein, for consciously allowing the situation to deteriorate to the extent it had by 4 February in order to discredit the Wafd. Amidst these summary accusations and counter accusations, we will try to make our way through all the information to hand in order see what it suggests. Dr. Anis wrote that the British were hinting at the participation of the Wafd in the government since the resignation of Mâhir in June 1940. That was publicly known to the Wafd and its opponents, as well as the Palace, but the issue was whether to bring in a purely Wafdist government, as Nahhâs wanted, or a coalition government under Nahhâs, as the Palace wanted. It is most likely that Nahhâs did not know of the intention of the British to deliver an ultimatum to the King when he was in Upper Egypt. It is also probable that when he was called from there, his first thought was that the idea of a coalition government had been revived.

We come now to the role of Amin Osmân, the well-known British

82. FO 371-31566 J514/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson (No. 442) 1 February 1942. Anis, Al-Ahrâm, 9 March 1973. FO 371-31566 J515/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 443) Cairo 2 February 1942.

sympathizer, whom Lord Wilson called the negotiator of the British Embassy in political crises. It is known that he had met Nahhâs more than once after his return from Upper Egypt and informed him of the determination of the British to let him form the government. Dr. Anîs contends that it was perhaps the conversation with Amîn Osmân which encouraged Nahhâs to hold on to his initial idea of a Wafdist cabinet.⁸³

Before we proceed any further, some light must be shed on Amîn Osmân. What makes the role of Amîn Osmân so important? Hashish writes,

What adds weight to the role of Amîn Osmân, in our opinion, is that Nahhâs later rewarded him for his efforts, possibly at the suggestion of the British Embassy, by appointing him Minister of Finance in June 1943. When Dr. Salâh al-Dîn was interviewed by an Egyptian scholar, he vehemently defended Nahhâs saying that Nahhâs knew nothing about the communications.

Salâh al-Dîn added "As for Amîn Osmân, he might have had some contacts." Hashish adds that Mr. Maḥmûd Sulaimân Gannâm tried to defend Amîn Osmân, but his defence raised doubts, for he said

Maybe all these rumours about the contacts with the British was due to the presence of Amîn Osmân near Nahhâs, as it was thought that it was he who conducted those communications. But I cannot, being impartial towards Amin Osman, accuse him of not being a patriot for he wished every good for his country, even if it required an understanding with the British authorities, and there is nothing wrong or shameful about that. But he had his special way and his way was unfamiliar. I was one of those who were not in agreement with him before knowing him, until I became close to him and knew his good intentions.⁸⁴

Thus the role of Amîn Osmân was not denied by the Wafdists or their sympathizers.

A close look at the British records would complete the picture, but from a British point of view of course. On 2 February, Miles

83. Anîs Al-Ahrâm, 10 February 1967, p. 3.

84. Hashish, p. 202 interview with Maḥmûd Sulaimân Ghannâm 3/12/67.

Lampson was instructed by the Foreign Office to establish direct contact with Nahhâs and clarify three points which might arise in dealing with a new government. The first was that in such circumstances, every point which arose could not be measured by the yardstick of the Treaty, and that they could not allow any question of Treaty revision to be raised. Secondly, was to ascertain if Nahhâs was ready to continue the policy of his predecessor towards curtailing the Palace and the Italians, including 'Alî Mâhir? Here one must note that Nahhâs was mentioned by name as the next Prime Minister. Thus he was not contacted just for consultation as the beginning of the telegram would suggest, but to bargain with him for a deal. Thirdly, though not as important, was the decision to let his predecessor receive some mark of the King's favour. If Nahhâs agreed at least to the first two demands, then Sirri's advice should be followed. Lampson was urged to meet Nahhâs at any cost, before the king could summon him in order to appoint him in place of Sirri.⁸⁵

Although the telegram arrived after midnight and Lampson claims he did not act according to these instructions due to their late delivery, yet he wrote

I gravely doubt the wisdom of my getting in direct touch with Nahhâs Pâshâ in advance of my audience [with the King as he was instructed to do]: nor do I fancy he would be willing to see me at the moment as it might embarrass him. It might even deter him from going to see the King, if he knew that we were pressing him in advance to make terms with us.⁸⁶

Being on the spot, and knowing Nahhâs from at least the way he conducted the 1936 treaty negotiations, he could understand Nahhâs' sensitivity about his public image, and how any formal contact, which could suggest a British backing, might ruin his patriotic image. On

85. FO 371-31566 J515/38/16 From Foreign Office to Cairo (No. 543), 2 February, 1942.

86. FO 371-31566 J553/38/16 From Cairo to Foreign Office (No. 453), 3 February, 1942. See Appendix 4.

the same day, 3 February, Amīn Osmān called on Lampson (was he sent by Nahhās, or asked to come by Lampson?, although Osmān denies both suggestions categorically) to whom he conveyed the three points mentioned by the British Foreign Office as issues he would raise with Nahhās in case he was appointed Prime Minister. Lampson also asked Amīn Osmān to tell Nahhās that he should not accept a transitional government, but to form a coalition government. Answering Amīn, Lampson said that Nahhās could hold elections after his appointment. In the same conversation Lampson said that he was sure that Nahhās would agree that he should for the time being keep in the background. Amīn also said that Nahhās was determined to clean out the Palace.⁸⁷ Thus the second point of the three points raised by the British was satisfied.

An indirect contact was established between Nahhās and Lampson through Osmān. The fact that Osmān did not meet Nahhās before the latter met the King to convey to him Lampson's message did not change the matter much, nor did it affect the course of events which went along with what both had agreed on.⁸⁸

What is interesting here is the dubious role played by Amīn Osmān, and how it was easy for Nahhās to deny any knowledge of what was supposedly going on behind his back.⁸⁹ This impression of being only a figure-head whose real moving force was another person behind the scenes would be strengthened in the future. In the past, for example it was assured that Nahhās was elected in 1927 by Makram, Māhir, and Nokrashī, and that, as it would be later charged, Makram was the real

87. FO 371-31566 J554/38/16 From Cairo to Foreign Office (No. 461), 3 February, 1942. See Appendix 4.

88. FO 371-31566 J555/38/16 From Cairo to Foreign Office (No. 462), 3 February, 1942. See Appendix 4.

89. Compare with his reaction to the meeting between Makram and the King later (Chapter Four, p. 182).

personality to reckon with while Nahhâs was a nominal leader. Thus Makram was blamed for the split of 1937 and the defection of Mâhir and Nokrâshî; and Amîn Osmân was blamed for the events which led to the Palace incident of 4 February. Does not that raise some doubts, or at least suggest something about the type of leader Nahhâs was, under whose patronage such figures flourished, including in later years his wife, Zeinab al-Wakîl, and the last Secretary-General of the Wafd, Fûâd Sirâġ al-Dîn?

need
elaboration

According to the official report on the subject of that day, on 3 February before noon, Lampson contacted Hassanein to advise the King to invite Nahhâs (or whoever he nominated) to form a government. Nahhâs was summoned by the King, but rejected an offer to form a coalition government. After that, Hassanein went to Lampson and informed him of what happened.⁹⁰ The latter in his turn informed Nahhâs through Amîn of what he had said to Hassanein.⁹¹ The second day in the morning Lampson sent his ultimatum that if by 6:00 pm of that day Nahhâs was not summoned to form a government, then King Fârûk would bear the consequences. By then all party presidents, members of the National Front (who negotiated the 1936 treaty) members of the ex-Regency Council, ex-prime ministers, and senior royal advisers were invited to attend a meeting to discuss the situation.⁹²

Once more Amîn Osmân pops up in the picture, and as the telegram from Lampson reveals

Amîn has just called and told me that at 2:00 pm Dr. Neqib, an emissary of the Palace called on Nahhâs and told him that the King was "packing with a view to leaving the country." Amîn continued that the King is summoning Nahhâs at 3:30 pm

90. 'Abdin Archives Malaf 4 Febrayir Wathîqa Tarikhiyya Li-Hadith 4 Febrayir min 2 Ila 5 Febrayir Malaf 27.

91. FO 371-31566 J557/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson, Foreign Office (No. 409), 4 February 1942.

92. 'Abdin Archives Ibid.

together with the other leaders and will tell them that the British have sent him an ultimatum to summon Nakhās by 6:00 pm and ask him to form a cabinet: that His Majesty regards this as an interference which is inadmissible and he leaves it to them. Nakhās proposed to answer that he had no knowledge of any British interference and that the only person who can appoint a Prime Minister is the King, that the situation in the country had reached a very serious point through not being governed by a real democratic party; that he considered himself representing the democratic party and was ready, as he informed His Majesty yesterday, to form a Wafdist cabinet to save the situation if His Majesty would charge him with the task.⁹³

As could be seen so far, Amīn Osmān was not dealing with Lampson in his personal capacity, but as an emissary of Nakhās. The question to be asked then, was he really so? I do not think the British would have attached so much importance to him if he was not.

According to a report by the Palace on the incidents of that day, those who attended the meeting were Muḥammad Sherif Sabrī, member of the ex-regency council, Muḥammad Hussein Haykal, vice president of the Liberal Constitutional Party, Muṣṭafā al-Nakhās, President of the Wafd Party, Muḥammad Tewfiq Rifaat, ex-minister, 'Alī Māhir, ex-prime minister, Muḥammad Helmi Issa, President of the Popular Unionist Party, Hussein Sirrī, President of the outgoing Council of Ministers, Hafiz Afifi, ex-minister and President of Bank Misr, Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl, President of the Senate, Aḥmad Māhir, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Saādīst Party, and 'Alī al-Shamsī, ex-minister and President of the ^{Board of Directors} Board of Directors of the National Bank, Aḥmad Ziwar, ex-prime minister, Ismail Sidqī, ex-prime minister, 'Abd al-Fatāh Yehya, ex-prime minister, Muḥammad Hafiz Ramadan, President of the Watanī Party and Crown Prince Muḥammad 'Alī, President of the ex-Regency Council did not attend.

It is not appropriate here to reproduce the whole text of the meeting, but some extracts are illuminating, especially regarding what

93. FO 371-31567 J576/98/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 482), Cairo 4 February 1942.

Nahhâs had to say. He did not know anything about the interference of the British authorities, and he expressed his views on the reasons for refusing to accept a coalition government when he met the King. In another extract, he said that the present regime was responsible for what the nation was suffering from disease, hunger and mismanagement. Thus he could not co-operate with any of its adherents. That was why he told the King he could not accept to form a coalition government. The matter was serious, and the Prime Minister does not receive his orders except from the King, and the ultimatum was dangerous. We ought to be aware that it was not for the British to intervene to form the government. He was ready to save the situation, but on the basis of a Wafdist government.

Nahhâs was urged by Ahmad Mâhir to back down from his position after he knew about the ultimatum, but Nahhâs responded by saying "do what you want". Sherîf Sabrî suggested that a neutral government should be formed, its president and members would be chosen by Nahhâs, and that he would form his cabinet after elections if he had the majority. Nahhâs answered that he had already asked that but was refused, so he could not accept now. Sidqi then summarized the situation as first, that those present urged Nahhâs to form a coalition government which he refused. Secondly that he should refuse to form a cabinet on the basis of the British ultimatum. Nahhâs accepted Sidqi's suggestion. Sidqi then registered that Nahhâs refused to form a cabinet based on the British ultimatum on account of Nahhâs saying "Do what you want", which he had taken as meaning that Nahhâs had accepted their point of view and would therefore refuse to form a government. Nahhâs objected to that summary, since he would accept the cabinet if it was offered to him, and what he meant by "do what you like" was to do whatever was possible so that the government would not be offered to him.⁹⁴

94. 'Abdin Archives Ibid.

It was also reported in another account of the meeting that Nahhâs warned the participants in the meeting of the consequences of their decision, which was that he (Nahhâs) should refuse to form a Wafdist government under the pressure of the ultimatum. He added that the British would retaliate in a violent way. He then added that he agreed with them in refusing the ultimatum but held them responsible for the grave consequences which would result from that rejection.⁹⁵ Both documents agree on the fact that Nahhâs participated in drafting the answer and signed it, while Ziwar was the only one to abstain.⁹⁶ Later Nahhâs was to say that he warned those present in the meeting that this ultimatum was not of a threatening but of an executive nature. He told the King that that protest was good but would lead the country and the throne to a catastrophe.⁹⁷

Hassanein then went to Lampson and submitted the following protest to him:

On receiving the British ultimatum His Majesty the King convoked the persons mentioned in the attached list who submitted after discussion of the British ultimatum, the following decision: "That in their opinion the British ultimatum is a great infringement of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and of the independence of the country. For this reason, and acting on their advice His Majesty cannot consent to an action resulting in an infringement of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and of the independence of the country."⁹⁸

Meanwhile Lampson had received a telegram from the Foreign Office instructing him not to force the Wafd into a coalition government,

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

97. Gamâl Selîm, Qira'ah Gadidaeh fi Hadith 4 Febrayer p. 92. Diyâ al-Dîn Bibars Safhat Maghula min Mudhakkirat al-Nahhâs. Al-Isbi'a al-'Arabi Beirut 3 February 1975. Anîs al-Ahrâm 6 February 1976.

98. FO 371-31567 J578/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 487) Cairo 4 February 1942.

since they had never favoured them.⁹⁹

An investigation later conducted by the Palace showed that Amin Osmân was at the British Embassy that afternoon at 4:00 pm according to an eyewitness.¹⁰⁰ It does not contradict what Lampson wrote on receiving Hussanein's answer

As it was impossible to get into direct touch with Nahhâs who is still at the Palace, Minister of State (Lyttleton) and I informed Amin of this message and asked him whether Nahas would take on the government in the event of the King being forced to abdicate or being deposed. Amin swore by all his gods that Nahhâs would do so.¹⁰¹

The rest is known.

D. The Significance of 4 February

Whether the exchange of letters which followed Nahhâs' visit to the British Embassy after his appointment as Prime Minister was a cover-up or expressed real intentions, it reflected once again his lawyer's mentality. For him, as in a court, when two opponents settled a dispute one affirmed the rights of the other in a document. Thus his right would not be challenged in the future, since it was documented. According to the same logic, Nahhâs stressed the importance of publishing these letters before forming his cabinet.¹⁰² It was also a public relations act, intended to defend and justify whatever he might be faced with. By publishing these letters he was showing how he had safeguarded the rights of the nation and how everything was done according to certain principles which the British themselves had agreed to. The British who had obtained what they desired, had nothing to lose by signing these letters. By doing so, Nahhâs thought he had

99. FO 371-31566 J551/38/16 From Foreign Office to Cairo (No. 609), 4 February 1942.

100. 'Abdin Archives Ibid.

101. FO 371-31567 J578/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 487), Cairo 4 February 1942.

102. FO 371-31567 J579/98/16 (No. 502), 5 February 1942.

dealt with the issue of the British intervention, and showed that his appointment had nothing to do with the previous incidents. Of course he was greatly mistaken, and the public reaction was not as he had calculated. Truly there was still strong support for him among the staunchest of the Wafdists, and he was praised alongside Miles Lampson, but, on the whole, as a national leader Nahhâs was on the decline.

It is important to record here the first official and public contact between Nahhâs and Lampson, in which the letters were exchanged, which was after the King had summoned him to form the cabinet. Lampson wrote that Nahhâs arrived an hour later and had a satisfactory interview with him in the presence of the British Minister of State. He added that Nahhâs agreed with him wholeheartedly that the evil elements both in the Palace and outside should be eliminated immediately. Then Lampson emphasized his desire to pursue his policy of remaining as much as possible behind the scenes, while Nahhâs carried out the necessary measures on his own.¹⁰³ Nahhâs also asked the Minister of State to supply the country with some of the items consumed by the British army to solve the acute shortage of food in Egypt at that time. His request was granted.

The intended or unintended deal was to become more assured when Miles Lampson paid his first official visit to Nahhâs as Prime Minister. According to Lampson's own words he touched on the immediate need of eradicating the root cause of their troubles, to which Nahhâs answered that he appreciated the need to deal with 'Alî Mâhir and the Palace but would prefer to deal with the King in his own way.¹⁰⁴ (Some unconfirmed reports suggested that Nahhâs or the British wanted either to declare Egypt a Republic or for Fârûk to abdicate. Others,

103. FO 371-31567 J608/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 491), Cairo 5 February 1942.

104. FO 371 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office 7 February 1942.

including Nahhâs himself later asserted that they had saved the monarch from a greater evil. Did they mean the above-mentioned rumours, taking into account the fact that Nahhâs was a loyal royalist, and it went with his legal mentality.) Lampson then assured him of his continuing backing while Nahhâs assured him of his standing endorsement for the treaty and its application.¹⁰⁵ Once could argue that the treaty was finally being implemented after six years from signing the official one.

Before proceeding further, two important questions should be considered. First, why should the British, who regarded Nahhâs as their main enemy, bring him to power? Secondly, why should a leader of a national movement like Nahhâs, co-operate with the occupying force to that extent?

Before answering these two questions, a point must be made. The British in no sense regarded Nahhâs a stooge when they gave the order and he carried it out, and in no way did Nahhâs look at the British as his superiors whose advice he always had to accept. But it was a deal between two opposing forces, at a time in which both felt it was in their common interest to reach a mutual understanding and an agreeable compromise as in 1936. The question then to be asked is, whether Nahhâs as a national leader did strike a good bargain, and why. But before answering the last question, one has to go back to the first question, and I could not find a better answer of the British position than the view expressed by Mr. Beckett (Head of the Egyptian Section at the Foreign Office in London). Nahhâs filled the bill in a time when they felt that they needed the support and loyalty of Egypt. Nahhâs was the only person who could guarantee that.¹⁰⁶

105. FO 371-31567 J649/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 525), Cairo, 7 February 1942.

106. See Appendix 4.

As for why Nahhâs cooperated with the British one could argue that the roots of this policy go back to the ideological origins of the party to be found in the old Umma party's concept of co-operation with the British against the monarchy. This co-operation reached its climax when the professional, urban middle class took over the leadership of the Wafd. The signing of the treaty in 1936 was its greatest achievement. But because of the nature and context of the relationship between the Wafd and the British, the treaty of 1936 was the most the Wafd could have got from the British in terms of reaching their goal of complete independence by gradual means.

Thus the Wafd for the moment had nothing more to present for the national cause. They were the prisoners of their own supposed victory. Since independence was achieved, what was left was to exercise their right of rule under independence. That was what the whole issue was about, between Saâd and 'Adlî, Nahhâs and the others. The argument was that British occupation did not allow the representatives of the people to rule. Now that the British occupation was terminated, representatives of the people should rule. That was the tacit understanding Nahhâs hoped to reach with the British. Nahhâs knew quite well, as did Zaghlûl before him, that independence did not necessarily mean the rule of the people, because there was already the rule of the powerful institution of the Palace. But Nahhâs hoped that by delivering the goods, the strong arm of Britain would help him to curtail the power of the monarchy as Saâd believed before him. Independence shackled by the King's rule was meaningless, that was the essence of the conflict with the Liberal Constitutionalist Party representing the large landowners and the King's allies, as distinguished from the Wafd, Nahhâs, the urban middle class and the masses. British backing was what Nahhâs expected and demanded, it was in line with his own logic and thought, as well as the logic of events.

He saw no paradox in that, since he was the leader of the majority party and it was for the majority party to rule. Being in power, even with British help, was for Nakhâs simply promoting or advancing the interests of the majority party. That is why in 1942 he insisted on a purely Wafdist government. With the Wafd in power, Egypt's national demands would be promoted further. Thus even if he came to power as a result of British backing, it was in the interest of the people in the long run, and there was no doubt in his mind of that or of his ability to manipulate the British in order to further these interests.

Like Zaghlûl, knowing how sensitive the Egyptian people were to the national issue and how easily he could be labelled a British stooge, one could understand how the role of Amîn Osmân developed, and how Nakhâs played the political game very consciously without being caught in its web. A British report on the incident from the Foreign Office sent to Lampson illustrates the point:

But I have one serious caveat to lodge and that is that at no time in this business as regards either the appointment of the new government or the possible deposition of the King has Sir Miles Lampson been in personal touch with Nakhâs. As a result not only is it open to Nakhâs publicly to deny (and he will certainly deny it) that he either owes anything to our support or is under any obligation towards us, but we really have nothing to flourish, even privately, in his face when the next crisis arises. I do not regard the various messages which have passed between Sir Miles Lampson and Nakhâs through the intermediary of Amîn Osmân as in any way a satisfactory substitute for a personal interview between the Ambassador and the Wafdist leader since such messages entrusted to such a channel may quite well not have been delivered, or at least delivered in a form entirely different from that in which they were sent.¹⁰⁷

That was how Nakhâs played it, and this did not differ much in essence from the general trend of events since 1924. It was the British who had the final say and the return of the Wafd to power whether in 1930 or 1936 was, on the whole, with their consent, which makes 1942 consistent with previous governments. For if the political scene was

107. FO 371/31567 5 February 1942.

left free to the monarchy and Muḥammad Maḥmūd in 1929-1930 or the Palace institution and 'Alī Māhir in 1935-1936, without any intervention or pressure by the British, one could argue that Nahhās would not have formed his governments of 1930 or 1936 and the governments of the time would have stayed in power.

But what made 1942 (even though the British had forced a change of government in June 1940 as shown) different were two things. First was the fact that never in the past had the British intervened with such force to back the Wafdists to the extent of surrounding the Palace with tanks. In the past the British would cease giving support to the Wafd's rivals and abstain from using any force against them, i.e., it was a passive action. Giving such forceful support to a nationalist party it must have accepted the latter's claim to be the leader of the national struggle against the occupying British. Thus the Wafd lost the support of those who formed its base, especially the younger army officers who had entered military college by the good graces of the Wafd after signing the treaty, and who could be considered as the natural sons of the Wafd. The result was that they rebelled against their patrons. The price was extracted ten years later.

The second factor was that the internal situation was not the same, Farouk was not Fūād. He was popular and still thought to be religious and uncorrupted. Egypt after the treaty was not Egypt before the treaty, it was supposedly independent. Lampson's action in February 1942 was that of a country that still regarded itself as the occupying force. Last, but not least, some sections of the population that were anti-British, regarded their enemy's enemy as their friend, and they harboured pro-Axis sympathizers. The Wafd with the British was not the best choice from their point of view. These were the factors which had changed, which made the situation different, and on which the opposition seized the chance to blacken Nahhās and the Wafd

in every possible way. Nahhâs was right in the sense that if he had accepted a coalition government he would have been a hero, not a traitor. But that was party politics and if he wanted to avoid it, he should have taken that factor into consideration and acted accordingly.

Was Nahhâs hoping to out-manoeuve the British, the same way as he tried to do in the case of the Blue Shirts? One must seriously doubt his ability to do so especially after confining himself to a set of rules which did not allow him more than he had already achieved, i.e., the treaty of 1936. 4 February 1942 was proof that Nahhâs had reached his peak in achieving the goal of national independence by 1936. After that he was moving in a vicious circle to achieve his aim of the treaty, which was to come to power, and that was the only way. His road was then blocked, and now he was reduced to a mere party leader asking for the premiership for himself and the posts of government for his colleagues in the party.

Dr. Rizq argues that, while the British had interfered against an unpopular king (Fûâd) to bring down the Sidqî regime and the public reacted favourably to the return of the Wafd, in this instance the scene was different and the public reacted angrily against the British action against a popular monarch (Fârûk).¹⁰⁸ At the same time opponents of the Wafd did not miss the chance to attack the Wafd. One of their leaflets illustrated how public feelings were aroused against the Wafd. It described how the British forced the King to choose between Nahhâs as prime minister or exile, and how the King answered courageously that he was not bothered about the throne, but would not like to see Egyptian blood spilled in such circumstances. This type of propaganda continued throughout the coming years. But the direct and most important result I would argue was Makram Ebeid's defection from

108. Rizq Tarîkh al-Wizarât, p. 391.

the Wafd. Three years after the Palace incident, the Egyptian Gazette published a story to the effect that Makram had told Nahhâs that he had made a fool of himself by going to the Embassy, and that by doing so he had shown that it was the Ambassador who had appointed him.¹⁰⁹ Could it be argued that Maḳraḡ did not object to the principle of British-Wafdist co-operation, but objected to how it was implemented? He thought that Nahhâs had exposed himself, and therefore was no longer the representative of the national movement, and that he, Makram, could replace him or make the attempt outside the Wafd. Unlike other opponents of Nahhâs, Maḳraḡ did not base his attack on the Palace incident, but chose another field, corruption, and dealt with it at length.

109. The Egyptian Gazette, 18 November 1945.

The Final Years 1942-1953: The Wafd in Decline

A. The Defection of Maḡraḡ

The year 1942 was not only marked by the assumption by Nahnâs of the Premiership, but by another more alarming incident on the way to the decline of the Wafd, and as a further indication of a new course on which Nahnâs was embarking. Not only did Nahnâs' leadership of the Wafd for the independence of Egypt reach a stage of stagnation after 1936, but the type of leadership which he projected, changed. With the defection of Makram Ebeid shortly after the formation of Nahnâs' fifth government, the last of the old vanguard or the third member of the "Gang of Four" which once ruled the Wafd came to an end. Thus Nahnâs was left alone, but he was no longer the Nahnâs of the twenties and thirties. With the disappearance of the old leadership, through defection or change, a new one emerged. The old struggle between the urban lawyers and rural landowners was finally settled, but this time it was the cause of the destruction of the party. For neither were the representatives of the urban middle class, such as Sabrî Abu 'Alam or 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa, of the same calibre as the ones who had defected, nor did they represent the new middle class which was growing, though outside the confines of the Wafd. The party ceased to be representative of the effendi class that it was.

The defection of Maḡraḡ was the culmination of several factors, some personal, like the competition with the new elements in the party led by Mrs. Nahnâs and Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, others more general such as corruption and public policy. Ironically enough, it was Maḡraḡ who introduced Zainab al-Wakil to Nahnâs,¹ and it was she who was the

1. al-Yûsuf p. 192.

primary cause of his defection. As it turned out, because of Nahhâs' marriage, the relationship between the two old friends had to change. Nahhâs no longer went out every morning with Makram in the latter's car to the House of the Nation as they used to do, and come back with him in the evening.² Naturally their contacts were fewer than they used to be, and misunderstandings or disagreements eventually occurred more often with less time to discuss and settle them. To make matters worse, jealousy played its role, either from Maḳraṁ's side for her taking him away from him, or from Mme. Nahhâs' side by setting her husband against Maḳraṁ. She complained that Maḳraṁ's name was mentioned more often in the newspapers than Nahhâs', the President of the Wafd.³ Naturally that had some effect on the latter. Accusing Mme. Nahhâs of direct corruption was Maḳraṁ's main reason and major weapon in his later campaign against his old friend. By refusing to accommodate her demands, according to Makram, she was not only set against him, but naturally had another reason to incite her husband against his old friend. Later on she proved to be Nahhâs' "Achilles' heel", as she turned more conspicuous and he defended her actions, thus alienating more people.

Another factor was the role played by other members of the Wafd who were annoyed by Maḳraṁ's monopoly of Nahhâs, and who wanted to share in some of his powers. The most notable of these was the new rising star in the Wafd, Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, who was keen to expel Maḳraṁ while they were in power and the country under martial law. His reasons were that matters between Nahhâs and Maḳraṁ had gone too far to be repaired, especially after the conflict concerning the exceptional promotions which Maḳraṁ alone in the cabinet opposed, and about which

2. al-Shâhid p. 31 Ibrâhîm Faraj, al-Ahrâr 12 April 1982.

3. Maḳraṁ Ebeid, Al-Kitab Al-Aswad n.p. n.d. p. 12.

he published his opinion in the newspapers, thus breaking the custom of not publishing cabinet matters, in order to embarrass Nahhâs. Sirâj al-Dîn was of the opinion that Makram should be dealt with while they were in power, lest the latter defect after the Wafd was out of government, and it would then be difficult for the Wafd to curb Makram's activities against them.⁴ (That opinion proved to be valid since Nahhâs as a military governor used his powers to imprison Maḡraḡ.) Feelings were mutual. Makram had objected to Sirâj al-Dîn's appointment as Deputy of the Interior Ministry in the last cabinet.⁵ Sabrî Abu 'Alam and Nagîb al-Hilâlî were not also far from widening the gulf between the two friends, as was 'Abd al-Wahîd el-Wakîl, the Minister of Health.⁶

Naturally, an unholy alliance was formed among all those in whose interest it was to expel Makram from the party, especially between Sirâj al-Dîn and Zeinab al-Wakîl. Afraid of losing more members, such as Mâhir and Noḡrashî in 1937, for which Maḡraḡ was to be blamed, Nahhâs tried to balance his relation with Maḡraḡ and the others by placing them on equal terms. Naturally that was not to Maḡraḡ's liking since it meant a loosening of his hold over Nahhâs.⁷ Yet it was done by Nahhâs, with the effect of sacrificing Maḡraḡ in order to save the party from more defections.

The most decisive factor in the break between Nahhâs and Maḡraḡ was the role played by the Palace, in particular Aḡmad Hassanein, who devised a scheme to which Makram fell victim. By then Maḡraḡ was more vulnerable. Although isolated inside the Party, he must have

4. Al-Tâbi 'i p. 269.

5. 'Abd al-Fatâh al-Tawîl informed Sirâj al-Dîn of that fact. Hashîsh interview with Sirâj al-Dîn 6/4/68.

6. Rizq, p. 56.

7. al-Shâhid p. 40-41, Rizq Tarîkh al-Ahzâb p. 63.

calculated that the Party itself was on the wane after the 4 February Palace incident. His political ambition was also inordinate. According to one scholar, Makram's keen nationalist zeal was meant to assure the Egyptian people, who were predominantly Muslims, of his credentials for the Premiership despite his being a Christian (Copt).⁸ Nahhâs became very suspicious of Hassanein's deliberate overtures to Makram. He angrily denounced Makram in a private conversation on the phone with him for an article Makram published after he had met the King. When Makram replied that everybody praised the King daily, Nahhâs became more furious, saying that Makram's doing so was different because it was calculated. After that conversation, Nahhâs said to Muhammad al-Tabi'i that what Makram wrote was written "by a slave". Nahhâs then wondered what he would say to the British who brought the party to power in February 1942. Was the party a slave of the King soon thereafter?⁹ Nahhâs in short, was aware of Hassanein's plot and warned Makram about it, although the latter did not tell him of what happened between himself and the King.¹⁰ Hassanein's ploy succeeded.

When Ahmad Hamza was appointed Minister of Supply on 14 May 1942, Makram took it as a personal insult, as it implied he was not capable of handling both the Ministries of Supply and Finance.¹¹ When Makram published his view of the matter of "exceptional promotions", Nahhâs took it as a declaration of war.¹² Thus on 26 May, just three months after forming the cabinet, Nahhâs submitted a letter of resignation in order to enable him to form a new government.¹³ Being always faithful

8. Changed from Protestantism and cancelled his first name which was William.

9. al-Tâbi'i p. 265.

10. al-Tâbi'i p. 287.

11. Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizarat p. 447.

12. El-Feki p. 166.

13. See Appendix: 2

to the tradition of Zaghlûl concerning the Christians, and also fearful of any support Maḳraḡ might win based on sectarian religious grounds, Nahhâs appointed another Copt, Kâmil Siḏqî, Minister of Commerce and Industry in the previous cabinet, in his place.¹⁴ Maḳraḡ retaliated by publishing the report of the Financial Committee in Al-Masri on May 23, 1942.

Things began to move fast, Maḳraḡ and Raghib Hannâ were expelled from the Wafd,¹⁵ to be followed by nineteen others from the Wafd General Command,¹⁶ among them Galâl al-Dîn al-Hamâmsî and Muḡammad Farîd Zâlûk. Maḳraḡ and al-Hamâmsî were to publish and distribute the "Black Book". Another two expulsions followed,¹⁷ bringing the total number to twenty-three. Of these, one could distinguish two factions: one comprising those who owed their personal allegiance to Maḳraḡ such as his brother George Maḳraḡ Ebeid, and one comprising those who suspected the integrity and honesty of Nahhâs, such as al-Hamâmsî and Zâlûk.¹⁸ The battle between Maḳraḡ and the Wafd was now transferred from inside the cabinet and the Party, to Parliament. On 18 August 1942, Maḳraḡ asked the Prime Minister to justify his public statement in the Chamber of Deputies on 29 June 1942, based on a letter from the British Foreign Secretary to Nahhâs which Maḳraḡ believed to imply the acceptance of a protectorate over Egypt when the Senate had rejected a similar letter before. To this Nahhâs retorted that the term "To resist attacks against Egyptian territory" in the said letter to which Maḳraḡ objected did not mean protection. Maḳraḡ also referred to the

14. Rizq p. 451, el-Feki p. 214.

15. Al-Ahrâm, 7 July 1942.

16. Al-Ahrâm 13 July 1942.

17. Al-Ahrâm, 14 July 1942.

18. Yûnân Lubîb Rizq, Al-Wafd wa Al-Kitâb al-Aswad Al-Ahrâm Cairo 1982 p. 32.

steps being taken by the government towards sparing the country the consequences of war. Nahhâs replied that these matters had been discussed and there was nothing to add. As for the continued presence of British police officers and officials in the Egyptian police force, Nahhâs replied that as with previous governments work would be also found for them dealing specifically with foreigners. The matters raised by Maḳraṃ pertained to licenses issued to particular persons for the export of raw materials and food stuff, exempting some smugglers from prosecution, and enforcing illegal taxes upon the people. Replying to this, Nahhâs went into a lengthy defence of his relatives and their honesty, and accused Makram of persecuting them. The final issue raised by Makram was that of the domestic policy of the government concerning public liberties. To this Nahhâs replied that Makram was a minister in that cabinet.¹⁹

One could argue that Maḳraṃ was fighting a losing battle and was hoist with his own petard. First, it was he who in earliery days had created a personality cult around Nahhâs by his oratory among the masses. He had even reached the extent of calling Nahhâs the "Sacred Leader",²⁰ thus creating an image which was difficult for him to attack later. By blocking the way for many Wafdists in the exceptional promotions, either for themselves directly or for their relatives and associates, after so many long years in the political wilderness, surely these had little heart to support him, in fact they wished to get rid of him.

A proposal to censure Maḳraṃ in the Chamber of Deputies placed in doubt his eligibility as a candidate in the last elections. It was based on the fact that Maḳraṃ's name was not registered in the

19. Madâbit Majlis al-Nūwwâb 18 August 1942, pp. 1455-1475.

20. al-Yūsuf p. 118.

electoral list of the constituency of Heliopolis in Cairo or Qînâ, but that he had adopted for himself the name of his brother, George Ebeid, which was registered in Heliopolis, in order to be elected as representative of the Heliopolis district in which he was not registered.²¹

Maḳraḡ's bombshell was soon to follow in the form of a petition he presented to the King, which was also printed and widely circulated at the end of March 1943. This petition was titled The Black Book of The Black Reign when it was published as a book. In it, Maḳraḡ described some of the circumstances which surrounded his dispute with Nahhâs. He referred to Nahhâs' wife's complaint that Maḳraḡ's name was mentioned more often in the newspapers than Nahhâs.²² Then he proceeded to refute some allegations by the Wafd that seventeen members had resigned and were not expelled.²³ The subjects of the book were divided between two main topics. First, issues concerning actions and behaviour related to upright government, which by its turn was divided into several sub-topics as licenses for export, nepotism, forgery of facts, etc. It was this part which sparked off a chain of scandals ranging from promoting a relative of Nahhâs to ordering the Ambassador in London to buy a fur coat worth £E3,000 for Nahhâs' wife.²⁴ The other part dealt mainly with political matters, such as freedom of the press, civil liberties, elections, and so on. But because of the innumerable petty scandals which the book contained, and the fact that Maḳraḡ himself was the second in command of the Wafd, the case was much weakened, and did not produce the hoped for results among the populace.

21. Madâbit Majlis al-Nûwwâb pp. 366-367 1 February 1943.

22. Ebeid, p. 12.

23. Ibid. p. 35.

24. Ibid. p. 232.

Nevertheless, the importance of these accusations, as Dr. Rizq noted, was that they revealed the new class orientation of the incumbent leadership of the Wafd, and particularly Nahhâs. A comparison could be made with the Nahhâs of the twenties when faced with his involvement in the case of Seif al-Dîn for which he was acquitted by the court, and the new allegations.²⁵ This would strengthen our hypothesis of the new social milieu in which Nahhâs now found himself, either by the fact of becoming a Prime Minister several times over the years, or at least by the effect and influence of his marriage to that particular lady, Zainab al-Wakîl.

In one of the incidents about which Makram wrote in his book, two things of utmost importance can be seen. First the interest of Zainab al-Wakîl to acquire land, thus moving her husband socially from urban interests to those of a landowner. Secondly, there was the relationship developing between her and the new rising star in the Wafd, Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, for she was not from a rich family, although her father was a Pâshâ. She inherited from him at the beginning of 1942, twelve feddans, twenty-one qirat and twenty-two sahm with a debt on them of £E76. She bought eighty feddans, seven qirats and fourteen sahm from Sirâj al-Dîn in June 1942 at the price of £E53 per feddan to sell them later back to Sirâj al-Dîn in June 1944 for £E120 per feddan. This could be considered political bribery. In October 1942, she bought seventy-four feddans, eighteen qirat, twenty-two sahm from Emile 'Ades for £E9294 and in November 1943 she bought thirty-two feddans, twenty-six qirat, sixteen sahm from the Agricultural Land Bank for £E2487. In June 1944 she bought 129 feddans, twenty-three qirat, five sahm from Subhî al-Shûrbaqî for £E21,529. Her two brothers, Aḥmad and 'Abd al-Hamid al-Wakîl, bought 657 feddans for £E157,000 from the

25. Rizq, al-Kitâb al-Aswad pp. 17, 18.

Property Union Company.²⁶

The other incident was that of a sale contract extracted from land registry records of the Mixed Court of Munsoura. In it, Zainab al-Wakîl bought from Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn eighty feddans, seven qirats and fourteen sahm in the area of Dimdash, centre of Sherbin, in the State Domain administration of Bihas for £E4283 and 519 millims, or at £E53 per feddan. It had also been stated in the contract that £E1427 and 840 millims of the total price of the land were paid on signing the contract and the balance of £E2855 and 679 millims was to be paid by the buyer directly to the treasury of the State Domaine by annual subscription, the last of which would be in the year 1955. Each subscription would be in the range of £E200 to £E250. Aḥmad al-Wakîl and another person witnessed the contract.²⁷ What is interesting here, is Nahhâs' silence regarding his wife's financial dealings as if it had nothing to do with him. Although he would defend his wife in his public speeches, yet he was able to distance himself from her concerning his own financial situation, for despite the fortune his wife was alleged to have gathered, he died without any property. In the same way he would distance himself from Amîn Osmân and Sirâj al-Dîn, as if he left the "dirty work" to them and they got the blame while he got the glory. There is nothing to indicate that he objected to his wife's activities, and surely he was not the last to know about them. Thus if he was unaware of her financial dealings, then one could at least conclude that he consented. Some would argue as Dr. Salâh al-Dîn did, that Nahhâs' nature needed always someone to dominate him, and that was Maḡraḡ, later it became his wife.²⁸ But Nahhâs who was so

26. 'Asim Dessouki Kubâr Mulâk al-Ard al-Dhir'aya Wa Domuhum fi ul-Mujtam'a al-Misrî 1914-1957 Dâr al-Thaqafa al-Jadîda Cairo 1976, p. 49. Quoting Mahkamit al-Thaurat, Jalsit Mahkamit Zînab-al Wakîl 1,2 March 1954 Maslahit al-Istalamat.

27. Ebeid, pp. 44, 45.

28. al-Tâbi'i p. 266.

sensitive to any contact between Maḳraḡ and the King, was well aware of its consequences and was firm in his decision to eliminate Maḳraḡ from the Wafd, as with Māhir and Noḳrashī before him, one could not but ask how is it he was not aware of the path along which his wife and Sirāj al Dīn were leading him. But where they succeeded and the others had failed was that they did not threaten his position directly. Māhir wanted to depose Nahhās, and Maḳraḡ's ambition of replacing Nahhās as prime minister surely was not hidden from the sensitive mind of Nahhās. Thus Zainab and Sirāj could do what they wanted, could flourish, so long as Sirāj's eye was not on Nahhās' chair, and Zainab's dealings did not contradict basically with his holding on to power. On the contrary, now he was over 63 years old, he had been several times Prime Minister, some even rumoured that he was aspiring to be treated as a prince. In 1935 he had told Fatma al-Yūsuf that he was tired of being in opposition, so one could imagine his feelings in 1942.

Nahhās showed great political shrewdness in dealing with Makram's smear campaign. He refused to take him to court on the pretext that that might take years, during which time the government would be under public suspicion, and would be prevented from publishing ministerial statements or parliamentary discussions as that might influence the course of justice. Instead, he preferred to discuss the matter in Parliament.²⁹ Maḳraḡ's petition (the Black Book) was read in a secret session of Parliament when making a statement about the military situation. On 12 July 1943, Maḳraḡ was expelled from the Chamber of Deputies by 208 votes to 17,³⁰ and was later arrested by an order of the Military Governor, Nahhās himself, under the provision of the prevailing Martial Law. Sirāj al-Dīn was moved from the Ministry of

29. Colombe p. 145.

30. Rizq, al-Kitāb al-Aswad p. 136.

Agriculture to the more important one of Interior. Earlier on 2 June 1943, only ten days after the consideration of the Black Book, Amin Osmân was brought into the cabinet. This was a gesture of gratitude to the British for their support during the Nahhâs-Maḡraḡ crisis.³¹

B. Relations with the Palace and the British

Nahhâs was both preaching and implementing the alliance of co-operation with the British. On 22 February 1942, 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzâm, President of the Territorial Army, was dismissed from his position. On 8 April 1942, 'Alî Mâhir was arrested after he had been asked to refrain from any political activity, and was confined to his house. At the same time Nahhâs vehemently rejected the rumours that Britain had asked the government to help it militarily. Instead, he emphasized the pledge he had made before coming to power that he would not offer one single Egyptian soldier whatever the situation. He then added that he had fulfilled his promise to implement the Treaty of Friendship in its letter and spirit, and that he would not allow any person to disrupt the terms of this treaty which should reassure Egypt's ally completely at a time when he was fighting for the defence of liberty and democracy. He also denounced the fifth column which was working for the disruption of the country, and he tightened up security measures. The Royal Automobile Club, whose members were suspected of harbouring Axis sympathies, was closed. Prince 'Abbâs Halîm and the President of the Egyptian Sports Union were arrested. The army was ordered to co-operate with the police in keeping law and order, while some other suspects were detained.³²

Nahhâs was not simply implementing Britain's orders in detaining

31. Ibid. pp. 132-136.

32. Colombe pp. 140-141.

'Alî Mâhir or 'Abbâs Halîm, he was also taking advantage of the convergence of Anglo-Wafd interests to punish his opponents. Otherwise, he remained faithful to his objective of complete independence. In the speech from the throne, he expressed his firm support for Britain and the implementation of the letter and spirit of the 1936 treaty. He also reiterated his belief in the policy of "Sparing Egypt the Ravages of War". This was tantamount to neutrality, since it did not encourage Egyptian participation in the war.³³ On another occasion, Lampson wrote that, in a meeting between Sir Stafford Cripps and Nahhâs, the latter said that when the war was over there would be enough time to talk of Egyptian aspirations for complete independence. As Lampson noted, that was the first time that Nahhâs hinted at a revision of the treaty.³⁴

Maybe Nahhâs' mistake was his dependence on the goodwill of Britain. He thought that if he helped them in their hour of need, the British would show their gratitude after the war by fulfilling Egypt's aspiration for complete independence. The lesson of World War I was forgotten, and Nahhâs was only too happy to come back to power, forgetting for the moment how politics was played. He thought that the British, by restoring him to power, were conceding his argument that he represented Egypt, and that they were remedying the mistake of not backing him in 1937. By bringing him back, with a free hand to curtail the powers of the Palace, arresting 'Alî Mâhir and the other Italians working in the Palace, he was adjusting the situation to normality. It was as if he had not been dismissed in 1937. Now that that was accomplished, coming back to power, a return to their main objective should follow, which was the national question. What Nahhâs had

33. Madabit Mağlis al-Niwâb 19 November 1942, pp. 13, 14.

34. FO 371-31570 J1852/38/16 Sir Miles Lampson to Foreign Office (No. 1105) 15 April 1942.

forgotten or miscalculated, was to press the British for a statement on that matter, as a condition of assuming the premiership on 4 February. Fûád Sirâj al-Dîn retorted that it was immoral to press a friend and an ally in such a situation. Or was it a fear of a repetition of 1914: the Declaration of martial law and a new Protectorate? Most probably it was the latter reason, and as long as the Wafd was in power, they felt the 1936 deal was honoured and independence was partially fulfilled. Thus Nahhâs' talk of a revision of the treaty, although sincere, was futile as later events had shown, for the time of bargaining had already passed.

Nahhâs summarized the situation as he saw it in his annual speech on 13 November by stating that he shouldered the responsibility in answering the King's call, depending on God, on the support he got from the King, and the love and faith of the people. He added that his first task was to purify the atmosphere from whatever was poisoning it and safeguard the dignity of the country. He did not proceed to form the government without first exchanging the known letters with the British Ambassador. This way he had restored to Egypt its rights, safeguarded its dignity, and stressed its sovereignty and independence. Now that nine months had passed since the formation of his government it was his pleasure, he went on, to see the relation with the ally as best as it could be, and see the respect the ally had for our rights. Among other things, he mentioned such actions by the government as the buying of the cotton crop, or the compulsory use of the Arabic language in commercial companies. He also referred to a welfare project sponsored by his wife and defended it.³⁵

This was the first time Nahhâs publicly defended his wife, but not the last. Since then, his wife's actions would be a liability which he

35. al-Masrî 14 November 1942, p. 2.

had to bear. He no longer had to defend himself against charges of corruption as in the case of Seif al-Din in 1928.³⁶ All charges now were against his wife who was becoming a target for the opposition. Nahhâs did not restrain her, nor did he convince an increasing number of people, of the falsehood of the charges against her. On the contrary he flatly defended her as if she was a source of pride and not an embarrassment. Many people attributed that to the fact that she was younger than him by twenty-five years and the daughter of a Pasha, emphasizing his social inferiority complex and old age. His opponents portrayed her as his Marie Antoinette.

Nahhâs' policy of appeasing the British was bearing fruit when he declared in Parliament that, while his government was paying attention to the interests of the nation and its fate during the war, it was also concerned with its interests after the war when peace negotiations were due to start. He had raised the matter with the British Ambassador as early as last June, and ascertained that Egypt would be represented in the peace negotiations on an equal basis with other participants. Although she had not yet entered the war, she nevertheless suffered from its consequences, and provided every assistance within its capability according to the terms of the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance with Britain. It was his pleasure to announce that he had received the following statement from the British Ambassador on 15 November: that he (Ambassador) had reported to his government the verbal demands which were presented to him on 11 June concerning the participation of Egypt in the peace negotiations, and that he was now authorized to inform him that his government would do its utmost to fulfil Egypt's demand in participating equally in all peace negotiations which dealt with her interests directly. Furthermore, the

36. See Chapter Two, p. 82,84

British government would not enter into any discussions concerning the direct interests of Egypt during these negotiations without first consulting the Egyptian government.³⁷

Nahhâs, who was keen ever since 1936 on winning the favour of the army, was well aware that the 4 February incident had set the younger army officers against him. Many of the officers after the 1952 military take over had revealed that Nahhâs was never forgiven for his role that day. On 5 September 1942, he secured the release of 'Aziz al-Masrî from detention and took the credit for it.³⁸

As for Nahhâs' policy towards the King, it was not very cordial. With the full backing of the British and the recovery from five years in the political wilderness, he had no reason to be lenient or forgiving. But being the political animal that he was, he underplayed his role. On the King's birthday, 11 February 1943, he gave an official reception at the Z'afârân Palace and made a complimentary speech in the King's honour.³⁹ Yet on 15 March, the anniversary of the Constitution, matters were different. Nahhâs broadcast from his house a review of the progress and setbacks of the Constitution. The reference to King Fûâd and his son Fârûk were clear, as he blamed non-Wafdist governments for undermining the Constitution.⁴⁰

On the Palace side, every opportunity was taken to try to dismiss Nahhâs. After the publication of Makram's Black Book, Hassanein tendered his resignation, protesting at the continuing presence of the Wafd in government after the scandals which had been revealed, which

37. Madabit Maqlis al-Niwâb 19 November 1942, pp. 13, 14.

38. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Rahman Burj 'Aziz al-Masrî wa al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Misriyya Al-Ahrâm Cairo 1980 p. 123.

39. WO201/161/05/4112/21 Monthly Intelligence Summary No. 5. February 1943.

40. Ibid., Summary No. 6. March 1943.

were ultimately to cause the revolt of the people against Nahhâs or the British, thus making his position impossible. Hassanein hoped that his resignation, together with the impact of Maḡraḡ's Black Book, would give the King the excuse to dismiss Nahhâs. Lampson reacted vehemently by warning the King of any imprudent action. Once more, British support proved necessary for Nahhâs to remain in power, and Amīn Osmān was brought into the cabinet.⁴¹

Clashes between the government and the Palace continued as usual over several issues. One in September 1942 was about who should preside over the Azhar celebrations of one thousand years, Shaikh al-Marâghī of the Azhar, favoured by the Palace, or the Minister of Waqf; the result being an indefinite postponement of the celebrations. Another issue was the demand by the Palace to dismiss Hamdī Seif al-Nasr and Najīb al-Hilālī during a cabinet reshuffle. This demand was ignored. Seif al-Nasr had made statements in front of some army officers which were regarded disloyal to the throne; and Al-Hilālī attacked Hassanein in the Chamber of Deputies. However, when al-Maraghi tendered his resignation over the policy of the government following the strike of the Azharites, Nahhâs, contrary to the wishes of the Palace, was glad to accept it. A compromise was reached by giving him sabbatical leave. The dispute took on a new dimension when the Palace insisted that al-Marâghī should pray on Fridays with the King during Ramadan of August 1944. No minister could attend such Friday prayers lest it be interpreted that Marâghī had been reinstated. The cold war between the two opponents intensified when malaria spread in some provinces of Upper Egypt. The King used his visit to these areas to highlight the government's failure to handle

41. Rizq, Tarikh al-Wizarat pp. 452-453. FO 371/41237 Desp No. 207 General Political Review 25 February 1943. FO 371/41237 Desp No. 375 General Political Review 16 April 1943. FO 371/41237 Desp No. 393 General Political Review 22 April 1943.

the situation there. Similar visits by Nahhâs angered the Palace, for they negated whatever impression the King might have created.⁴²

Nahhâs' problems came not only from the Palace, but also from other emerging political ideologies and issues which he had to deal with. Signing the treaty with Britain did not give Nahhâs a free hand as he had hoped. It was time that the Anglo-Egyptian dispute was settled, but other supra-national ideologies would soon attempt to replace Egyptian nationalism by a far wider nationalism, whether Islamic or Arab. The former found its expression in the Muslim Brotherhood, which was gradually transferring its activities from the purely religious field to the political arena. That came when Hassan al-Bannâ, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood stood as parliamentary candidate for Ism'ailliya in the elections of 1942 conducted under Nahhâs' government. It was said that Nahhâs did not even know of the political objectives of the Brotherhood, and did not take any notice of Banna's candidature. It was Muḥammad 'Afifî Shâhîn, editor of the al-Hawadith, a Wafd newspaper at the time, who brought the matter to Nahhâs' attention. Shâhîn gave him full details about the ramifications of the Brotherhood all over Egypt with all the names of the staff employed by al-Bannâ and his branch organizations. It was at that point that Nahhâs became alert. He knew quite well the consequences of introducing religious issues into politics. It was not long before Nahhâs summoned al-Bannâ and, after a long conversation with some threatening language being used by Nahhâs, al-Bannâ agreed to withdraw his candidature. Al-Bannâ, who had given Nahhâs a brief account of the history of his group and the reforms he wanted, was able to bargain his candidature withdrawal for some demands, mainly the restriction on the sale of alcohol and the banning of prostitution.

42. Ibid., pp. 454-455.

Nahhâs for his part, argued that this was a political matter, and that he would implement al-Bannâ's demands. After that Nahhâs, as a military governor of Egypt, instructed that the sale and consumption of liquor in all establishments during certain hours of the day and during the period of Ramadan, as well as certain other days as the birth of the Prophet, should be banned. Also prostitution was made illegal.⁴³

Another version of the episode, which does not contradict the previous one, was that Nahhâs asked al-Bannâ to withdraw his candidature in exchange for giving him (al-Bannâ) a free hand in preaching for his group but on religious matters only.⁴⁴ A pro-Brotherhood account of the same episode says that only after the British Ambassador had advised Nahhâs, did the latter summon al-Bannâ and threatened him that if he did not withdraw his candidature, then he would order the closure of the society's branches. Actually, fifty were closed, but members of the society rebelled and tried to enter their branches by force and reopen them. Nahhâs was forced to back down from his position and reopen them. Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn and 'Abd al-Hamîd 'Abd al-Khaliq joined the society as honorary members.⁴⁵

Another issue which transcended Egyptian nationalism was the problem of Palestine and Arab nationalism. It had been argued for a long time that the Wafd was not interested in Arab affairs, due to some remarks made by Zaghlûl when he was approached in 1919 to co-ordinate in the Paris Peace Conference with other Arab leaders. It was reported at the time that he asserted that the Egyptian cause was not an Arab one. There is also Zaghlûl's famous comment on the same issue "If you

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43. J. Heyworth-Dunne, Religious and Political Trends in Modern Egypt, Washington, J. Heyworth-Dunne 1950, pp. 39-41.
44. Tariq al-Bishrî, Tarikh al-Harakat al-Siyasiyya fi Misr 1945-1952 al-Hayât al-Misriyya al-'Ama lil Kitâb Cairo, p. 49.
45. 'Abd al-Mit'aâl al-Gabry Limâzâ Ughtîl al-Shahîd Hassan al-Bannâ Dar al 'Iatisam Cairo, 1977, p. 38.

add zero to zero what will be the result?"⁴⁶ One could argue that the intellectual heritage of the Wafd was for an Egyptian territorial identity more linked to the West, since in terms of civilization Egypt's Pharaonic and Hellenistic periods were an integral part of the Mediterranean world. Thus Alexandria was a vital centre of that classical heritage. The choice of Zaghlul's tomb in mixed Pharaonic style and modern European style were two models to be looked to, one for heritage, another as an example of government to be emulated. It is interesting to note, for example, how men of the liberal parties, all descended from the Umma Party and the school of thought of Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, would be described by the British as friendly to Britain, although political disagreements existed, while the Muslim Brotherhood and Young Egypt were considered to be "anti-Western".

What made matters worse, was that liberal tendencies had to compete with pan-Islamism or Arabism, especially when the Palace chose to support these tendencies in order to enhance its autocratic power against those of the Western-trained - particularly French - liberal lawyers and intellectuals. It was not strange therefore that Egyptianism would be associated with European liberalism and a dependence on Britain, and Pan-Islamism or Arabism would acquire strong anti-liberal tendencies especially since it was used by the Palace. Thus we find a situation in which anti-British feelings turn into anti-liberal feelings, especially when events had shown how the interests of both "Egyptian Liberalism" coincided with those of "British colonialism", as in February 1942.

Thus for the Wafd and Nahhâs, Palestine and Arabism were viewed from the perspective of their struggle with the Palace and their relationship with the British. While the Palace, Young Egypt and the

46. Anis Sa'igh, Al-Fikrat al-'Arabiya fi Misr Beirut 1959, p. 142.

Muslim Brotherhood were increasingly using Palestine as an issue against the Wafd, Nahrâs had sooner or later to change the Wafd's stand and outbid his rivals. The chance presented itself to Nahrâs when talks for Arab unity started in 1943, and he seized it for a multitude of reasons.

This was not the first time that Nahrâs would deal with the issue of Arab unity; in 1936 he had refused an offer by Nuri Pasha al Said and later Hikmat Sulaiman of Iraq of an Egyptian-Iraqi alliance on the grounds that he did not wish to get involved in general complications and wished first to consolidate Egypt's position.⁴⁷ Although the unity of Arabs was referred to by him in his speeches of 13 November 1938, 1939, as well as a demand for a just solution for the Palestine issue (13 November 1937), his idea of Arab unity was the promotion of economic and cultural inter-Arab relations. And if this could be achieved then steps aimed at political co-operation could be initiated "with each country retaining its political identity in accordance with its special circumstances and needs".⁴⁸ This view of Nahrâs which was considered a tremendous advance over that of Zaghlûl, was combined with his desire as the leader of the wealthiest and most populous Arab country to be the sole arbiter and mediator among the Arab states. That would have greatly enhanced his own prestige vis-à-vis the opposition minority parties and the Palace elements within Egypt.⁴⁹

Pan-Arabism received a great push when Anthony Eden in his Guildhall speech in November 1941 referred to Arab aspirations for unity and expressed his support for any scheme that commanded general

47. Ahmad M. Gomâa, The Foundation of the League of Arab States, Wartime Diplomacy and Inter-Arab Politics 1941-1945 Longman, 1977 p. 49, FO 371 20801 Miles Lampson to Eden 26 March 1937.

48. Gomâa, p. 49 Quoting Muḥammad Shâker al-Khardji Al-Arab fi Tariq al-Ittiḥād, p. 76.

49. Gomâa, p. 37.

approval. Nuri al-Sáid, the Iraqi Prime Minister, presented a memorandum to Sir Richard Casey, British Minister in the Middle East, proposing a unity of Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan into one state in a federation with Iraq, which other Arab states could join. That was not considered to be in the best interests of Egypt, since it challenged its leadership in the Arab World. Moreover, both the Hashemite monarchies in Iraq and Jordan were regarded as British puppets. The project did not live long and died due to the efforts of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, whose monarch was afraid of Hashemite hegemony.⁵⁰

In March 1943, Nuri tried once more by proposing to Nakhás the holding of an Arab conference. Being suspicious of a Palace-Nuri connection, Nakhás refused the idea of an unofficial conference as suggested by the latter.⁵¹ But Nuri recognised Nakhás' desire to make up for the Palace antagonism and his (Nakhás) difficulties following the Black Book incident, by posing as the leader of the Arab world. Nuri also recognized the strong streak of vanity in Nakhás' character, and, by playing on this weakness, he hoped to win him over. Meanwhile Nakhás was under increasing public pressure from the opposition and the Palace elements concerning his Arab policy. In reply to a question put forward by Dr. Haykal, Nakhás made a statement in the Senate on 30 March 1943 indicating his long interest in Arab affairs and outlining his plan for future Arab relations. By defining his role as that of exploiting different views and of reconciling them, he conceived of himself as the arbiter in the Arab arena.

The fact that it was he rather than any other Arab leader, who was wooed by Nuri al-Sáid, gave him the leading role he had aspired for. This did not leave much room for the anti-Wafd elements to criticize him on that account and it justified his plan to deal with the whole issue in his own way.⁵²

50. J.C.D. Richmond, Egypt 1798-1952 Her Advance Towards a Modern Identity Methuen London 1977, p. 208; Colombe, p. 213.

51. Gomáa, p. 157.

52. Gomáa, pp. 160-161.

Nahhâs started his negotiations with each Arab state separately in order to reach a loose organization of Arab unity, by which Egypt's position could be retained and Iraq's attempt to forge a union under its leadership be foiled. Thus Nahhâs in his talks with the Syrian delegate in Alexandria on 26 October 1943 raised doubts as to the possibility of the realization of the Greater Syria project on the basis of complete fusion, since each of the component states had its identity, distinct national development and regime. He also referred to the difficulties presented by the Maronites in Lebanon and the Jews in Palestine. He then explained the suggestion put forward by the Prime Minister of Transjordan about the initial unity of his country with Syria to be followed by a federation with Palestine and Lebanon. This, added Nahhâs, raised the difficult issue of the different forms of government in existence in both Syria and Transjordan.⁵³ Nahhâs was to reach his objective, thanks to the Saudis, Syrians and Lebanese, whose interests fell in line with those of Egypt, and the Arab League was formed and its Protocol was signed on 7 October 1944, just one day before Nahhâs was dismissed from office.

The end of the Nahhâs government came when the British ceased to support the government over its dispute with the King. On Friday, 15 September 1944, when the King was on his way to prayer, he ordered Ghazâlî Bey, Head of Public Security, to remove some placards written on it "Long live the King and Nahhâs". In the evening Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, as Minister of the Interior, ordered the suspension of Ghazâlî from duty, and that was published in the following morning's newspapers. Naturally, the King insisted that Ghazâlî should remain in his post. Lampson was absent in holiday, and the British decided not to interfere. The Palace took it as an encouraging sign, a green light,

53. Gomâa, pp. 179-180 FO 371/3462 Sir Harold Machichael to C.O. 16 September 1943.

so to speak.⁵⁴ Nahhâs, according to Hassanein, planned to summon a cabinet meeting at 7 pm on 8 October 1944, in order to submit his resignation that evening as a protest against British intervention in the Ghazâli question, and to publish the letters exchanged between himself and the Embassy concerning the Ghazâli affair.⁵⁵ The King pre-empted Nahhâs' action by dismissing him. Why did Nahhâs act so weakly, as a British report asked? Was it perhaps because Nahhâs considered his Presidency of the Arab Unity Conference (which had concluded its work in a blaze of glory the day before the dismissal) would deter the King from action. Or did the frank interview with the Ambassador on 6 September 1944, which dashed any hopes of implementing a popular policy of treaty revision, make him realize that the Wafd would be stronger in opposition than in power?⁵⁶

C. Back to the Political Wilderness

Although the Nahhâs cabinet had lost quite a substantial amount of support in office, the mere fact of dismissing it on unconstitutional grounds portrayed Nahhâs and the Wafd as defenders of the Constitution and enemies of absolute rule. Thus Nahhâs became once more a martyr in the eyes of the public and regained whatever popularity he had lost.⁵⁷ Aḥmad Mâhir's government started an investigation into the accusations raised by Maḥram against Nahhâs and his colleagues in the Black Book, threatening to undermine the position of Nahhâs and the Wafd. A ministerial committee headed by the Minister of Finance was set up to

54. FO 371/41319 J3638/14/16 Weekly Political Report (No. 96) 28 September - 4 October 1944, FO 371-41319 J3749/14/1 Weekly Political Report (No. 97) 5 - 11 October 1944.

55. FO 371 Mr. Shone From Cairo to Foreign Office (No. 1995) 8 October 1944.

56. WO 208/503 M12/BM1677 10 October 1944.

57. 'Abd al-Qâdir p. 143.

investigate the financial dealings of the previous government. Its first action was to ask Nahhâs and Sirâj al-Dîn, as ex-Minister of Social Affairs, to return the sum of £E170,000 which was gathered as donations for the victims of malaria, and which was allegedly deposited in the Prime Minister's personal account rather than in the Egyptian National Bank.⁵⁸ The attempts by the government to blacken the name of Nahhâs and his rule, especially with the charge of corruption, did not produce the necessary results, and the investigations in the charges presented against Nahhâs resulted in nothing at all; they died out quietly.

But the most serious challenge did not come from the post 1919 politicians like Mâhir and Nokrashî and the others, i.e., the traditional élite, who still believed and worked through the methods of the twenties and thirties. These were mainly peaceful and legal methods, of charges and counter-charges of corruption, or the mishandling of public affairs and abuse of personal power for nepotism and exceptional promotions. These were charges which were held in any elections, or in press campaigns with eyes fixed on forthcoming elections. Any action did not amount to more than litigation in the courts, or a counter-press campaign. As at the end of World War One the rise of new social forces led to social and political turmoil with a sharp rise in political violence. With the revolutionaries of 1919 becoming the traditional ruling elite of post-war Egypt after the Second World War, the same process was repeated now with new social forces on the rise and an escalation of political violence. This time it was the traditional politicians who were its victims, as were the politicians of the previous political order in 1919. Butrus Ghali and Yûsuf Wahba were now replaced by Mâhir and Nahhâs. The bullets of the

58. Colombe, p. 263.

new assassins did not differentiate between one party or the other, for most of them did not belong to parties and were against most, if not all, parties.

These new social forces were almost the same as in 1919, a small working class and an urban professional middle class. They were distinguished from their predecessors by two factors. First, the previous generation were not the only rising social force; a powerful landowner class was already in the making and was demanding its full share in political power. Thus political parties were formed whose political outlook, policies and alliances could be traced back to their social roots, urban or rural. The new urban middle class was not hindered by the landowners as was the case after World War I. This time they allied themselves with the working class, and provided much of their leadership. Several factors led to that situation. First, while in the pre-1914 situation, the landowners who were first allied to the urban professionals, were to discover that their interests did not complement each other but were diametrically opposed, and therefore allied themselves with the Palace. Thus the whole political situation was paralyzed in a battle between these two forces which took the form of the struggle for the Constitution, while the working class, because of their small size, played a marginal role.

After World War II, a new urban middle class was emerging, with a complete monopoly over new social-political movements with no competition from any other rising social class. There were no rising landowners. The working class remained almost as small as ever and did not present a major threat in terms of a social base for competing leadership or ideology, as did the landowners before and after World War I. The second feature of this post-World War II middle class which differentiated it from the old one, was that the new one was more petit bourgeois than the old middle-class one. Thus while the old ones rose

up the social ladder with Nakhās, they were transferred to the upper-middle class. Due to the increase of population and the number of educated Egyptians, the developments of new professions such as journalism, the lawyer of 1919 became more a part of the establishment, while the journalist, army officer, teacher and also some lawyers, constituted a new brand of middle-class, the lower-middle class or petite bourgeoisie.

The urban capitalists, contrary to some arguments, played a very minor role because they hardly existed. The few who did were hampered by the rural landowners who comprised most of the traditional ruling elite with their interests well defended, and who refused legislation in parliament which they controlled that levied taxes on land or that favoured land reform which some of the new capitalists were demanding to accelerate the capitalist development of Egypt. The Capitulations and foreign competition also played a role in diminishing the role and power of the new Capitalists or Entrepreneurs. Although the Treaty of Montreux in 1937 put an end to the Capitulations system, it was not until 1949 that this system was completely abolished. Besides, most native capitalists had to link themselves to foreign capital as happened to Misr Bank, so that the "National Bourgeoise" were not quite native.⁵⁹

The third main difference between the "old" urban middle class and "new lower" middle class or "petite bourgeoisie" was ideological. The former had experienced the failure of the Urâbî revolt of 1882, and the collapse of the Watanî Party's "No Negotiations except after Evacuation" policy.⁶⁰ The ideas of the Umma Party, which reflected the rural large landowners prevailed among the political élite of both

59. See Robert L. Tignor State, Private Enterprise, And Economic Change in Egypt, 1918-1952 Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1984.

60. See Chapter One, pp. 33, 4 .

social groups, were those of democratic institutions and of the peaceful, legal resolution of domestic and national issues. Thus one could say that a whole social force adopted the ideas of another social group. This general new was to dominate that social group in the future. Nahhâs' example could not be better illustrated. But with the failure of this approach, a small number started to doubt and question its efficacy. Al-Khaskoul for example⁶¹ and several new groups renounced this "false" ideology which they felt did not quite express their views, and a search for a new ideology was pursued. Of these new political groups, were "Young Egypt" and the "Muslim Brotherhood".⁶² They were the "true" expression of the new urban middle class and a continuation of the intransigent or extreme strand of the pre-World War I Watani Party. With the failure of constitutional institutions to preserve themselves - the Constitution was suspended twice and completely changed once, besides the rigging elections - faith in liberal democracy was being eroded. The 1936 Treaty and the 1942 Palace incident showed the limits of the power and path of the Wafd, and to what extent their nationalism depended on how much British support they could get to attain power. With the ideological decline of the Wafd, other groups were gradually replacing them, at a time of the expansion of the urban middle class and the rise of new elements of the petite bourgeoisie. Thus Young Egypt (Islamic National Party, later the Socialist Party), the Muslim Brotherhood and a variety of Marxist groups expanded rapidly after World War II with new recruits, politicized activists disillusioned with the traditional politicians, including Nahhâs and his Wafd party.

The traditional ruling elite, in other words, responded to the

61. See Chapter Two, p.85 .

62. See Chapter Two, p.(03),4

failure of their methods by adopting a negative approach, that is, by abstaining from acting the way they had, and moving from negotiation to non-negotiation. They also kept holding firmly to the political framework they were functioning in. New solutions were to be sought within the framework of parliamentary democracy, and the peaceful legal resolution of conflict. But for the new social and political groups, the whole experience was rejected; parliamentary democracy and peaceful legal methods were rejected outright. As a result the Wafd underwent an experience similar to that of the pre-1919 elite during the inter-war period, that is, that of a conservative ruling élite coming under increasing pressure from new forces. These new pressures manifested themselves in the same way, namely political violence and assassination attempts.

Although the first victim in this post-war terror campaign was the Saâdist Prime Minister, Ahmad Mâhir, the Wafd found itself a target of these rebellious young men. A bomb was thrown at the car of Nahhâs with the intention to assassinate him on 6 December 1945, but he escaped injury.⁶³ One of the assailants was a dissatisfied young army officer by the name of Anwar al-Sâdât.⁶⁴ The same group was to attempt a more successful assault on Amin Osmân less than a month later. In his confessions, Hussein Tewfiq maintained that his group took the responsibility of eliminating both Nahhâs and Osmân as the persons primarily responsible for the incident of 4 February 1942. Besides Tewfiq and Sâdât, Muḥammad Ibrâhîm Kâmil (a future Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1978-79) was also implicated.⁶⁵ There is no doubt that the Palace was pleased, and that it supported the vigorous

63. Anwar al-'Amrûsî Al-Garâ'im al-Siyassiya fi Misr Matba'ait al-Barlaman Cairo n.d. p. 135.

64. Ibid.

65. 'Abdin Archives File 4925.

campaign by the press to condemn Nakhâs for his role in February 1942. Whether the Palace was directly or indirectly responsible for these violent acts is beside the point, for these incidents revealed two things: first, that these press campaigns did not fall on deaf ears, but were well received by young educated, resentful youth who had lost faith in parliamentary democracy and its principal advocate, the Wafd Party. Second, they highlighted the increasing rift between the Wafd, as the representative of the urban middle class and the post-war urban petit bourgeois class.

Naturally, with the increase of the size of the urban population, the number of workers, students, government officials and members of the professions increased, so that the number of people interested and involved in politics also increased.⁶⁶ Also, the greater availability of public education during the inter-war period, inflated the student population especially from the lower middle class. A university at Cairo was opened in 1925, and another in Alexandria in the 1942s. The result was that members of these new groups entered the military profession and journalism, changing the social composition of these two professional groups.⁶⁷

These social changes were reflected in the articles written by a young Wafdist in a newly established Wafdist organ, Al Wafd al-Masri. In a report to the Ministry of the Interior during the Sidqi government of 1946, the newspaper was accused of adopting a bias towards the left and socialism. Its continued publication was considered a threat to the security of the country and a danger to its social system which was protected by Article 15 of the Constitution. Investigations by the security authorities revealed that Dr. Muḥammad Mandûr who contributed

66. Vatikiotis, p. 270.

67. Anis, al-'Usûl al-Tarikhiyya p. 139.

regularly to the newspaper was politically active against the basic principles of the Constitution and the social basis of the community. Finally the report recommended the suppression of the newspaper.⁶⁸

The Wafd was not completely alien to this new generation, large segments of which joined its ranks. The party was not yet denuded of all credibility and still had some of its glamorous popular attraction as the defender of constitutional rights and the leading force in the national struggle. There were, however, already voices raised to curtail the power of the large landowners, as suggested by two members of the Senate.⁶⁹

At the same time King Farouk's pictures were stamped upon by the students on his birthday in a clear defiance of the monarchy,⁷⁰ suggesting that the new trend was moving against both the large landowning class and its most obvious symbol, the monarchy. While the general mood was against the landowners, the Wafd was moving in the opposite direction when its leadership was being infiltrated by more landowners. The apparent symbol of the landowners in the Wafd was none other than Fûád Siraj al-Dîn, a Liberal Constitutionalist who had joined the Wafd in 1936,⁷¹ and became a member of its High Command in 1944. A notable with a large fortune, he was ready to accommodate non-Wafdists and appease the monarchy, the latter tendency being attributed by some to his non-Wafdist origins.⁷²

It was not surprising that the pre-Second World War political

68. 'Abdin Archives File 6630 July 46 Communism in Egypt.

69. Muḥammad Khattâb demanded to limit agricultural property to 50 feddans, while Liberal Constitutionalist member Galal Fahim suggested to limit family property to 500 feddans after the land had been inherited.

70. Maḥmud, Asrâr al-Madî pp. 181, 72.

71. Dessûkî p. 229.

72. 'Abd al-Qâdir pp. 183-184.

groups which were on the fringe of the political arena should gain ground at the expense of the Wafd and attract those who used to form its traditional social base. The Muslim Brethren, as noticed by one scholar, was based on the urban, not rural, society. Since the 1940s a half-agricultural and half-artisan "proletariat", which was disoriented by the "city lights", found refuge in the Brotherhood. Small businessmen and artisans who were pressed by the economic hardship of the war also joined the movement. Students at the university in Cairo who were actual members or sympathizers, counted for about 30 per cent of the total membership of the Brotherhood, with the strongest presence at the Faculty of Law. The leadership consisted mainly of lawyers, magistrates, and lecturers, some of them French-trained. The society's upper stratum resembled that of the Wafd, though of an inferior quality.⁷³ A British report supported the notion of the increasing shifting loyalty of the urban middle classes to the side of the Moslem Brethren, and the Egyptian headmaster of a large Egyptian secondary school was quoted as saying that the Wafd was now in a minority in the schools and universities; that the Ikhwan al-Muslimin were by far the strongest, and the "Front of Egypt" i.e., 'Alî Mâhir's organisation, was also quite strong; that he was astonished to hear in his school one day during some demonstrations cries of "Down with Nakhâs", and that students were fed up with the old refrains of the Wafd such as "National Government" and "Free Elections".⁷⁴

D. The Years of Upheaval and Social Change 1946-1949

What is interesting is that Nakhâs' approach to different political and national issues did not change; it continued along the

73. Jean & Simon Lacotune Egypt in Transition Methuen London 1958 pp.246-248. See also Ritchard P. Mitchell The Society of the Muslim Brothers Oxford University Press Oxford 1969 pp. 328-331.

74. FO 371 J1256 Mr. Bowker 11 March 1946.

same line adopted since the Wafd was formed. When Ibrâhîm 'Abd al-Hâdî, Vice President of the Saâdist Party, was appointed Head of the Royal Cabinet, Nahhâs protested by not signing his name in the King's visitors' book on the King's birthday. That was a breach on the part of the King to a tradition of appointing only non-party senior statesmen, and it was rumoured that the Wafd would demand that the position be occupied by a Wafdist on returning to power.⁷⁵ That was not to happen, as the King grew more and more autocratic and careless, which led some scholars to believe that, with the sudden death of Hassanein, the only restraint over the King was removed. Feelings also grew against the King, as seen during his birthday the following year.⁷⁶ There were also some rumours that his life was in danger, which forced him to cancel his visit to the university.⁷⁷

While political and social changes were taking place in society at large, the traditional parties and politicians were pursuing their usual course of party squabbings and house-tidying. Sidqî, appointed Prime Minister in 1946, embarked on the mission to resolve the national issue. Once more, the issue of who should negotiate with the British, resurfaced. Sidqî, through 'Alî al-Shamsî, offered to include Nahhâs in the negotiating team. Sidqî was to be the president of the delegation, and elections would be held after the negotiations. Nahhâs insisted that a declaration be obtained from the British that they agreed to free negotiations on the basis of evacuation and the unity of the Nile Valley. He also asked for a neutral government to be formed and fresh elections to be held at once. Later Nahhâs agreed to the postponement of elections until after the negotiations, whether these were

75. FO 371/45917 J773 Sir R. Campbell Cairo (No. 409) 15 February 1945.

76. al-Bishrî p. 126.

77. Haykal ^{Vol 2} p. 315.

successful or not. He also agreed to the maintenance of the present government provided he was the head of the negotiating delegation.⁷⁸

Naturally Sidqī refused Nahhās' terms, and the Wafd reverted to its old custom of attacking the former on the grounds that he was unsupported in his national cause by yielding to British demands. At the same time, as a British report noted, the Wafd was attacking Sidqī more than the British, and that these tactics were possibly due to the desire of the Wafd not to burn all the bridges between itself and the British for the time when a change of government was thought to be possible.⁷⁹

In his memoirs, Sidqī explained the reasons for the failure of his negotiations as having been due to the notion of an alliance with Britain that was rejected by a section of public opinion for whom the alliance was always portrayed as a constraint on Egypt's independence. That section believed that with some pressure and firmness Egypt could free itself from the Treaty and its obligations, and from the Defence Committee. It could also force the British to evacuate Egypt and abandon the Sudan and acknowledge Egypt's rights there.⁸⁰ The statement published by the Wafd objecting to any new treaty with Britain fell on the deaf ears of a bored public.⁸¹ Negotiators changed opinion under the pressure of public opinion,⁸² which Sidqī attributed to the efforts of a major communist state in convincing a section of the public opinion that the national issue would only be

78. FO 371 J992 Lord Killearn (No. 401) 4 March 1946. FO 371/53330 J1064/59/16 Mr. Bowker to Mr Bevin Weekly Political Report 9 March 1946.

79. FO 371 J3651 Sir R.I. Campbell 24 August 1946.

80. Ismáil Sidqī Mudhakkirati Dâr al-Hilâl Cairo 1950 p. 111.

81. Ibid p. 112.

82. Ibid p. 126.

resolved through the United Nations Security Council, where Britain could not isolate Egypt.⁸³

On the one hand, national consciousness in Egypt was moving towards accepting the futility of any further negotiations with Britain. The alternative to that was the traditional one of playing on the contradiction of the international scene. That had been tried before by Mustafâ Kâmil with the French and Saád Zaghlûl with the Americans. In both unsuccessful cases, the opposing power was another Western liberal democracy whose system did not cause any fears to the Egyptian leadership. This time the situation was entirely new. The Western democracies were confronted with a communist challenge in what was rapidly developing into a "cold war". That forced the Western democracies to close ranks and eventually eliminate any risk of a struggling liberal nationalist movement such as the Wafd in Egypt and its counterparts, Saádists or Sidqî, to manipulate the differences or contradictions which existed inside their camp. What made matters worse, was that the Western powers in their new bid for power in their ensuing struggle against the Soviet Union, linked their overall global strategy with the defence and security of their spheres of influence, such as Egypt. Thus Egypt's defence was not only related to Britain as was the case in the Treaty of 1936, but Egypt was part of a Middle Eastern policy incorporated in a more general Western alliance. Thus Nahhâs' main objection to the proposed treaty of Sidqî-Bevin was that this time Egypt had to defend not only its borders, but any threat to the Middle East, which would make the British presence permanent.⁸⁴ So in his annual speech on 13 November, he demanded the termination of the 1936 Treaty as the United Nations had now the full responsibility

83. Ibid p. 126.

84. Al-Masrî, 14 November 1946, p. 5.

of preserving peace, and its Charter announced the termination of any treaty whose provisions contradicted those of the Charter.⁸⁵

Since the Wafd had confined itself from the start to settling the Egyptian-British dispute through peaceful negotiations, it really had no alternative, if these negotiations did not produce the satisfactory results, but to stop negotiating in the hope that, with some pressure from inside Egypt, the British would yield to Egyptian demands when the next round of negotiations began. If pressure from inside Egypt was not enough, pressure on Britain from other countries was foreseen, as Zaghlul tried to do in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This was available in the framework of the United Nations, including the diplomatic support of the Soviet Union.⁸⁶ Nothing would have been more disturbing to the Wafd or any other traditional rival politician than being accused of making contacts with the communist republics of the Soviet Union.

In these circumstances, Nakhâs signed his name in the King's book on the occasion of Bairam in 1946, for the first time since he was dismissed. Another gesture of moderation was the holding back of a Wafdist manifesto and the adoption of a more moderate tone towards the British. The Wafd was further encouraged by the fact that important members of Sidqî's negotiating team were known to be in favour of Wafd participation in the government and the delegation.⁸⁷ Although disappointed by the reinstatement of Nokrashî as Prime Minister later in the year, Nakhâs and other prominent Wafdists nevertheless called at the Palace to inscribe their names in the Royal Book on the return of the King to Alexandria on 17 September 1946.⁸⁸

85. Ibid.

86. Qurashi pp. 153-154.

87. FO 371-5332 J3710/57/16 Sir R.I. Campbell (No. 1402), Cairo 30 August 1946.

88. FO 371-5332 J3968/5/16 Sir R.I. Campbell to Bevin (No. 1482) Cairo 20 September 1946.

E. 1947: The Beginnings of Change

While Nahhâs was manoeuvring with the Palace and other political parties in his old-fashioned way, the year 1946 saw two major developments which had far reaching consequences for the Wafd in particular, and Egyptian political life in general. The first was the change which occurred in the leadership of the Party due to the death of Sabrî Abu 'Alam, in April 1947, the Secretary General of the Party, and one of the "Old Guard". A struggle for power ensued between the remnants of the "Old Guard" which belonged to the professional urban middle class, such as 'Abd al-Fatâh al-Tawîl, who believed he had every right to inherit the leadership of the party on one side, and the new elements from the large landowners who joined the party after the year 1936 and especially during the years of World War II, on the other, and best represented by Sirâj al-Dîn, al-Badrâwî 'Ashûr (relatives of the former) and al-Wakîl (relatives of Madame Nahhâs).⁸⁹ It was reported that Nahhâs' candidate for the post was 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa (a lawyer from Tantâ and colleague of Nahhâs during the 1919 revolution), who was not himself keen on the post, but wanted instead the post of Vice-President of the Wafd so that in time he could succeed Nahhâs. The other name mentioned was 'Abd al-Fatâh al-Tawîl (of similar background). Nahhâs was apparently reluctant to appoint Sirâj al-Dîn for fear of displeasing the old guard because of his comparative youth. He also suspected Sirâj al-Dîn of being too conciliatory towards the Palace.⁹⁰ Eventually 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa (Deputy since 1924) was appointed Secretary-General of the Wafd. In May 1947 Mahmûd Sulaimân Ghannâm (member of the student's committee in 1919, lawyer, and Deputy since 1930) became Assistant Secretary-General, and

89. Anîs Al-'Usul al-Tarikhiyya pp. 151-152.

90. FO 371-63020 J1952/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 988) Cairo 26 April 1947.

'Alī Zakī al-Urābī (BA Law in 1903, subsequently professor of law) became leader of the Wafdist opposition in the Senate. A British source commented that although junior elements (most probably new, not junior, elements) of the Wafd were disappointed that Sirāj al-Dīn was not appointed as Secretary General, it would appear that the unity of the Wafd had not been affected by the above appointments.⁹¹

Thus it appeared that the old guard, the traditional middle class, was able to preserve its position in the Wafd leadership, but that was only short lived. In fact, the old guard was already in eclipse. Another element however came to challenge them. It came from the same grass roots from which the "Old Guard" had derived their legitimacy. These were the young men who joined the Wafd but could not reach its upper echelons which were monopolized by the "Old Guard" and the large landowners. As a result most members of the second and third layers of the party were occupied by these new elements. They were to be found in the youth committees and the Parliamentary Committee.⁹² More significantly they formed the Wafdist Vanguard in March 1947. Thus one could argue that thanks to Nabhās' policy of recruitment, the Wafd was divided into three factions. The "Old Guard" and the landowners who divided the leadership among them, and the Wafd Vanguard who were strongly present outside the leadership. While Nabhās himself was originally from the same group of the "Old Guard", yet by encouraging elements of the landowners into the leadership, and without including any from the Vanguard he was strongly weakening the "Old Guard".

Press reports of an estrangement between Nabhās and Naḡīb al-Hilālī were confirmed by Embassy sources. Hilālī had refused to defend Madame Nabhās' brother, Aḡmad al-Wakīl, who appeared before the

91. FO 371-63020 J2147/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 1097) Cairo 10 May 1947. Sawt al-Umma 5 May 1947.

92. 'Abd al-Qādir p. 181.

court on a charge of violating the regulations governing the issue of import and export licences.⁹³ It was Nahhâs this time, through his wife, who was causing dismay among his lieutenants, as in 1942 with Makram. Hilâlî was to defect later in 1950, thus weakening even more the lawyers' faction inside the Wafd.

The year 1947 witnessed another development on the Egyptian political scene. This concerned the handling of the Egyptian national issue. For the first half of the year, political life continued as it did before: the Wafd went on with its traditional policy of rallying the people against the British, while at the same time sending discreet signals to the British that no settlement with Egypt could be concluded without their full approval. And on 15 July 1947, the Wafd issued a manifesto attacking the government and demanding the termination of the treaties of 1936 and 1899. Sirâj al-Dîn passed the word to the Embassy that he wished them to know that declarations made by the Wafdist press against Anglo-Egyptian alliance were not to be taken seriously, and that if the Wafd came to power they would be quite prepared to negotiate on the basis of an alliance.⁹⁴

On the other hand, a proposal by Haykal (Liberal Constitutionals) for national front was refused by the Wafd on the grounds that it was useless since it was not supported by the King.⁹⁵ Nahhâs was reported to have said to the press that only the King was in a position to make an appeal for union and then all would obey him. This was regarded as an adroit manoeuvre by Nahhâs to put the King in the position of

93. FO 371-63020 J5233/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 149 27) Cairo October 1947.

94. FO 371-63020 J659/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 350) Cairo 8 February 1947.

95. FO 371-63020 J1275/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 668) Cairo 16 March 1947.

opposing the union if he did not act on this suggestion.⁹⁶ That was followed by negotiations between the Palace and the Wafd for the Wafd's entry into the government and joining the delegation for treaty negotiation. The Palace insisted on Nokrâshî as Prime Minister and said elections must be held after settling the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty issue. The Wafd insisted on a neutral prime minister and elections to be held at the end of the autumn recess. That was expected since it was unreasonable to expect the Wafd, especially Nahhâs, to serve under Nokrâshî with a parliament in which there was no Wafd representation, with the possibility that after the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty issue had been settled the Wafdists might be discarded.⁹⁷ Another manifesto on 20 September, with a letter to the British Ambassador and to Nokrâshî on the subject of Egypt's national claims, were published with the object of impressing local public opinion by a show of firmness towards Britain.⁹⁸ That was followed by a message of greetings to Muslims in Egypt and elsewhere on the occasion of Qurban Bairam on 1 November. It contained a veiled attack on the government and omitted the normal conventional reference to the King.⁹⁹

The second half of the year, saw a development in the Egyptian national question which proved to have far reaching consequences. With a stalemate in Egyptian-British relations, the idea of internationalizing the Egyptian question was once more given prominence. Since Saád's failure to internationalize the Egyptian

96. FO 371-63020 J1507/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 814) Cairo 29 March 1947.

97. FO 371-63020 J2271/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 1144) Cairo 18 May 1947. Haykal Vol. 2 p. 316.

98. FO 371-63021 J4671/79/16 Mr. Bowker (No. 131) Cairo 26 October 1947.

99. FO 371-63021 J5341/79/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 153) Cairo 9 November 1947.

question in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the dispute between both countries had been dealt with on a bilateral basis. With the failure of this course of action to reach a stage beyond the 1936 treaty, hopes were once more raised about the capability of the United Nations as an international forum to voice Egypt's demands as they did before in 1919. But the same old story was repeated, when Nabhâs refused to support Nokrâshî as did Saâd with 'Adlî on the basis that only the true representatives of the nation should speak in its name.

In August Nokrâshî presented Egypt's case to the Security Council which decided that both the Egyptians and British should resume negotiations. Nokrâshî refused to accept the decision because it meant that the Egyptian issue was a matter between Egypt and Britain alone, and not an international issue which should be resolved by the Security Council as Egyptian public opinion demanded and the majority of the Egyptian delegation believed. Thus the Security Council decided to suspend the matter.¹⁰⁰

This failure to resolve the national issue through the international organization had a tremendous impact on the national movement. For some, the failure was due to Nokrâshî and not to the method. That was expressed by Nabhâs in his annual speech on 13 November when he said he warned the other parties and individuals outside the Wafd that they - and especially Nokrâshî - were the least qualified of all to present the Egyptian cause in international organizations, since they had become linked with the Siḍqî-Bevin project, and all the world knew that they do not represent Egypt, and thus they failed.¹⁰¹ Actually the Wafd had played a role in weakening Nokrâshî's position by writing to the United Nations that he was not

100. Haykal Vol. 3 pp. 82-83.

101. Nabhâs speech on 13 November 1947 al-Masrî 14 November 1947.

representative of Egypt.¹⁰² For some other sections of public opinion, it meant that the old formula of peaceful legal methods to resolve the national issue was no longer working. It was another three years before another formula emerged.

The régime was facing a serious crisis, politically and socially, which clearly manifested itself in the strike of the police to be followed by the nurses of Qasr al-'Ainî Hospital and the two bombs thrown in the garden of Nahhâs' house in one week during April 1948.¹⁰³ Nahhâs was convinced that this incident was plotted by certain officials in the Ministry of the Interior and the Palace.¹⁰⁴ A more serious attempt was made to blow up his house by means of a car bomb which was parked in the road outside his house on the morning of 25 April. Nahhâs was unhurt, but his wife was slightly injured and considerable damage was done to the house. Nahhâs was convinced that the attempt on his life was instigated by the Palace.¹⁰⁵ It is interesting how the masses reacted to the incident and explains what happened in terms of Nahhâs being one of the "Saints of God" (Wâli min 'Awliy'a Allah).¹⁰⁶ While Nahhâs blamed the Palace indirectly for the incidents by accusing Nokrâshî and 'Abd al-Hâdî and their staffs, his wife did not conceal her belief of the direct responsibility of the King himself, which had the effect of worsening whatever tense relation already existed between the monarch and Nahhâs.¹⁰⁷ One might have

102. Vatikiotis, p. 363.

103. Al-Ahrâm 7 April 1948.

104. FO 371-69190 J2620/22/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 58) 14 April 1948.

105. FO 371-69190 J2898/22/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 64) 27 April 1948.

106. Aḥmad Mûrtadâ al-Marâghî Gharâ'b min 'Ahd Fârûk wa Bidâyât al-Thaurat al-Misriyyah Dâr al-Nahâr lil Nashr Beirut 1976 pp. 69-70.

107. Haykal vol. II p. 349. FO 371-69190 J3290/22/16 R. Campbell n. 79 13 May 1948.

expected such attempts, especially during and after the trial of the assassins of Amín Osmân and the press campaign which accompanied it, to capitalize on the role of Nahhâs in 4 February 1942.

In June 1948, it was announced that 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomáa had resigned from his position as Secretary General of the Wafd and that Fûád Sirâj al-Dîn had taken his place. A British report stated that change had become imperative owing to dissatisfaction among the Wafd youth elements with the comparative inertia of Gomáa and their insistence on a more energetic conduct of the Party's affairs. It may therefore be presumed, the report continued, that Gomáa was prevailed upon to resign in order to avoid a further weakening of the Wafd by the succession of discontented youth elements, but his resignation was officially explained as due to personal reasons.¹⁰⁸ Thus the balance between the "Old Guard" and the large landowners was turned in favour of the latter once more. Another attempt on the life of Nahhâs resulted in the death of two local policemen and the wounding of two others when fifty bullets were fired in front of his house while he was about to leave the car of Fûád Sirâj al-Dîn.¹⁰⁹ A few days later Nahhâs in his annual speech on November 13 demanded the termination of the 1898, 1899 and 1936 treaties. He also attacked the alliance with the East or the West, and advocated a non-alignment policy in foreign affairs.¹¹⁰ These developments were accompanied by disturbances in the University of Cairo and a sharp rise in political violence. On 4 December 1948, students and police exchanged fire, and in the Faculty of Medicine, Selîm Zakî, Commander of the Cairo police was killed by a hand grenade.¹¹¹ The government held the Muslim Brethren responsible

108. FO 371-69191 J4456/22/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 104) 25 July 1948.

109. al-Masrî 10 November 1948 issue 3992.

110. al-Masrî 14 November 1948 p. 6.

111. al-Masrî 5 December 1948.

for this rise in political violence, and Prime Minister Nokṛāshī decreed a military order to dissolve the society on 9 December. He was later assassinated on 29 December 1948.¹¹² The defeat of the Egyptian army in the war in Palestine in May 1948 had left many people frustrated, and with weapons freely available, the situation was extremely dangerous. It was not only a direct confrontation between a government - which had failed on every national level from the United Nations to Palestine - and the new political groups of whom the Muslim Brethren were the strongest, but also a time of deep crisis for the regime, with the country on the verge of chaos.

A few weeks after the installation of 'Abd al-Hādī's government, the King sent Lieutenant-General Haidar to Sirāj al-Dīn to ask the Wafd to return to power, which Nahhās flatly refused.¹¹³ It was said that Nahhās summoned the Wafd members to a meeting at which he presented the King's letter and others, and they supported his stand in rejecting it. The reason given by Ghannām was the unconstitutional behaviour of the King and his policy of pitting political parties against one another.¹¹⁴ Most probably though it was because the idea of a coalition government had surfaced once more after the assassination of Nokṛashī and the Wafd had accepted it on the condition that it would not be under the premiership of any party.¹¹⁵

It is interesting here to recall how Muḥammad Maḥmūd contacted Faṭhallah Barakāt. A British report at the time talked of "the apparent flexibility of a group of moderate Wafdists headed by Sirāj al-Dīn".¹¹⁶ That moderate group headed by Sirāj al-Dīn was soon to

112. al-Masrī 30 December 1948.

113. Hashīsh p. 260 interview with Ghanam 20/3/1969.

114. Hashīsh p. 260.

115. al-Rafi'i p. 283 Hashish p. 259.

116. FO 371-73459 J189/1013/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 2) 7 January 1949.

declare its policy of a rapprochement with the King when Sirâj al-Dîn in a meeting at the Saâdist club in 10 February 1949, spoke of the necessity to prepare themselves for the next elections, and to be ready to start a movement from Cairo to Aswan to declare their loyalty to the King so that he knows that the Wafdist youth were ready to sacrifice their lives for his sake. That was to be followed by a meeting of some students with Muşţafâ Mûsâ of the Wafdist Vanguard to discuss whether Nahhâs should go to the Palace and celebrate the King's birthday or not. After several speakers had spoken of the unconstitutional behaviour of the King, they decided to send a petition to Nahhâs asking him not to go for the sake of the Party and its unity.¹¹⁷

A change in the policy of the Wafd occurred when a coalition government was formed. This was attributed to the pressure of the moderate faction inside the Wafd¹¹⁸ and to a change of heart by Nahhâs and his siding with Sirâj al-Dîn. Nahhâs was at first considering boycotting the elections if they were held under 'Abd al-Hâdî's government, but then he changed his mind, according to some opinions, because of pressure from the majority.¹¹⁹ In Ramadan he warned in a speech at Alexandria that blood might flow like rivers if the government conducted elections. At the same time in a clear signal to the King he suggested that it was for the King to decide what should be done.¹²⁰ Nahhâs' change of heart from accusing the King indirectly of the attempt on his life to the more moderate stand of Sirâj al-Dîn was accomplished when his message to the people on Bairam included loyal references to the King, and he signed the Royal Book for that

117. 'Abdin Archives, File 4925 Ministry of Interior.

118. FO 371 3 189 Sir R. Campbell (No. 2) 7 January 1949.

119. FO 371-73459 J3929/1013/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 87) 7 May 1949.

120. FO 371-73460 J5658/1013/16 Sir R. Campbell (No. 111), 8 July 1949.

occasion.¹²¹ Nahhâs even took great pains in a declaration to the notables of Buhera province to deny strongly any allegations that it was the Wafd's policy to amend the Constitution, and declared that any such thing would be a sacrilege and a bad precedent.¹²² Later the Wafd would justify this course under the pretext that they had to eliminate any fears by the King so that they could concentrate on the national issue. In his annual speech in 13 November that year, there was no mention by Nahhâs of the British or the Sudan as usual, but much praise for the King for his Arab policy and the neutral government.¹²³ This change of heart by the Wafd was encouraged by the Palace and some contacts were established through Mahmûd Ghazâlî Pâshâ between Mr. Chapman-Andrews, Acting Ambassador, and Hassan Yûsuf, Deputy Royal Chamberlain, and Hussein Sirrî on one side, and Dr. Muḥammad Nasr, the private physician of Nahhâs, on the other to form a neutral cabinet with the intention of conducting free elections.¹²⁴ Direct contacts were made between Sirâj al-Dîn and Chapman Andrews and Hassan Yûsuf too. Thus all were agreed on the return of the Wafd. Actually there were already some rumours of a deal to that effect, backed by the British to guarantee the Wafd's return to power.¹²⁵

With a moderate faction inside the Wafd ready to co-operate, and considering the crisis the system was in, a coalition government was formed with the blessing of the British who were convinced after the experience of 1942 that the Wafd was more reliable and stronger than

121. FO 371-73460 J62081/1013/16 Chapman Andrews (No. 122) 30 July 1949.

122. FO 371-73460 J6466/1013/16 Mr. Chapman Andrews (No. 128) 7 August 1949.

123. al-Masrî 13 November 1949.

124. al-Shâhid p. 56.

125. Kamâl al-Dîn Rif'at, Mudhakkirât Kamâl al-Dîn Rif'at Cairo 1975 p. 63.

any other party.¹²⁶ 'Abd al-Hâdî's government resigned on 25 July 1949, to be followed by a coalition government headed by Hussein Sirri¹²⁷ to prepare for elections. Disagreements on the formation of the constituencies led to the resignation of the cabinet and the formation of a neutral one after three months, which was the Wafd's desire in the first place.¹²⁸

Many explanations were given for the unexpected vast majority with which the party won the elections. Of these explanations two are worth considering. One was that the existence of a neutral government was, in itself, an indication to government officials that the days of the Saâdists had gone, and those of the Wafd were coming, and this had its effect on the men who were conducting the elections, especially the police, who found opportunity to avenge their strike which the Saâdists had crushed.¹²⁹ Newspapers published an investigation with one of the Saâdist Ministers implying a condemnation of the whole party;¹³⁰ a minister went to various constituencies and spoke loudly in favour of the Wafd; and Sirri himself made it known that he voted for a Wafdist.¹³¹ But the most important factor was that of the Muslim Brethren. With their eyes set on elections, there was an understanding between the Wafd and Sirri on freeing those of the Brethren under arrest, to which the Saâdists and Liberal Constitutionalists objected.¹³² At the same time, the Wafdist organ Sawt al-Umma¹³³

126. Haykal V.2 p. 349.

127. Al-Rafi'i p. 132.

128. al-Rafi'i p. 139.

129. Akbâr al-Yum.

130. al-Rafi'i Vol. 3 p. 290.

131. Haykal Vol. 2 p. 350.

132. al-Shâhid p. 53.

133. A daily which replace al-Wafd al-Masri in 1946. Hamza, p. 157.

published the memoirs of the late Hassan al-Bannâ concerning the disbanding of the society. This was taken by the Brethren as a clear signal that their society would be legitimized once more if the Wafd were elected.¹³⁴ While the Palace expected only 30 per cent of the votes to go to the Wafd, thus implementing its dream of a coalition government under Sirâj al-Dîn and getting rid of Nabhâs, the outcome was an outstanding victory for the Wafd.¹³⁵ The King made a last effort to convince Nabhâs to give his position to Sirâj al-Dîn, but Sirri stood firm in his position of abiding by the results of the elections.¹³⁶ It seems that the idea of Nabhâs giving way to avoid a confrontation with the Palace, reminiscent of the Ahmad Mâhir incident in 1937, was also shared by Dr. Salâh al-Dîn.¹³⁷

134. 'Abdin Archives, File 4925. Kamâl al-Din Rifât, Mudhakkirât Kamal al-Din Rifât Cairo 1975 p. 63.

135. Akbâr al-Yum, 7 January 1950.

136. Hashîsh p. 265 Interview with Sirâj al-Dîn 9/4/1968.

137. Ibid. Interview with Salah al Din and Farag 20/5/68.

Chapter Five

Nahhâs Last Chapter

A. The Hero's Last Stand

Not only was the majority which brought back the Wafd to power an illusory one, in the sense that the Wafd got only 50 percent of the votes which was only 50 percent of those entitled to vote¹, only 15 percent of the Cairo electorate cast their votes,² in other words 25 percent of the votes only, but also the support did not come from only the Wafdists as in the old days, but from the Muslim Brethren and other opposition groups who had to make a choice between a Wafdist candidate, a Saâdist or a Liberal Constitutionalist. There is no doubt that the Wafd being in opposition during the previous five years made every effort to capitalize on the mistakes of those in power. Furthermore the general tendency of the Egyptian people was to sympathize with those who are out of power and favour.

But the Wafd in the early 1950s was not that of the early 1920s, and nothing better than the following incident could illustrate the change which took place. Sayyid Mari'i, who was a Saâdist deputy, was contacted by Sirâj al-Dîn through his brother-in-law, Morsî Farahât, (Minister of Supply in the last Wafdist government), suggesting he contest the elections as a Wafdist without paying the dues to the party. Instead, he suggested that Mari'i contribute about £E5,000 to the party coffers in exchange for the party's support and that he meet Nahhâs to discuss the matter with him. Mari'i was surprised when Sirâj al-Dîn introduced him to Nahhâs by saying that Mari'i had accepted

1. al-Rafi'i, Vol. 3, p. 292.

2. Anthony Eden The Memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden, Full Circle Vol. 3 Cassel London 1960, p.225.

entry in the elections as an Independent and not a Saádist or Wafdist, to which Nahhâs agreed.³ This incident showed how Nahhâs' grip on the Wafd was slackening, while Sirâj al-Dîn was more and more in control of the daily affairs of the party; how the new members of the party were recruited, by whom, and from where. This declining authority of Nahhâs was evident when the new cabinet was formed. Nahhâs was in favour of a cabinet which would be composed of those who formed the 1942 cabinet, while Sirâj al-Dîn wished to bring in new faces, and his opinion prevailed in the end. Thus Dr. Taha Hussein, Morsî Farahât, and Zakî 'Abd al-Mitââl were included, even though they were not Wafdist,⁴ though Zakî 'Abd al-Mutââl declared later in the Senate that he had been a Wafdist.⁵

Although Nahhâs insisted on the nomination of Dr. Taha Hussein against the opposition of the Palace for the latter's alleged leftist views, he did not show the same spirit when it came to the issue of who presides over the army. The Palace had suggested that Lieutenant-General Muḥammad Haidar be appointed Minister of War, but Nahhâs refused on the grounds that he was not a Wafdist.⁶ Most probably Nahhâs suspected that Haidar would be the King's eyes inside the cabinet. But later the King appointed Haidar as the General Commander of the Army, thus depriving the Wafdist Minister of War of any effective control over the army.⁷ Another Palace candidate, 'Abd al-Fatâh Hassan, was later to be included in the cabinet.⁸ Nahhâs

3. Sayyid Mari'i, Awrâq Siyasiyah al-Maktab al-Masrî al-Hadîth Cairo, 1978, Vol. 1, pp. 153-154.

4. Hashîsh, pp. 266-7.

5. al-Masrî 19/11/1950 p. 4.

6. Anîs, al-Ahrâm 6/2/1967, p. 3.

7. 'Abd al-Qâdir, p. 178.

8. Ibid., p. 188.

accepted both appointments without any objection.

But that is not the end of the story. Three decades after the "People's Government" of Saád Zaghlûl in 1924, in which the effendi class entered a cabinet for the first time, the 1950 cabinet seemed to run on opposite parallels. For the "Peoples Government" was composed of members of the old Turkish aristocracy and the rising middle-class professionals which reflected the balance of social forces at the time. This time the old generation of administrators were not from the Turkish aristocracy, but the Wafd's professional middle class of the twenties and thirties, while the new elements were those who heavily represented vested interests such as large landownership or capital.

Of the old guard there were Osmân Muharam, Zakî al-Urâbî, 'Abd al-Fatâh al-Tawîl and Mahmud Sulaimân Ghannâm, who had some wealth. The last two were known for their hostility towards Sirâj al-Dîn. Of the new elements were Ibrâhîm Faraj and Dr. Muḥammad Salâh al-Dîn, who could be considered to be from the old guard since they were "new" only in terms of becoming ministers for the first time. All the previous five were long-time Wafdists and could be regarded as one faction, though some would argue that Dr. Salâh al-Dîn stood alone. On the other side there was Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, the leader of the moderates who was opposed to the Wafd until he joined it in 1936, and who owned four thousand feddans of land. Muḥammad al-Wakîl was a millionaire and was instrumental in bringing the Wafd into the coalition government of Hussein Sirrî. Aḥmad Hamza was the owner of the largest ice factory in Cairo, and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Latîf was a fierce opponent of Nahhâs until 1942 and was believed to be loyal to Sirâj al-Dîn. Others, such as Muṣṭafâ Nasrat, though not a supporter of Sirâj al-Dîn, was a capitalist and about to enter a joint venture with Abûd. Dr. Aḥmad Hussein, who also stood alone, was a nephew of Osmân Muharam, and his brother was married to Abûd's daughter. Dr. Taha Hussein was an

opponent of the Wafd as well as of Yassin Aḥmad since they were Liberal Constitutionalists (compare with the early members of the Wafd who were from the Watani Party such as Nahhâs, now it is from the Liberal Constitutionalists as Sirâj al-Dîn). Morsî Farahât was not a Wafdist (he was the head of the office of Sabrî Abu 'Alem), while Zakî 'Abd al-Mitââl and Hamid Zakî formed one bloc.⁹ Thus, not only was the cabinet divided among two main factions, but each faction had its own internal division. Another scholar has described the 1950 cabinet as being composed of six experts never known to be Wafdists, two young Wafdists, six Senators, six with a doctorate degree, three university rectors, fourteen lawyers, two engineers, and six who were not members of Parliament. They were divided into three groups, the Purist young Wafdists, the pro-Palace, and the compromising commercialists.¹⁰

The balance between the two factions was soon to tip in favour of the new moderates when it became known that Nahhâs was looking to Sirâj al-Dîn as his successor for the Party's leadership. Twice Nahhâs overruled Osmân Muharam in favour of Sirâj al-Dîn when the former should have taken Nahhâs' place. The first time was when Nahhâs wanted the palace to agree to the appointment of Sirâj al-Dîn as Deputy Prime Minister, instead of Osmân Muharam, the longest serving minister, but the palace refused.¹¹ The second was when Nahhâs returned from Europe to Alexandria and rode in an open car with Sirâj al-Dîn instead of Osmân Muharam, the Deputy Prime Minister.¹²

In the speech from the throne Nahhâs declared that his government regarded the 1936 Treaty as an unsatisfactory basis for

9. Musâ Sabrî, Qissat Malik wa A'rbâ Wizârât Dâr al-Qalam Cairo 1964 p. 15.

10. Rizq Tarikhal-Wizarat pp. 503-505.

11. Ibid., p. 158.

12. Al-Shâhid, p. 132.

Egyptian-British relationship, and that there was no choice but to abolish it, and arrive at a new understanding based on the complete evacuation of British forces from Egypt and the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian throne. The termination of the 1936 Treaty, he added, would be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, not to mention the changed circumstances which had led to the Treaty in the first place, as well as that of the 1899 Condominium over the Sudan.¹³

By committing himself to abrogating the treaty, Nakhâs embarked on a course of action which proved to be both his greatest act and at the same time his own destruction. Public opinion was pressing for the abrogation, and Nakhâs knew that in order to keep his place in society, he must bow to their demands. But he also knew quite well that abrogating the treaty alone without any general policy to accompany it would be an absurd act. He had to bend to public pressure and at the same time try to reach a satisfactory settlement with the British as far as possible. To a man of his mentality, and taking the present social composition of the Wafd leadership into consideration, peaceful legal methods were more attractive than violent mass struggle. Because Nakhâs and the Wafd could not foresee an action outside the offices of their government buildings, their relationship with the Palace had to be assessed. They were not a party struggling in the streets of Cairo, but a government which had to abide by and cooperate with the constitutional institutions, especially the Palace. Thus it was not strange that Nakhâs, for the first time, chose to placate the Palace in order to extend his tenure of office. If Nakhâs had complained in 1935 that he was tired of being out of office for five years, then the Nakhâs of 1950 with the Wafd dominated by Sirâj al-Dîn would be more exhausted and ready to compromise than in 1935.

13. al-Masrî 17 November 1950 p. 6.

It was said that at his first meeting with the King after forming the government, Nahhâs bowed and kissed the King's hand and declared that the monarchy was the source of all authority. In another incident, when Fârûk went to Kabry, Nahhâs said "that the qibla [the direction of prayer] of the Egyptians had moved to Kabry because our beloved King is there".¹⁴ This new relationship between Nahhâs and Farouk was strengthened by a new alliance which was being forged between some elements inside both the Wafd and the Palace, for the Palace had undergone an almost similar development to the Wafd, with a new wing of financial interests as contrasted to the old guard. The latter were such as 'Alî Mâhir and Aḥmad Hassanein who were very much at odds with the Wafd. With the absence of the former and the death of the latter, their policy was gradually replaced by new elements such as Karîm Thâbit (press adviser) and Ilias Andrawes (Economic Adviser of the Royal Estate) who favoured a more conciliatory policy towards the Wafd based on the grounds that a Wafdist government would absorb public tension, and they were instrumental in endorsing the return of the Wafd to power.¹⁵ We can now see why Nahhâs insisted on appointing 'Abûd and Karîm Thâbit to the board of the Suez Canal Company instead of 'Alî al-Shamsî and Wassif Ghalî whom the Company had nominated to represent Egypt on the Board. When Nahhâs' nominees were rejected by the company, he nominated Ilias Andrawes.¹⁶ Abûd was also to prove useful not only in his capacity as an unofficial channel with the British, but also with the Americans, whose Ambassador used to meet Sirâj al-Dîn in Abûd's house.¹⁷

14. Mari'i, Vol. 1, p. 181.

15. Rizq, Târikh al-Wizarat pp. 492-498.

16. Haykal, Vol. 3, pp. 210-211.

17. Sabrî, p. 13.

One could then argue that Nahhâs' policy of accommodating the Palace was due not only to his desire to concentrate on the Treaty issue, but it also reflected the vested interests of such people as Sirâj al-Dîn, Abûd and Ilias Andrawes whose social status rendered it impossible for them to opt for any other policy.

While Nahhâs and the Wafd were pursuing a policy of accommodation with the King, events later proved that they were in fact moving in the opposite direction of political events which were soon to follow. The first came in May 1950, when the Independent Senator, Mustafâ Mari'i, presented an interpellation to the Senate calling for an inquiry into what was later known as the arms scandal and a corruption charge against Karîm Thâbit. The interpellation was the beginning of a series of charges against the Palace for corruption, and especially in dealing with the Palestine War for which the defeat was attributed to Palace corruption. This anti-Palace feeling which had begun in 1946 was to take a more serious direction when it was joined by the traditional politicians. Nahhâs was to make the fatal mistake of taking the wrong decision at the wrong time, and this was to defend the monarchy at a time when it seemed he was standing alone against a tide of anti-monarchy feelings. Thus Sirâj al-Dîn came to the defence of Karim Thabit in the Senate, and a month later Dr. Haykal, Speaker of the Senate, was replaced by Zakî al-Urâbî, Wafd Minister of Communications. Most Opposition figures in the Senate were replaced by Wafdists or Independents in a clear move to punish the Opposition for supporting Marie's interpellation. The irony was that these Opposition figures were no less responsible for the corruption of the Palace which they now attacked than the Wafd. They were, perhaps, even more responsible. But in the game of party politics which Egypt was now witnessing, it was because of the new alliance between the new elements in both the Palace and the Wafd that the non-Wafdist Opposition figures

of the traditional parties fuelled anti-monarchy feelings and became champions of an anti-corruption campaign. It was the fate of Nabhâs that he had to defend the monarchy at that moment while still pursuing his policy of settling the Anglo-Egyptian dispute. Thus, when the opposition parties presented a petition to the King on 17 October 1950, accusing the régime of corruption and warning of a forthcoming revolution, Nabhâs described it as redundant, devoid of truth, and unworthy of reply.¹⁸

The Wafd itself was undergoing a similar tension as Egyptian society, caught between the new elements and the traditional ones, between those who supported a pro-monarchy policy and those who supported the traditional policy of the Wafd.

Another factor was to complicate the situation further, and this was the matter of Palestine. Nabhâs had rejected the 1947 decision by the United Nations for the partition of Palestine between Arabs and Jews. In doing so, Nabhâs was following the mainstream of Egyptian public opinion in its hostile attitude towards the newly created state of Israel. As prime minister he continued his predecessor's policy of non-recognition of Israel. That was to prove a hindrance to any British-Egyptian settlement, for the former maintained that because of the hostilities existing between Egypt and Israel, it was difficult for Britain to abide by its commitment made to Siḍqī in 1946 to evacuate in three years' time. It was even rumoured that Britain had refused to open negotiations with Egypt until the latter had reached a peaceful settlement with Israel.¹⁹ Nabhâs was not to yield to that kind of pressure, although Ismâil Siḍqī did. He was to publish a statement

18. Barry St. Clair McBride, Farouk in Egypt A Biography The Trinity Press London 1967, p. 171.

19. Office of Military Attaché Embassy of India Report No. 14, 15 May 1950, p. 3 Oxford papers.

saying that by maintaining the present policy, Egypt was merely provoking America, placing Britain in a difficult position, delaying the settlement of her own question and losing economically and politically without gaining anything.²⁰ It was said that inside the Wafd, Hamid Zakî held similar views.²¹ Even when the negotiations between Egypt and Britain did open, Britain held the view that it could not move its forces to Gaza as Nabhâs had suggested. The British Ambassador asked Dr. Salâh al-Dîn if he was aware of the political matters concerning this proposal which also included making peace with Israel. To this Salâh al-Dîn answered that a truce existed which did not allow for the aggression by either party. But the Ambassador was not convinced and argued that the truce was not enough and a final settlement with Israel must be reached with an agreement that Israel would allow British troops to cross its territory, since Britain could not enter Israel to meet any enemy without permission.²²

Events followed rapidly. Hamid Zakî accused Dr. Ahmad Hussein of communism because he demanded progressive taxes and minimum wages. With the help of Ahmad Hussein, Akhbâr al-Yûm published a report on the scandal of the distribution of government landed property among the al-Wakîl family. Later there was a spate of resignations and reappointments, of which the most notable was that of 'Abd al-Fatâh Hassan who was accused of being a Palace nominee.²³ Then, when the government tried to pass in Parliament the law concerning the coverage of Palace news, the Wafdist deputy 'Azîz Murham led a campaign against it since it forbade publishing anything related to the Palace without

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., p. 4.

22. al-Qadiyat al-Misraya Mahadir Muhadathat bain Salâh al-Dîn wa al-Safir al-Britânî 17 August 1950, p. 644.

23. 'Abd al-Qâdir, p. 188.

its prior approval.²⁴

Matters were not to stop there, but would deteriorate further when a Wafdist Deputy, Istaḡân Bâsilî, presented to the Chamber of Deputies a new law for the press. It was rumoured that the law was ordered by the King and that Nahhâs was of the view that the government should stay at any cost.²⁵ This led to a campaign of protest led by Aḡmad Abu al-Fath, editor of Al-Masrî, the main Wafdist organ, and Dr. 'Azîz Fahmî, the son of 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa. Hamid Zakî exchanged attacks and accusations with Dr. Salâh al-Dîn when the former said that these laws should be passed as a "white" government could not govern a "red" people.²⁶ Dr. Salâh al-Dîn also firmly opposed the cabinet's intention to dissolve the Council of State, and threatened to resign, thus causing the proposal to be shelved.²⁷

At the same time opposition from the rising new middle class found expression in Aḡmad Hussein's newly modified version of his "Young Egypt's Society", the Socialist Party. The Muslim Brethren were lying dormant for the moment after the assassination of their leader Hassan al-Bannâ in February 1949 and the subsequent crackdown on their organization after the assassination of Nokrâshî. Consequently, the distribution of the Al-Ishtirakiyya, the Socialist Party's organ, reached a peak, especially after publishing photos of beggars sleeping in the streets under the title of "These are your subjects your Majesty".²⁸ Attacks on the monarchy were more direct and aggressive, and the government of Nahhâs was put in an awkward position since its policy was that of avoiding any provocation of the monarchy, not to

24. Sabrî, p. 15.

25. Aḡmad Baha'al-Dîn, Farûk Malikun Dâr Rose al-Yûsuf Cairo 1965 p. 111.

26. Ibid., p. 112.

27. Ibid., pp. 105-109.

28. Sabrî, p. 19.

speak of the new lifestyle which characterized both the new elements of the Wafd and Nabhâs himself. Much was made of the fact that Sirâj al-Dîn was a close relative of the Badrawy family, and the consequent show of wealth by Nabhâs and, especially, his wife. Nabhâs came to personify a way of life of the upper class and was denounced for his trips to Europe, his alleged friendships with "dancing girls", his gambling and frequenting of night clubs.²⁹ It was not altogether surprising that when the King ordered the closure of the newspaper, the cabinet met the following day and decided that since the newspaper of the Socialist Party and its owner Ahmad Hussein were apparently trying to incite the country to revolution and endeavouring to change its social system, it should be closed down.³⁰ The Wafd was using the same language of Sidqî in 1946, and the once opposition party to the established political élite and social order, was now identified with it and became its defender. In the same year, another member of the old guard, Nagib al-Hilâlî, was dismissed.³¹ He had joined the Wafd in 1938 and was known not to be on good terms with Sirâj al-Dîn and had refused to join the cabinet.³²

B. Nabhâs' Last Showdown: The Termination of the Treaty

While Nabhâs was continuing with his policy of accommodation with the monarchy, negotiations with the British opened but in a very different atmosphere from that of the earlier days of Nabhâs. There is no doubt that public opinion left no alternative for Nabhâs, and for

29. James P. Jankouski, Egypt's Young Rebels Hoover Institute Press, Stanford 1979, p. 95.

30. Qadiyat al-Tahrid 'Ala Harqi Madinat al-Qahira wa Mukaddimat Thaurat 23 Yûlyu 1952 al-Matba'at al 'Alamaya Cairo 1957, pp. 60-61.

31. Al-Masrî, 8/11/51 p. 2.

32. Anîs, al-Usûl al-Tarikhiya p. 181.

the first time during his negotiations with the British he played on the fact that the opposition might not accept what he offered. Gone were the days when the Wafd was synonymous with Egypt; now there was opposition to be reckoned with.

To understand my position, one has to appreciate the principle of evacuation. I want to reach a solution by which I can convince the government, people, and opposition. It cannot be denied that the opposition has its eyes opened and focussed on us.³³

And you know that there is communist propoganda and that there is an opposition in Egypt to which we should pay attention in such a delicate matter.³⁴

Salâh al-Dîn was to warn the British that public opinion had accepted the resumption of negotiations only because they were conducted by the Wafd whom they trusted, and that if these negotiations failed, as a means to reach national aspirations, they would totally be rejected in the future by the people, with serious consequences for both of them. He also said that Nahhâs had to give an account to the Egyptian Parliament in his speech from the throne next November on the results of the negotiations.³⁵

Some scholars argue that Nahhâs' decision to abrogate the treaty was a political act. Al-Rafi'i maintained that it was an attempt to cover up the internal situation, which was both corrupt and inefficient.³⁶ Another writer believes that Karîm Thâbit had informed Sirâj al-Dîn of the King's intention to dismiss the government. Hence it was a political move on the part of Nahhâs to force the King to

33. al-Kitâb al-Abyad al-Misri al-Qadiyat al-Misriyya 1882-1954 al-Mutbâa al-Amiriyya Cairo 1955. From a meeting between Nahhas and Field Marshall Sir William Sliem on 5 June 1950, p. 598.

34. Ibid. Meeting between Dr. Salâh al-Dîn and British Ambassador Sir Ralf Stevens 10 August 1950, p. 630.

35. Ibid. Salâh al-Dîn and British Ambassador 24 August 1950, pp. 647, 648.

36. 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Râfi'i, Muqaddimat Thaurat 23 Yûlyu Sanat 1952 Maktabat al-Nahdah Cairo 1964 pp. 26-27.

abandon his decision, for the moment at least.³⁷ It seems that there was some serious talk of forming a new government by al-Hilâlî which would abrogate the treaty, and so outbid the Wafd in the national cause. A meeting was held on 19 September 1951, between Dr. Aḥmad Hussein, 'Abd al-Fatah'Amr (Egyptian Ambassador in London) and Hassan Yûsuf, but it seems that the idea was abandoned.³⁸ By now, there was a real race against time and Nabhâs was eager to gain a breathing space. The King, who returned from Europe on 14 September, did not grant Nabhâs an audience until three days later, after which Nabhâs came out with full praise of the King. Wafdists speculated that Nabhâs was winning the King over to cover his move for abrogating the treaty, which he did on 8 October.³⁹

But the decision was not an easy one, it was rejected by the more moderate elements in the Wafd, headed by Sirâj al-Dîn, as it was previously rejected by the Palace men. The move was too daring to be adopted by the traditional elite. Sirâj al-Dîn regarded it as the "madness of Salâh al-Dîn"⁴⁰ and agreed with Hamid Zakî to give a chance to the British as their Ambassador had asked the latter to do, and Nabhâs agreed to postpone adjournment of parliament for three more weeks.⁴¹

The British, however, did not present any new proposals and Nabhâs was left with his pledge made in Parliament a year ago to terminate the treaty. It is rather difficult to assess the situation and to describe exactly what prompted Nabhâs finally to terminate the treaty. The fear

37. al-Bishrî, p. 479.

38. Sabrî, p. 61.

39. Ibid., pp. 37-40.

40. Mari'i, Vol. 1, p. 183.

41. Sabrî, pp. 56-59.

of being dismissed by the King was definitely a factor, but some sources, though few, speak of another reason - America. It was said that when Hamid Zakî returned from Europe before the termination of the treaty, he asked Nahhâs whether he was prepared for the abrogation of the treaty, and Nahhâs replied that the United States supported them. Then Salâh al-Dîn had called Ibrâhîm Faraj from Paris and told him there was pressure on Britain. But it seems that that was a mere illusion on the part of both Salâh al-Dîn and Nahhâs, or in other words, just wishful thinking. No evidence was found to support such an idea.⁴² As for the King, Sirâj al-Dîn told Nahhâs that Fârûk would not dare to dismiss them after abrogating the treaty.⁴³

It is difficult to know on what Salâh al-Dîn based his conviction of American support, although one is inclined to think that he was moved more by his own personal convictions of how to deal with the British. Salâh al-Dîn was an old Wafdist who had shared in the Wafd's struggles from its earliest days and was known to have been on good terms with the new young elements of the Wafd, especially in the Al-Masri newspaper, which was advocating a policy of neutrality line that Egypt should adopt in the East-West cold war. This was a policy advocated by him, and he was raising the two popular slogans, "Evacuation at all costs", and "Unity of the Nile Valley", in order to undermine any moderating influence by Sirâj al-Dîn in the Cabinet.⁴⁴

One could, of course, argue that Sirâj al-Dîn and Nahhâs found it opportune to terminate the treaty after they had heard of the King's intention to dismiss them and were assured of American support, however

42. Moḥammad 'Abd al-Wahâb who is working on his PhD dissertation on American Egyptian relations at that period refuted any such idea. See also George McGhee, "Britain and Egypt at the Brink" Envoy to the Middle East Harper and Row Publishers New York 1983, pp. 365-387.

43. Mari'i. Ibid., Sabri Ibid.

44. Embassy of India Monthly report N18 15 June 1950 Oxford private papers.

vague that might be, by Salâh al-Dîn. Nabhâs could have also calculated that his action would have little practical effect, as a British journalist wrote. British troops would remain and the Sudanese issue would continue on its chosen path, and Nabhâs would have killed two birds with one stone: the continual protection of Egypt by the presence of British troops, which the present writer doubts was Nabhâs' intention, and the opportunity to say that he had never betrayed the people of the Valley by surrendering any of Egypt's sacred rights.⁴⁵ Thus on 8 October 1951, Nabhâs concluded his speech in Parliament by saying "It was for Egypt that I signed the treaty, and it is for Egypt that I abrogate it". The choice of the day was not without significance, precisely six years earlier his cabinet was dismissed.

Instead of capitalizing on that act, what Nabhâs did was actually to release a force which he could not control. Not only was he giving the go-ahead to all anti-British sentiments in the country, but also by this act he admitted the futility of his peaceful legal methods. And soon the alternative which was sought but unrealized became available - armed struggle. Thus the Wafd had fulfilled its historic mission in extracting every possible legal and peaceful method for more than three decades, and now the people were totally convinced of the futility of that road as Salâh al-Dîn had warned the British. The leadership of the Wafd which had become an integral part of the traditional ruling elite of the country was not prepared and equipped for that kind of struggle and that type of situation, and this time they were lagging far behind the national movement instead of leading it as they did under Saâd and Nabhâs in the twenties and thirties.

The dilemma of the Wafd and Nabhâs of keeping pace with the national movement while retaining their traditional outlook, cannot be

45. The Times, 27 March 1951.

better illustrated than by these words of Nahhâs himself on the anniversary of Eïd al-Jihâd on 13 November 1951. Addressing the workers who left the Canal he said

the programme we have pledged ourselves to is a socialist programme as you know, and as such not for the benefit of one group over another. Rather it seeks the happiness of all the classes of the people, especially the workers.

Then at the end he concluded by saying

People of the Nile Valley, you who are protected by the noblest reign, that of al-Fârûk al-'Azîz King of Egypt and the Sudan, before whose birth the national movement was born, and during whose youth the shackles of colonialism were broken and the sites of the occupier abolished.⁴⁶

This policy of extending a hand to a restless public opinion and another hand to the monarchy was doomed to failure since both camps were increasingly uncompromising in their stands and demands. Guerrilla activities against the British forces in the canal zone were gaining wide support from a population inflamed by Nahhâs' action of abrogating the treaty and determined to replace the Wafd's policy of peaceful negotiations with that of a people's war. Nahhâs and all other traditional leaders could not but pay homage to those who were killed in action when huge processions were organized in the streets of Cairo especially on 13 November 1951.⁴⁷ But as a responsible government which was entrusted to maintain law and order, it issued a statement at the end of September stating that it had decided to take the responsibility of training the guerrillas under its supervision and prohibited the collection of donations for them.⁴⁸ In other words, any independent movement by the people was banned and a crackdown on guerrilla camps, especially those of the Socialist Party, followed

46. al-Masri 14/11/1951.

47. Mahmud, p. 196.

48. al-Rafi'i, Muqaddimat Thaurat 23 Yulu 1952, p. 5.

under the pretext that they were illegal.⁴⁹ This dual policy was soon to lead the Wafdist government into direct confrontation with the people when demonstrations were held against the appointment of Hâfiz 'Afifi as the Royal Chamberlain. In an interview with the press 'Afifi had expressed pro-British views which were considered to be in direct contrast with the national feelings at the time. Nahhâs, who was still embroiled in interparty squabbling, had consented to 'Afifi's appointment rather than 'Alî Mâhir or Nagîb al-Hilâlî who were also put forward by the Palace. Nahhâs' personal feeling at the moment did not equal the national sentiments, and serious clashes between the police and demonstrations followed especially on 17 January 1952.⁵⁰ Voices were raised demanding the severing of diplomatic relations with Britain, and guerilla activities were on the increase, forcing the British to send reinforcements.⁵¹

The situation was deteriorating so rapidly that on 20 January, student demonstrations took on a serious aspect when, for the first time in some years, police were fired upon by armed demonstrators. According to some press reports there was something of a battle in one secondary school in which two were killed and twelve wounded. The government then threatened that schools where serious disorders took place would be closed for the rest of the academic year and their students suspended. Nahhâs appealed to the students, describing the situation as very serious and warned them against agitators who attempted to divert their patriotic sentiments into seditious channels. All Cairo schools, together with the two universities, were closed for one week.⁵² On 24 January Aḥmad Hussein held a press

49. Qadiyat al-Tahrid p. 199.

50. al-Bishrî, p. 494.

51. Eden, p.226.

52. FO 371-96870 JE/1018/5 Sir R. Stevenson (No. 120) 21 January 1952.

conference in Cairo in which he attacked the government in the strongest terms. He concluded by saying that "We should not give the Wafd government another chance to commit more stupidities, and we must do our best to throw it out". The Al-Asâs newspaper, which was the only one to publish his statement in detail, was confiscated for printing it.⁵³

The situation rapidly deteriorated. The King provoked public opinion once more by appointing 'Abd al-Fatah 'Amr, the recalled Ambassador from London, as his political adviser.⁵⁴ Feelings against the King were running high and anti-monarchical slogans were common in the demonstrations. The atmosphere was very tense with the news of the activities of the guerrillas and the counter-measures taken by the British inflaming further an already inflamed population. The explosion came when Sirâj al-Dîn as Minister of the Interior ordered the provisional police in the town of Ismailiya to refuse an ultimatum by the British forces to surrender and instead to resist. The ensuing battle resulted in about fifty dead and more than a hundred injured. The news spread in Cairo and the next day the Capital witnessed a series of violent disorders which was later to be called "Black Saturday". Eye-witnesses of that day described how a group of organized and well-disciplined squads led by young men of the effendi class were conducting a campaign of destruction in what appeared as a planned programme against selected targets.⁵⁵ This led many people to speculate on a conspiracy theory with the accusation directed against the British or the Monarchy or both together. 'Abd al-Fatâh Hassan wrote in his memoirs how he received a report from the political police

53. FO 371-96870 JE/1018/6 Sir R. Stevenson (No. 163) 26 January 1952.

54. 'Abd al-Qâdir, pp. 202-203.

55. See Gamâl al-Shargâwî Hariq al-Qâhirah Qarâr Ittihâm Gadîd Dar al-Thaqafat al-Jadidah Cairo 1976 especially the Appendix section where there is more than one account of what happened.

that there was a plot afoot to get rid of the Wafdist government and replace it by a 'Alī Māhir cabinet.⁵⁶ There was talk about contacts being made between Hāfiz 'Afifi, 'Abd al-Fatah 'Amr, Alī Māhir, and the British and American Ambassadors,⁵⁷ and how the cabinet was going to discuss and maybe even declare the expulsion of all British subjects from Egypt and sever relations with Britain.⁵⁸ It is interesting to note here that only Salāh al-Dīn accused the Americans of burning Cairo. Others, including the present writer, would hesitate to compare the term "burning of Cairo" with the famous burning of Rome by Nero. A close inspection of the places burned would reveal that they were the targets most likely to be attacked by angry people against an irresponsible ruling class. At some moments in history, as in the revolution of 1919, the public reacts in the same manner without proper planning or co-ordination in advance. The anger was general and the reaction was similar. That the masses this time were not controlled by the Wafd, in fact were against the Wafd, simply meant that the Wafd had lost control and legitimacy. As future events would reveal, 26 January was to be a watershed in Egyptian politics, the collapse of the authority of the traditional powers, be it the Wafd or the monarchy. It was not for another six months that the vacuum of power caused by the upheaval of 26 January would be finally filled by the most powerful and organized sector of the urban lower class, the army. With the dismissal of Nahhās, a new era in Egyptian politics started which could be best described as the final days of not only Nahhās, but also the Wafd, the monarchy, and the whole political order. But it seems that

56. 'Abd al-Fatāh Hassan Dhizrayāt Siyāsiyyah Mua'sasat Dar al-Sh'ab Cairo 1974 p. 101.

57. Shuhdī 'Attīyah al-Shafāf Tatawwar al-Harakat al-Wataniyyah al-Misriyya 1882-1956 Manshurat Salah al-Dīn Jerusalem n.d. p. 122.

58. Cab 129-24 Cabinet meeting 28 January 1952 8th Conclusions p. 48.

none of the actors on the scene at the time were aware of the consequences of what happened on 26 January, for they continued behaving as if nothing had happened.

At 2300 hours Nabhâs' broadcast came out with first attacking British atrocities in the Canal zone. Then he described the outbreak in Cairo as due to traitors who were profiting by the situation to undertake criminal acts and sow dissension harmful to the national cause. He then announced his own assumption of supreme power under conditions of martial law. He appealed to the people to keep calm, and said that practical steps would be taken to realise national aspirations.⁵⁹ Nabhâs, who was persuaded by his ministers to declare martial law, was subsequently dismissed for the last time after telegrams had reached the Palace that British forces were forty miles away from Cairo.⁶⁰

'Alî Mâhir was to succeed Nabhâs as prime minister, but he was to follow a policy of accommodation with the Wafd which Nabhâs warmly welcomed. Mâhir visited Nabhâs in his house the second day of his appointment, and Nabhâs declared after the visit that Parliament was to convene that night to support Mâhir's government. It was said that Nabhâs was told that by doing so he would be the one supporting the government, thus restoring his position in the face of the public after his dismissal. It was rumoured that the idea was Karîm Thâbit's, who had visited Nabhâs that morning. In the evening Mâhir described Nabhâs as his "great predecessor" among cheers and claps of the Wafdist Parliament. In the second meeting Mâhir asked Parliament to extend martial law another three months, but they refused. That night, Mâhir issued an updated, open decree dissolving Parliament, to be implemented

59. FO 371-96870 JE/1018/13 Sir R. Stevenson (No. 184) 26 January 1952.

60. Sabrî, p. 36.

when necessary. When Nahhâs knew about it, he called one of Mâhir's ministers, Ibrâhîm 'Abd al-Wahâb, to ask him to tell Mâhir that whatever the latter wanted, would pass in Parliament.⁶¹ But that policy adopted by Mâhir towards the Wafd strengthened the Wafd in the eyes of the public once more. Nahhâs deliberately appeared in photos in the newspapers shaking the hands of 'Alî Mâhir, which gave the impression that it was not long before his return to power.⁶² Naturally this policy was not to the liking of the Palace, and only a month after Mâhir had formed his cabinet he was dismissed, to be replaced by an ex-Wafdist and an arch rival of Sirâj al-Dîn, Nagîb al-Hilâlî.

Nagîb al-Hilâlî's first action was to suspend Parliament for one month.⁶³ One week later, the report of an official inquiry into the events of 26 January was published. It accused Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn, who was the Wafdist Minister of the Interior at the time, of negligence, and he was found to be "administratively responsible".⁶⁴ This was to be followed by an order from Hilâlî to both Sirâj al-Dîn and 'Abd al-Fatâh Hassan to leave Cairo and retire to their country homes.⁶⁵ Hilâlî's campaign against corruption which he had declared on forming his cabinet gave the impression that it was conducted solely against the Wafd.⁶⁶ But his government lasted no longer than the beginning of July.

Hilâlî's fall was rumoured to be due to a large bribe paid in Swiss francs to Elias Andrawes and Kârim Thâbit by Aḥmad 'Abûd. The

61. Sabrî, pp. 49-51.

62. Ibid., p. 79.

63. The Times, 3 March 1952.

64. The Times, 8 March, 1952.

65. The Times, 19 March 1952.

66. Sabrî, pp. 80-81.

latter was said to want to avoid claims by the government for unpaid taxes amounting to several millions of Egyptian pounds. It was also said that 'Abūd and Karīm Thābit had had talks with Mr. Caffery, the American Ambassador in Cairo, prior to Hilālī's fall. This led to some speculation of possible American intervention to bring down Hilālī and hence the return of the Wafd.⁶⁷ Hilālī was to assert later that he was told through two foreigners in high positions that the Wafd had contacted the British through 'Abūd offering to reach an acceptable agreement.⁶⁸

A state of 'confusion lasted for two days after the fall of Hilālī. Bahi al-Dīn Barakāt and Hussein Sirrī were both instructed to form a cabinet at the same time. The former asked Nahhās to co-operate with him, to which Nahhās replied that he would leave the King to act as he wished but would not participate in any government, and would always demand elections.⁶⁹ When the choice was finally made and Sirrī formed the government, Nahhās responded to it favourably saying that it was only a transitional arrangement.⁷⁰

From the start Sirrī's government had to face the army's crises. There had been some discontent brewing since the end of the previous year. The form of the army's discontent expressed itself in the elections of the Officers' Club, which were postponed from 18 December 1951 to 3 January 1952. The King wanted Hussein Sirrī 'Amir to be elected as President of the Officers' Club, but Muḥammad Najīb was elected instead.⁷¹ Hilālī had nominated Brig. Muḥammad Najīb as

67. Eden, pp. 236-237.

68. Sabri, p. 86.

69. Ibid., p. 108.

70. Ibid., p. 92.

71. Aḥmad Hamrūsh Qissat Thaurat 23 Yulyu al-Mua'sasat al-'Arabiya lil Dirāsāt wa al-Nashr Vol. 1 2nd ed. Beirut 1977 p. 163.

Minister of War but the King rejected the idea. Sirrî repeated the nomination to be refused once more. Things got out of hand when Haydar, without Sirrî's knowledge, dissolved the Officers' Club and Najîb was transferred to Mankabad.⁷² Sirrî tendered his resignation, and was once more replaced by Hilâlî as prime minister and Ismail Sherîn, husband of Princess Fouzaia, sister of Fârûk, became Minister of War.⁷³ This appointment, together with the general knowledge that the King was planning a clampdown on the army, prompted a secret organization of officers, known as "The Free Officers", to decide to take military action immediately. That organization had been planning some action for 1955, but the incidents of Cairo on 26 January convinced its leader Gamâl 'Abd al-Nâsser, to advance the date to November 1952. For a second time the date was advanced, this time to the night of 22-23 July 1952.

Two explanations can be given for both the reason and success of the army's move on that night. The first is that the "Free Officers Organization" was able to identify its cause within the army with the general discontent against the King at the time.⁷⁴ The arms scandal was easily integrated with the corruption, and the King was accused of being its primary cause. The second was that since 26 January, it was obvious that the only national institution in Egypt which would be able to provide law and order, was the army.⁷⁵ Furthermore, they were to represent the spearhead of the urban lower middle class in its conflict with the more traditional landowners class and upper middle class who had dominated Egyptian politics and society since the revolution of 1919. As one of these officers later wrote, none of them was a son of

72. Sabrî, pp. 13-17.

73. Sabrî, p. 122.

74. P.J. Vatikiotis, The Egyptian Army in Politics; Pattern for New Nations? Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1961 pp. 66-67.

75. Ibid., p. 71.

a Pâshâ, nor had his family more than fifty feddans. They were from the middle class, with some from the lower strata of this class, sons of minor government officials. Their social composition was close to the leadership of the Socialist Party, the New Watanî Party, the Muslim Brethren, and the Marxist organisations, not the Wafd or the Liberal Constitutionalists or the Saádists.⁷⁶ Nâsser, of course, was only thirty-five years old, whereas Nahhâs was seventy-three.⁷⁷

Nahhâs who was spending a holiday in Europe, took the plane for the first time in his life to return to Egypt. He arrived on the night of 26-27 July, the day King Fârûk abdicated his throne to his infant son at the "request" of the army, and hurried from the airport to meet the new army leadership. He told reporters after the meeting that as prime minister he had shown indulgence to traitors only so long as they appeared to serve national aims, later he had fought them.⁷⁸ He hailed General Najîb, who was chosen by the army to preside over its Revolutionary Command Council, as "saviour of the nation".⁷⁹ Nahhâs also declared "We have returned to our country after tyranny has been exterminated and prestige restored by our great Army and its great leader, General Nagib".⁸⁰

Nothing could illustrate the gulf between Nahhâs and the new army leaders than the offer by Nahhâs to Najîb of the title of Pasha, the same day titles were abolished.⁸¹ For Nahhâs, the army had got rid of his arch-enemy, ex-King Farûk now, and Parliament should be convened

76. Hamrûsh Vol. 1, pp. 212-215.

77. Ibid., p. 210.

78. The Times, 29 July 1952.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Terry, p. 311.

once more so that constitutional life could continue with the natural result of him resuming the premiership once more. Naturally, once the army moved out of its barracks and held absolute power, it was difficult to send it back to where it belonged. With the social composition of the new leadership, some of whose members had been in anti-Wafd parties or organizations, mainly the Muslim Brethren and Young Egypt (later the Socialist Party), the collision between the Wafd and the young army officers was inevitable.

Parliament was not convened as Nahhâs had hoped. This was because of some legal interpretation by anti-Wafdist members of the State Council.⁸² The campaign against the Wafd, and especially its leader, had begun. On the night of 31 July, Muḥammad Najīb issued a public statement urging the parties to purge themselves from corrupt elements as the army had done.⁸³

Although 'Alī Mâhir, who was appointed prime minister had declared that the government was in agreement with the army on dissolving political parties on 10 August, this was denied by Najīb the following day.⁸⁴ It was succeeded by hints by Najīb to 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa at a meeting between them that Nahhâs should resign. To this Nahhâs replied in a public statement that he would not. Another issue of collision between the army and the political parties was the new proposed law of land reform. In the same statement Nahhâs added that the Wafd executive had made it clear that they thought the regime was working on the wrong lines.⁸⁵ A meeting between Sirâj al-Dîn and some of the army officers - Nâsser, Gamâl Sâlem, and Salâh Sâlem - to

82. Hamrûsh Vol. 1, pp. 233-234.

83. Wahîd Râft Fuḏul Min Thaurat 23 Yulyu Dar al-Sharûk Cairo 1978 p. 68.

84. Ibid., p. 35.

85. The Times, 21 August 1952.

discuss the land reform issue was to be followed by another when Muṣṭafâ Amin reprinted in the weekly Akhir Lahza that Sirâj al-Dîn had said that he had the army officers in his pocket.⁸⁶ Naturally the second meeting never took place. The conflict between the Wafd and the army was escalating when the Wafd's executive declared its opposition to the limitation on land ownership for present holders of land and the suspension of the purge committee which had been established by the Wafd.⁸⁷ Event followed upon event. On 7 September, sixty-four politicians were arrested, including Sirâj al-Dîn, Hâfiz 'Affîf, Karîm Thâbit, and Ibrâhîm 'Abd al-Hâdî.⁸⁸ 'Alî Mâhir himself resigned two days later and the land reform law was issued on the same day, 9 September 1952.⁸⁹ The same day a new law was passed giving political parties one month to reorganize themselves. On 15 September, Sirâj al-Dîn resigned from the party as General Secretary⁹⁰ and Nahhâs' refusal to give up the Party leadership forced the army to set in motion the purge machine against him. Under the new law of political parties anyone convicted by the purge tribunals would be disqualified from holding an official position in the party. Nahhâs was thus held administratively responsible for the £E300,000 given to ex-king Fârûk as a personal loan from the secret fund of the Ministry of the Interior under Sirâj al-Dîn.⁹¹ But it seems that under continuous pressure from the army, Nahhâs had finally to give up. As The Times reported,

The Wafd Party, reversing its decision of a few days ago, to-day decided to drop Mustafâ al-Nahhâs, its leader for the

86. Hamrûsh, Vol. 1, p. 261.

87. The Times, 6 September 1952.

88. Hamrûsh, pp. 238, 242.

89. Ibid., pp. 239, 240, 243.

90. The Times, 17 September 1952.

91. The Times, 16 September 1952.

past 25 years, rather than face dissolution of the party. This decision, which was made at a meeting of the executive in Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs' house, was not unanimous, and some members estimated that the Wafd under new leadership would retain little more than one-third of its former strength.⁹²

Nahhâs was given the title of "Honorary President of the Wafd", but even that was not acceptable to the new régime. On 8 November 1952, the Minister of the Interior objected to his name and title.⁹³ On 10 December, the 1923 Constitution was abolished, and political parties were banned completely by 18 January 1953. Three days before the Corruption Tribunal started its work on 25 May 1953, Nahhâs' name was lifted from the Wafdist newspapers which used to publish news about his meetings and movements. The Tribunal started its work by bringing to court Karîm Thâbit, Dr. Ahmad al-Naqib and other prominent Wafdists, Osmân Muharam and the al-Wakîl family. On 18 June 1953 Egypt was declared a republic. Nahhâs expressed his approval of this step to the Indian leader Nehru who was on a visit to Egypt at the time, but also his displeasure with the "military régime". By mid-September 1953, the Revolution's Court was set up with the sole aim of destroying the Wafd. Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn was tried and convicted, Nahhâs, his wife, and Hâfiz 'Afîfî were put under house arrest.⁹⁴ Nahhâs remained under house arrest until he died on 23 August 1965. His funeral turned into a mass demonstration attended by more than a hundred thousand people.⁹⁵ A last tribute by the Egyptian nation to the man who presided over the national movement for a quarter of a century.

92. The Times, 7 October 1952.

93. Hamrûsh, Vol. 1, p. 270.

94. Hamrûsh, Vol. 1, pp. 281-285.

95. al-Sâid, p. 128.

CONCLUSION

In order to have a better understanding of the role played by Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs in Egyptian politics, this thesis tried to examine the framework, whether it be social or ideological, in which Nahhâs operated. The character of Nahhâs, important in itself, is not sufficient to understand his policies. Nahhâs shared some of the traits of his own social class, education, and generation which would lead some to say that any other person in Nahhâs's position ^{would} adopt the same stand against the British and the Palace. Yet Nahhâs was not just a mere instrument of history as might be suggested here, for without his own personal traits Nahhâs would had never become a popular leader for such a long time: The leader of the largest Egyptian political party and for the longest time compared to any other Egyptian leader in recent history. Nahhâs therefore should be seen in the context of what he represented in Egyptian political thought in general, inside the Wafd party, himself.

Contrary to what has been widely accepted, the Liberal Constitutional Party was not the sole heir of the old Umma Party. The argument that it was went as follows: there were two main parties and ideologies before World War One, the Umma and Watani. Since most of the Umma party members joined the Wafd later, and then defected to form the Liberal Constitutional Party, this new party is an extension of the old one. Here the argument is based on the similarity of ideologies but, more arguably, on the sheer physical existence of the same men in the two parties, as for example, Lutfi al-Sayyid "the philosopher of the Party". Their rival, the Watani Party, however, continued as it was in ideology and organization, although not with the same members or influence. Thus the two parties did exist before World War One, and after it.

Although this argument is basically correct, it fails to notice that the Wafd Party was an heir of the old Umma Party too. It was the ideology of the Umma Party which became the dominant ideology among the elite of the politically-minded Egyptians after World War One, and it triumphed over the Watanî ideology. More significantly, its ideology and programme became that of the Wafd Party. The difference between the two rival parties - the Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalist - was one of social background of its members and political awareness of the developments which occurred in the Egyptian society as a result of the revolution of 1919. Thus their approaches differed in degree but not in content. Both parties were for Egyptianness versus Ottomanism, a Liberal Constitutional Monarchy versus Republicanism or absolute autocracy by the King. Most important was the similarity of approach to the solution of the national problem, i.e., by peaceful legal means, though negotiation with the British. ^{Not} or illegal methods, and the rejection of negotiation, as was the case with the Watanî Party. One could further argue, that the Liberal Constitutional Party had betrayed its principles, while the Wafd was more faithful to its Umma ideological heritage.

Because of the mass support enjoyed by their rivals, the Liberals soon abandoned their democratic ideas and institutions, such as the constitution and parliament, after failing to get elected as they hoped, in favour of a more autocratic notion of government, and became closely allied to the autocratic monarch. The reason for the defeat of the Liberals was the fact that they were bound by family links and wealth, both of which they still used in campaigning as contrasted to the more modern and skillful methods used by the urban middle class effendis. It was not long before the rural landowners discovered that their main rivals in governing post-independent Egypt were not their old enemy, the Palace, but their old allies in the urban middle class.

This competition between the landowners and the effendi lawyers was to dominate Egyptian politics from 1919 to the military coup in 1952. Saád or 'Adlî, Nahhâs or Muḥammad Maḥmūd, only reflected this struggle between these two social groups for political primacy. This struggle between the Wafd and the Liberals continued after the social structure of the Wafd had become similar to that of its old rival. It was transferred to the new parties which represented the same social groups that the Wafd once did.

The other difference may be inferred from the political power and structure of the leadership of the Wafd Party. There were two main competing wings in the Wafdist leadership, the urban middle class, and the rural landowners. The urban middle class, in a sense represented the first generation of the urban intelligentsia who were mainly professionals and to be more precise, lawyers. Thus a lengthy exposé was given to the reasons by which this segment of the society became the leaders of the national movement. Its main representatives were Saád Zaghlûl and the "Gang of Four" which succeeded him, Nahhâs, Makram, Mâhir and Nokrâshî. Although Nokrâshî was not a lawyer - not all of them were lawyers - he belonged to that school of thought, the intellectual background of which was predominantly influenced by lawyers and government officials. Although they were not the majority in numbers, and did not constitute the main bulk of the second or other strata of the Wafd, which was their power-base and main source of power, yet they had immense power and influence disproportionate to their actual numbers and representation, due to the skill of their profession, as shown earlier.

The second wing consisted of large and medium landowners. With the defection of the large landowners to form the Liberal Constitutional Party, their number in the leadership of the Wafd declined. A further set-back came with the election of Nahhâs as

successor to Saád and the defeat of Fathallah Barakât. With the defections in 1932, the control of the "Gang of Four" was absolute.

Each wing had its own policy which differed from the other, and the outcome of the Wafd's general policy reflected the internal balance of power between these two wings within the party's leadership. So the urbans versus the rurals, as one might put it, was reflected in one being more militant than the other. The internal balance between these two wings decided their policy against the other two powers, the King and the British, and their shifting alliances too. The urban lawyers were for a more militant policy in general though with a closer relation with Britain at the expense of the power of the King. That was evident in 1932 when the two factions argued on whether to accept the King's terms, i.e., enter into a coalition government or reject them, which resulted in defeat and the defection of the landowners. Thus from 1932 to the end of the forties, the urban wing dominated the leadership, although it had two setbacks. The first was the defection of two strong pillars of the old guard, Mâhir and Nokrâshî, and secondly, the defection of Makram himself in 1942. Although they were replaced with men from the same background, as for example, Sabrî Abu 'Alam, yet they were not of the same calibre or influence. Thus, this period was characterized by a very close relationship with the British, while sharply hostile to the King. It was not surprising that they were the ones who signed the 1936 Treaty with Britain, and came back to power on the heels of the 4th February 1942 incident.

The explanation one might give is that after all the King represented the head of the social pyramid consisting of the landowners. Yet however much the landowners differed with the King over issues of constitutionalism and liberalism, in practice they shared the basic common social and class base, and their conflict of interests was secondary rather than primary. The story was different

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with the urban intellectuals for whom a less autocratic system was the only way for their social and political advancement in a society which was still controlled by those who owned wealth and land of which they had none. Thus they were ready to challenge the social system in order to have more votes, even by upsetting certain rules and laws. They understood that it was the nation, the masses which were the source of their power. Sa'ad enshrined this idea in national lore.

Although this thesis did not discuss in detail the social policies of the Wafd, it was by comparison the most progressive of all the pre-1952 governments in terms of social legislation. Two examples which illustrate this were the legalization of the trade or labour unions, and the labour laws of 1942, and the introduction of free education in 1952. There is no doubt that even by the mere fact of their wide patronage, favouring supporters, they served the interests of a larger constituency than any other party. Also they were more oriented to the popular decisions which served their party interests, and so had to rely on more favourable social policies than other parties.

The defeat of the urban wing was due to the absence of three of its most celebrated leaders, Noqrâshî, Mâhir and Ebied. Then there was the gradual transformation of Nabhâs into a member of the establishment as a result of his marriage, and the rise once more of the big and medium landowners in the leadership of the Wafd, best exemplified and personified by the assumption of the Party's secretariat of Fû'ad Sirâj al-Dîn, the nephew of one of the largest landowning families, the Badrâwî. With the decline of the role of the urban middle class in the party's higher echelons, the Wafd became a second edition of the Liberal Constitutional Party, with a popular flavour.

On the other hand, the urban middle class expanded rapidly during World War Two comprising new social forces that differed from the

effendi class which existed at the beginning of the century. This time they were not only lawyers and government officials, but army officers and members of the free professions. The increasing ranks of the working class as a new force was closely linked, at least in theory, to them adding to the strength of this new middle class of the forties, and affecting their way of thinking. Thus a new generation of urban middle class emerged and found political expression to a great extent in the Muslim Brotherhood, and to a lesser extent in new groups of the Marxist Left. The Wafd lost its grip over the middle classes, as a result, and increasingly became a party of the big landowners, despite its efforts to maintain its popularity by the termination of the Treaty in 1951, a self-defeating and in fact, suicidal act.

The landowner-dominated Wafd now had to content with new groups that had a different perspective on the national question. In order to maintain its property and national appeal, it had to respond - or succumb - to the pressure from these new groups whose votes were needed. The Wafd was, in effect, abandoning whatever ideology and "raison d'etre" it had, and playing into the hands of its rivals when it unleashed a force which was not under its control.

It found itself dealing with a situation of armed struggle. Given its own structure, its fate was sealed in 1952, for the situation went out of their control on 26 January 1952 and the whole system collapsed four months later.

The Wafd, for a long time, articulated the aspirations of that emergent middle class in the last century. As it was not capable of bringing down the old monopoly of power exercised by the Palace, it had to share power with the landowners, either inside the party itself or outside with the Liberal Constitutionalist Party. The struggle between the party and the King was a symbol of the struggle between the new urban middle classes and the rural landowners, especially when the

Liberal Constitutionalists allied themselves with the Palace. After World War Two, the urban middle classes strengthened their position in society. At the same time, they were alienated from the Wafd which ceased to be their representative because of its internal conflicts and defections. Thus the urban middle classes were no longer opposing only the King but the Wafd, under the banner of the Socialist Party and the Muslim Brotherhood, until their absolute triumph came on 23 July 1953 with the complete defeat and surrender of the landowners by the abolition of the monarchy and the agrarian reform laws in the same year. One may argue that the Wafd at a certain stage in the social development of Egyptian history represented the repeated attempts of the rising urban middle class to break the aristocracy's monopoly of power, that is of the old Turkish ruling class before and after the 1919 revolution, and the big rural landowners after the 1919 revolution. the 1924, which saw for the first time elements of the effendi class, was the first attempt, to be followed by others in 1928, 1930, 1936-7, and 1950-2. They were resisted bitterly throughout the period, and the Sidqī regime was the absolute and final attempt to try to destroy them.

Where does Nahhās fit into all of this? Nahhās as the leader of the Wafd and through his own personality (which had enabled him to assume the role of leadership in the first place), played a weighty role in the ensuing struggle between the two wings of the Wafd Party. Nahhās was a typical representative of the urban middle-class wing. When his own position moved closer to that of the rural landlords, the final defeat of that wing inside the party was not long acoming. One could even suggest that he let them down. With the leader of the Wafd no longer representing the urban middle class, the whole course of the Wafd changed, although his presence still gave the party its popular appeal, even when the party's reality had already changed. Nahhās is

the personification of that development of the party from an urban middle-class party to a rural landowner's party. Of course I am not arguing for a clear-cut mechanical relationship, or in absolute terms, only in general terms. Nahhâs' own development is a classical case of the impact of a position of power on an ex-revolutionary. Being prime minister, or even minister, changes his social status. There is no doubt that the case of Seif al-Dîn was groundless, yet one cannot but still see some point in it. If Nahhâs was not already a member of the establishment, would not the fees have been different? And in seeking to be a prince (a debatable point, but one not without interest) his life-style had definitely changed. His marriage to Zainab al-Wakîl, daughter of a pasha, turned him into a landowner, even though all this land may have been acquired by his wife. The elderly Nahhâs had little in common with the young militant Nahhâs of the Watani Party. It was not strange, therefore, that he finally sided with Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn for his choice as his successor; a choice which clearly indicated his new social preferences and leaning.

The rural landowners not only benefited from the defection from the party of such strong personalities as Ahmad Mâhir, Nokrâshî and Makram, they also benefited from the personal change in the position of the leader of the Wafd himself. His defection from one wing (that of the urban middle class) to join the other carried weight and prestige. Nahhâs began as representative of the urban middle class and ended as the representative of the landowners, or at least, the patron and protector of their true representative, Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn. He ended protecting the very group he once opposed. That was not a change in his political position as much as a result of his moving upwards from the bottom of the social ladder to its top, via social-political status and newly-acquired landownership.

This leads us to another aspect in Nahhâs' personality, the role played by his co-partners without any effect on him. Two particular

examples are his wife and Amīn Osmān.

Charisma
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As for the latter, his reputation was at least that of a very close friend of the British. Some people would even accuse him of treason. Yet the astonishing thing is that whatever Amīn did, whether on his behalf, or on behalf of the Wafd, which meant Nahhās, did not raise any doubt about the feelings of Nahhās towards the British. For one could argue that it is doubtful whether Amīn would have contacted the British without the approval of Nahhās, and that Nahhās, who was so keen about his anti-British image as a national leader, would have allowed anything which would damage his reputation and stand between him and the Egyptian people to be continued. Nevertheless, it was Amīn who was labelled as the friend of the British, and not Nahhās.

Nahhās' wife, Zainab al-Wakīl, married him when her financial status was modest, in spite of being the daughter of a pasha. What happened to her was the focus of attention and criticism of the opposition, which, in her case, found a great deal to talk about. Nahhās did not say or do anything to restrain her from leading her own provocative life-style that differed completely from what was known about himself. If Nahhās himself did not get rich, the same could not be said about Zainab, but one cannot but note the fact that she was his wife. Was he unaware of her activities, and the rumours they fed?

The same could also be said about Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn. It was very interesting for the present writer to see how many writers labelled Sirāj a feudalist reactionary. Although it was Nahhās who promoted, or at least encouraged Sirāj's^{al-Dīn} rise to be Secretary of the Party, nothing was said about that. All three cases have one feature in common. All three had close relationships with Nahhās, yet he was not identified or associated with any of them. What makes it puzzling is Nahhās' three other close relationships, namely with Māhir, Maḡram and Nokrāshī. As was seen in the election of 1927, it was assumed that it was three of

them who got him elected. And to put it more strongly, Nahhâs was their tool. but what we saw was the fall of the three masterminds one after the other, and the survival of what was supposed to have been a stooge, for it was repeatedly alleged that Nahhâs was a stooge of Makram. However, it was Maḳraḡ who became the outcast and formed a new party without any real following.

Three explanations could be offered. Either that being leader of the Wafd gave Nahhâs such immunity that he was protected in any of the previous six relationships, whether as against Makram or Mâhir or Nokrâshî, thus being above suspicion in the cases of Zainab, Amîn and Sirâj, or that he was so cunning and a public relations man of the first order, that he saved himself from any connecting accusation. He was a politician in the sense of knowing how and when to associate himself with others and to do so without getting too closely associated with them, that is, he knew how to use people. The third explanation is both of them combined, and in my opinion is the most logical: since his position gave such prestige that Amîn, for example, would be overshadowed by Nahhâs' influence and reputation, and Maḳraḡ would be an outcast for having differed with him.

There is no doubt of the sincerity of Nahhâs as a national leader. But sincerity does not shine through when it comes to political reality and action. Nahhâs, as a devout disciple of Zaghlûl, inherited the latter's fear of another 1882, that is, a British intervention under the pretext of protecting the monarch, to secure direct rule over Egypt. Nahhâs therefore regarded any "revolutionary" method as an unnecessary provocation of the British that would lead to disaster. The ideology agreed upon was that of peaceful legal means, that of negotiations, but also that of curtailing the powers of the monarch, and bringing the Palace into the mainstream of the national movement, which practically meant under their control. In the case of the Wafd

and Nabhās, however, it presented them with a dilemma. On one side, the main aim of the Wafd was to demand national independence, but independence could not be achieved in the presence of what they considered to be a "fifth column". This "fifth column" was not only 'Adlī and his group, but also in a more direct way, the Monarch. For Saád and his successor the main battle was to get rid of these first, and independence would follow naturally. In domestic politics, 'Adlī and his group, although not identified with the monarch at the start, none the less became so due to popular pressure exerted on them by the Wafd, leaving them no power-base of support except the monarch. In the ensuing struggle between the Wafd and its rivals, it fell upon Nabhās to spend most of his career doing nothing but that. This conflict between the Wafd and the Liberal Constitutionalists and the King was two-fold. In the first place, it concerned who would conduct the negotiations with Britain. In the second place, it entailed the question of who would inherit the political benefits of independence. Naturally the group that conducted successful negotiations, would be the one to reap the fruits of independence. It was not, therefore, just a personal struggle between Saád and Adlī (though there is no doubt that it was an element in the proceedings) as some tend to explain the conflict between these two camps. Other social, political and cultural (ethnic) elements were some of the underlying causes of the conflict which consumed the national struggle for almost thirty years. The rising urban professional middle class from an originally Egyptian rural background with acquired Western liberal ideas, was pitted against an upper-class, rural Turkish aristocracy with a tendency towards a more feudal and autocratic regime. It was a struggle that served as a prelude to the final struggle for independence from the British. The main immediate objective of the liberal group was to secure the Constitution, since it was through the

Constitution that an elected government (presumably Wafdist) would soon be in office and would conduct the negotiations with the British. The fight for the Constitution replaced the fight for independence, as in the years between 1930 and 1936. The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 was considered by the Wafd as having secured the struggle for democracy and the Constitution, and Wafdist-British co-operation reached its climax in 1942. What the Wafd and Nahhâs did not realize, was that the early ideological formation of the Wafd, and the legal framework in which they had locked themselves without any real respect, allowed them no choice but to ask for British assistance, leading to the hopeless contradiction of being a party primarily established to get rid of the British, but at the same time forced to depend completely on them. They came to power, that is, in order to negotiate with them. Being more representative of the people than the aristocrats and large landowners of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party, they acquired a mass following, which however, concealed the reality until this was exposed gradually as of 1936, until it became completely clear in February 1942. In calculating the balance of power in local politics, the British saw the Wafd as serving their interests, especially when the latter was in power in 1936 and 1942. They met the Wafd's demands and made their co-operation possible. But when this co-operation did not serve the Wafd, a more militant policy would be adopted, as between 1930 and 1935 and after 1945. The argument used by Nahhâs and the Wafd regarding the British to the effect that the British had no choice but to negotiate with them because they had the support of the masses and could sabotage, or wreck, any agreement reached by the British with rival groups, was not always a sound argument and did not convince the British all the time. In fact, the British became convinced that what the Wafd really wanted was for them to legitimize the Wafd's request to share power in the government. Who needed the other more then? What

made matters worse was that the British, for the sake of their own interests, would never have allowed any force to upset the delicate balance of power which they had set themselves to allow them to govern Egypt with the least possible cost. Nakhâs was trying in vain to disturb that equilibrium between himself and the King in his own favour. The attempt to promote the use of Blue Shirts was one example. Now whether Nakhâs really believed that the British would let him go on with it, or whether he was trying to extract the maximum possible price from a stronger bargaining position, that is, just another bluff, is only for Nakhâs himself to answer. The situation reached a deadlock in which Nakhâs could achieve nothing more than the 1936 Treaty due to the unrestrained or undiminished power of the King and the restraint put on him by the British when he tried to dilute these powers. The policy of depending on the British to curtail the King in order to check the British came to a standstill and had led the country nowhere after twenty-five years of vicious circle in which its major achievement was the 1936 Treaty. But that was not enough, especially in post-World War Two Egypt. The final collapse of the professional middle-class wing in the leadership of the Wafd Party with the turning of Nakhâs to the old big landowners' wing which he had opposed in the past, also brought about the final collapse of the Wafd and its leader. This time adopting the policy of rapprochement with the King, which Nakhâs had rejected through the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, Nakhâs put himself into a much tighter corner than the previous policy had led him to. With the new alliance to a decaying monarchy, Nakhâs thereby tied himself to a sinking ship. New radical and militant groups on the left and right were attracting more and more of the support of the new generation and social groups away from the Wafd. With the monarch becoming a target of criticism and opposition, Nakhâs' alliance or conciliatory tone towards the King could not have come at a worse time. Not only was he

abandoned by the British, whom he vigorously denounced in an unprecedented way by unilaterally abrogating the 1936 Treaty, he also failed to maintain his grip of power over the masses. It was a final act of obeisance by a desperate and dying hero. It was a question of Samson's "Over me and my enemies", when all the forces was unleashed and the situation had got out of control. It was not "peaceful legal means, via negotiations", but guerrilla warfare and acts of terrorism which Nahhâs could not grasp or follow, even if he wanted to. The burning of Cairo and the army's intervention were a foregone conclusion.

Nahhâs was not only a mere instrument of history, or as some might suspect, just a representative of a social force in a certain period of time. There is no doubt that he shared many values and ideas of a larger group, be it a class, or nation. But one could argue that there are two levels by which to understand any key personality in history, politics or society. One is the social level, which might have been overemphasized in this thesis in general and in the conclusion in particular; and the other is the personal level. To translate this into political terms, the strategy adopted by all, and the different tactics adopted by each person. One could enter into endless discussions on where to draw the line between the two levels. For Nahhâs, one would argue that his strategy was that of the Umma Party, shared by the rest of his colleagues in the Wafd. But would the Wafd have been the same if it was led by Ahmad Mâhir or Nokrâshî? That is where the personal level comes in.

There is no doubt that Nahhâs was a charismatic leader in his own right. It is true that being the heir of Zaghlûl and President of the Wafd were powerful factors in attaining the attributes of national leadership. There is no doubt either that Makram played a role by constructing an image for Nahhâs as a "Sacred Leader". But all these factors would not have been enough without certain personal

characteristics which Nakhâs alone possessed, and which made him such a charismatic leader. One could argue that others may have been better educated, more experienced, but it was only Nakhâs who bore the charisma.

It is sometimes difficult to find out why a person is liked or loved, because basically it is a feeling which in most cases is not quite rational. Had it to do with his physical appearance, his general attitude and behaviour, ideas and principles, or every one of these mixed in a complex formula?

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Lacouture wrote that what delighted the Egyptians was to find themselves reproduced in Nakhâs, his moods, enthusiasm, resentments and quirks. He called it a "sounding echo". Nakhâs, continued Lacouture, gave the Egyptians the feeling that they themselves were exercising power, if not, that they were being excluded for personal reasons.¹ Another European, Barrie St. Clair McBride, who was the British tutor of young King Farouk for a short time, also wrote that Nakhâs' personal honesty and character were never questioned. He was an eloquent persuasive speaker in Arabic and French. He also described Nakhâs as a tall man with a striking face which clearly showed all his emotions when he was addressing an audience. He had a cast in his left which gave the unnerving impression from his photographs that he was able to watch those at his side as well as those in front. McBride concluded that Nakhâs was, on the whole, a likeable, attractive man with a sense of humour and pride of appearance. Naturally, there were those among the non-Egyptians who did not think well of him at all. Although the following remarks came from one of Nakhâs' bitterest enemies, nevertheless it gives some idea of why he was equally loathed as liked:

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Good heart, a very large street value by reason of his form of oratory, and obstinacy. His defects are boundless. Vanity, a

1. Lacouture p. 93

deficient third dimension in his reasoning capacity, and a not quite immaculate moral courage. The personal elements ranks with him too highly, and his talent is for party politics of a rather hectic kind, rather than for statesmanship.²

These not altogether complimentary views were also shared by Nahhâs' opponents, Egyptian or not. And sometimes it could be argued that all these qualities did exist in the man. It was what people wanted to see in him, or in other words, each group saw in Nahhâs what suited it best. There is no contradiction in being both honest and egocentric. But some would see one side of the coin rather than both sides. Surely for those who loved Nahhâs, he was no less a man or leader than Zaghlûl, even better. Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn told me that Nahhâs went through all that Zaghlûl went through, but while the latter came from the establishment, the former did not. And then, on comparison, Nahhâs was the stronger in character since he would never have resigned as Saâd did in 1924.

Equally important in the opinion of one Egyptian scholar, Dr. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid, who give an independent and almost objective opinion of Nahhâs despite the fact of her apparent leanings towards the Liberal Constitutionalists. She argues that Nahhâs was not entirely the irresponsible buffoon that some of the opposition claimed him to be. Rather he was an astute politician despite his lack of finesse and subtlety. His approach was one based on vested interest, and it served him well in garnering votes in the rural areas, since he was not averse to promising much that he had no intention of delivering. She then describes him when giving a speech by saying that his speeches were geared to the man in the street, who appreciated Nahhâs' style, and that contact with the public gave him a "kick", an excitement which the more mundane attributed to a touch of hysteria.³ This last sentence

2. Terry p.220 quoting Percy Loraine to P.G. Elgood 25 January 1937 St. Antony's College Oxford.

3. al-Sayyid-Marsot pp. 148-9.

might be followed by someone else's point of view on Nahhâs, although from a different angle. Egypt's famous novelist, Najîb Mahfûz, told me that Nahhâs had some of the characteristics of a sheikh of a tariqa (religious brotherhood), affecting simple religiosity that appealed to those of rural origin, as well as his simplicity and honesty.

Finally, before venturing on a personal assessment of Nahhâs, one last description of the man is worth noting. It is that of Salâh al-Shâhid, who worked closely with Nahhâs in the official circle, though not the party. He described Nahhâs as a democratic man by nature, liberal in his thought, a free person by inclination who was not biased or prejudiced. He had a judge's mentality, and would let everyone speak first, then he would speak. When it came to the national issues, which did not relate to the day to day government work, but to the Wafd, then the Wafd meant the nation, and also the President of the Wafd, as was the case with Saâd. His opinion prevailed, even when he was in the minority.

This last sentence leads us to one basic component in Nahhâs' personality. He personified the Wafd, and the Wafd, according to Wafdists, was the nation; thus he was the nation. Whether this idea was inherited from Saâd, or was a basic characteristic of Nahhâs, does not change the outcome at all. Here we are faced with a basic contradiction in Nahhâs' perception of democracy since the Wafd insisted that the people are the source of all power. This definitely suits Nahhâs as one of the people, outside the ruling establishment, who saw no reason why he should not share in power. In this he was absolutely right. Why limit power to only four families merely because of their blood relations, whether to the royal family, or to the so-called aristocracy? Nahhâs was thus expressing the will of a general public that was no longer content with the way things had been run since the times of the absolute rule of the sacred Pharaohs. Thus

Nahhâs was correct in his belief that the 1923 Constitution was the Magna Carta of Egypt, and was expressing the changes which was happening in Egypt. Unfortunately, the constitutional battle coincided with the national battle, and as explained by Tariq al-Bishrî in Chapter One of this thesis, it needed to consolidate all efforts in one camp. No dissension was allowed. Unity, or in other words, the monopoly over the national as well as the constitutional movement, was a basic component of the Wafd's strategy. This led to the unfortunate result of while upholding the slogan of "Democracy" against the autocracy of the King, no such "Democracy" was allowed in the democratic camp. It had its reasons, rightly or wrongly, but the fact that the Wafd was equated with its president, could hardly be based on any democratic notions. In the cases of political disagreements a basic notion of democracy, which is a majority vote, was never seriously followed. Although one could support the struggle of Nahhâs against the monarch as a necessary and evolutionary process in the development of Egypt, one would greatly doubt how far these democratic forces were democratic compared with other national and democratic groups. Nahhâs was shaped by this process into becoming not the President of the Wafd, but the Wafd itself. Nor surprisingly this resulted in the adoption of certain attitudes and behaviour which led many to accuse him of vanity. This can be seen in his relationships with most of the characters mentioned in this study. Since he was the Wafd, and since the Wafd was Egypt, he fell into the trap of regarding whoever differed with him, for any reason, as outcasts and opposed to the nationalist movement. Nokrâshî, Mâhir and Makram were expelled from the party. So long as they did not touch his person they were allowed to flourish, as was the case with Amîn Osmân, Zeinab al-Wakîl and Fûâd Sirâj al-Dîn.

Naturally, Nahhâs was not judging all the matters according to how

they related to his person. Personal matters became a major factor because he believed he was the people. That belief in being the people was what made Nahhâs different from other politicians, whether inside or outside the Wafd Party. For other politicians the "people" were a convenient myth which could be used to further their interests and ambitions. Whether it was Makram Ebeid or Ismail Siqqî, both saw themselves as intellectuals and statesmen, separate and distinct from the 'people'. Anyone of them could claim to "serve" or "represent" the "people", but still the fact remained that Makram or Sidqî were one thing and the 'people' another. It does not follow that their interests were the same. For Nahhâs, on the other hand, it was altogether a different matter. He did not distinguish himself from the people, but he was united with them in the same way a Sufi or mystic would feel one with God. Thus whatever Nahhâs saw as benefiting the people, surely it meant him also, and vice versa. Hence his popularity. He was not playing a role, and he did not need to do so. As Lacouture rightly observed, Egyptians found themselves reproduced in Nahhâs. ||

This leads us to the kind of charismatic leader Nahhâs was, as compared to Zaghlûl. Nahhâs was not from the establishment, and even when he joined the cabinet, he did not join it as a member of the establishment, and this influenced his behaviour to the extent that even when he was finally integrated into the establishment, he was like a nouveau-riche type, or a latecomer. This may explain his lack of subtlety and finesse, as Dr. Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid observed. But that was also what kept him popular. He was not the charming prince, or what ordinary people aspired to, a model to imitate, as Zaghlûl. He was who appealed to the ego of every middle-class Egyptian, not a super ego, as Zaghlûl. Nahhâs aspired to be like Zaghlûl, but he never achieved his ambition. With his own physical appearance, personal

behaviour, he could not be otherwise. He was not an outstanding hero who could capture the imagination of the people by his bravery or intelligence, as Mustafâ Kâmil or Saâd Zaghlûl or Hasan al-Bannâ. He was an ordinary man who shared the simple ways of the ordinary fellah. He would know when to bow to the storm until it passes, realize quite well his weaknesses, try to gain points without every performing outstanding acts or portraying great imagination to upset the whole balance of power. His steps were cautious, and only when he was sure that his opponent was completely helpless, would he attack. This can be seen in his abrogation of the Treaty in 1951, and his actions concerning the Blue Shirts, or the incident of 4th February in 1942. It can also be seen in his fear of provoking the British or the monarchy to the extent that one could believe that they were sacred taboos as far as he was concerned. This explains his firm belief in the political framework he was operating through without trying to change the rule of the game. As he once admitted, he was not a revolutionary.

Are we asking too much of the man? Naturally he was the product of his environment, his social group, his education, and several other influences. It is always easy to criticize other people's actions, especially if one is not under the same psychological pressure as them. And it is, of course, even more easy to criticize with hindsight. All in all, Nahhâs was definitely genuine, and he served Egypt as best he could, and as he saw best.

Appendix 1

Wafd in Paliamentary Elections

Year of Elections	Number of Votes	Percentage	No. of seats in Parliment	Percentage
1925	31,482 out of 67,342	46.8%	113 out of 222	53.6%
1926	771,737 out of 1,135,264	68%	171 out of 211	81%
1929	610,461 out of 1,002,662	60.9%	216 out of 232	93.1%
1931	boycotted - - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
1936	794,966 out of 1,281,085	62.1%	190 out of 232	81.9%
1938	111,106 out of 1,774,038	6.2%	14 out of 264	5.3%
1942	738,657 out of 1,267,004	58.3%	232 out of 264	87.9%
1945	boycotted - - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -
1950	1,357,206 out of 2,488,744	54.5%	226 out of 319	70.8%

Source Quraishi pp. 231-233.

Appendix 2

Ministry of 1924¹

1. Saád Zaghlûl Pâshâ (Premier & Internal Affairs)
2. Wâsif Butrus Ghâlî (Foreign Affairs)
3. Muḥammad Tawfiq Nasîm Pâshâ (Finance)
4. Hassan Hasib Pâshâ (War)
5. Muḥammad Nagîb al-Gharâbli (Justice)
6. Muḥammad Sáid Pâshâ (Education)
7. Aḥmad Mazlûm Pâshâ (Wagfs)
8. Murqus Hannâ (Public Works)
9. Muḥammad Faṭhallah Barakât Pâshâ (Agriculture)
10. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (Communications).

Nahhâs Coalition Government 1928²

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (Premier & Interior) Wafdist
2. Wâsif Butrus-Ghâli (Foreign Affairs) Wafdist
3. Muḥammad Maḥmûd (Finance) Liberal Constitutional
4. Ga' far Wali (War) Liberal Constitutional
5. Aḥmad Muḥammad Khashaba (Justice) Wafdist
6. 'Ali al-Shamsi (Education) Wafdist
7. Muḥammad Nagîb al-Gharâbli (Wagfs) Wafdist
8. Ibrâhîm Fahmi (Public Works) Liberal Constitutional
9. Muḥammad Safwat (Agriculture) Wafdist
10. Maḥram 'Ebied (Communications) Wafdist

1. Quraishi p. 226

2. Ibid. p. 227

First Nahhâs Government³

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (Premier & Interior)
2. Wâsif Butrus Ghali (Foreign Affairs)
3. Maḳram Ebied (Finance)
4. Hassan Hasib (War)
5. Muḥammad Nagib al-Gharâbli (Justice)
6. Muḥammad Bahi al-Dîn Barakât (Education)
7. Maḥmûd Basyûni (Wagfs)
8. Uthmân Muharam (Public Works)
9. Muḥammad Safwat (Agriculature)
10. Maḥmûd Fahmî al-Noḳrâshi (Communications)

Nahhâs Second Cabinet³

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (Premier & Interior & Health)
2. Wasif Butrus Ghali (Foreign Affairs)
3. Maḳram 'Ebied (Finance)
4. 'Alî Fahmî (War)
5. Maḥmûd Ghâlib (Justice)
6. 'Alî Zakî al-'Urâbi (Education)
7. Muḥammad Safwat (Wagfs)
8. 'Uthmân Muharam (Public Works)
9. Ahmâd Hamdî Sayf al-Nasr (Agriculture)
10. Maḥmûd Fahmî al-Noḳrâshi (Communications)
11. 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gomâa (Commerce & Industries)

3. Ibid. p. 227.

4. Ibid. pp. 227-228

Third Nahhās Government 1936⁵

1. Muṣṭafā al-Nahhās (Premier & Interior)
2. Wasif Butrus Ghali (Foreign Affairs)
3. Maḳraṃ Ebied (Finance)
4. 'Alī Zakī al-'Urābī (Communications)
5. 'Uthmān Muharam (Public Works)
6. Aḥmād Hamdī Sayf al-Nasr (War)
7. 'Abd al Salām Fahmī Gomāa (Education, Commerce & Industries)
8. Muḥammad Sabrī Abū 'Alam (Justice)
9. Maḥmūd Basyūni (Wagfs) 'Alī Hussein replaced him when the former was elected President of the Senate.
10. Muḥammad Maḥmūd Khalīl (Agriculture)
11. 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Tawīl (Public Health).

Nahhās Fourth Cabinet 1942⁶

1. Muṣṭafā al-Nahhās (^{Premier} President, interior, Foreign Affairs)
2. Maḳraṃ 'Ebied (Finance & Supply) replaced by Kāmil Sidqī
3. Aḥmad Hamdī Sayf al-Nasr (National Defence)
4. Muḥammad Sabrī Abū 'Alam (Justice)
5. Aḥmad Nagīb al-Hilālī (Education)
6. 'Alī Husayn (Wagfs) resigned on health reasons and was replaced by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Hādi al-Gindi.
7. 'Uthman Muharam (Public Works & Civil Defence)
8. 'Abd Al-Salām Fahmī Gomāa (Agriculture) Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn replaced him on March 31, 1942 as the former was elected Speaker of the House of Deputies).
9. Zakī al-'Urābī (Communications) 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Tawīl was entrusted of the ministry as the former was elected Speaker of Senate.
10. Kāmil Sidqī (Commerce & Industries)
11. 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Tawīl (Public Health & Social Affairs).

5. Ibid. p. 228 Nagīb al-Hilālī education in November 1937

6. Ibid. pp. 228-229.

The cabinet was enlarged due to the war and included also

- 12. Aḥmad Ḥamza (Supply)
- 13. Muṣṭafā Nasrat (Civil Defence)
- 14. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd 'Abd al-Ḥaqq (Social Affairs)
- 15. Dr. 'Abd al-Wahīd al-Wakīl (Health)

Nahhās Fifth Cabinet after the defection of Makram Ebied 1942⁷

- 1. Amīn Osmān (Finance)
- 2. Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn (Internal Affairs & Social Affairs)
- 3. Muṣṭafā Nasrat (Agriculture)
- 4. Fahmī Hannā Wisā (Civil Defence)
- 5. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd 'Abd al-Ḥaqq (Wagfs).

1950 Cabinet

- 1. Mustafā al-Nahhās (Premier)
- 2. Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn (Interior)
- 3. Dr. Muḥammad Salāh al-Dīn (Foreign Affairs)
- 4. Muḥammad Zakī 'Abd al-Muta'āl (Finance) dismissed in November 1950 and his porfolio was given to Fūād Sirāj al-Dīn.
- 5. Muṣṭafā Nasrat (War)
- 6. 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Tawīl (Justice) replaced by Muḥammad al-Gundi.

August 1951 (additions)

- 7. Dr. Taha Hussein (Education)
- 8. Yāsīn Aḥmad (Wagfs) resigned & replaced by Ismāīl Ramzī
- 9. 'Uthman Muharam (Public Works)
- 10. Aḥmad Ḥamza (Agriculture) was appointed the Chief Justice of Alexandria High Court in November 1950 and his porfolio was given to 'Abd al-Latif Mahmūd

7. Ibid. pp. 229-230.

11. 'Alī Zakī al-Urābi (Communications)
12. Maḥmūd Sulaimān Ghannām (Commerce & Industries)
13. 'Abd al-Latif Maḥmūd (Health) replaced by 'Abd al 'Awwad Hussein when the former was transferred to Agriculture.
14. Dr. Aḥmad Hussein (Social Affairs) resigned in August 1951, Abd al-Fattāh Hassan replaced him.
15. Mursi Farahāt (Supplies) resigned November 1950 his portfolio was transferred to Aḥmad Hamza.
16. Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Wakīl (National Economy) resigned in September 1951 and replaced by 'Abd al-Maḡīd 'Abd al-Haqq, the portfolio was transferred to Hamīd Zakī.
17. Ibrāhīm Faraj (Municipal & Rural Affairs)
18. Dr. Hamīd Zakī (Minister of State)

Appendix 3

The High Command was formed on September 23, 1927 after the death of Saád Zaghlûl.¹

1927

1. Muşţafâ al-Nahhâs (President)
2. Maḳraḡ Ebied (Secretary General)
3. Sîñût Hannâ
4. George Khayyât
5. Wasif Butrus Ghalf
6. Wîsâ Wâsif
7. Muḡammad Fathallah Barakât
8. Muḡammad 'Alwî al-Gazzâr
9. Murâd al-Sharîi
10. Murqus Hannâ
11. 'Alî al-Shamsî
12. Muḡammad Nagîb al-Gharâblî
13. Fakhrî 'Abd al-Nûr
14. Salâma Mîkhaîl
15. Râghîb Iskandar
16. Hassan Hasîb
17. Hussein Hisîb
18. Muşţafâ Bakîr
19. 'Atâ Afîfî
20. Dr. Ahmaḡ Mâhir
21. Maḡmûd Fahmî al-Noḡrâshî
22. Hamd al-Bâsil

1. Quraishi p. 223-4

1932 9 members with predominately land-owning interests defected over the issue of coalition government, George Khayât left on health grounds. 12 new members joined.²

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (President)
2. Maḳraḡ Ebied (General Secretary)
3. Sînût Hannâ
4. Wâsîf Butrus Ghali
5. Wîsâ Wâsîf
6. Murqus Hannâ
7. Hassan Hasîb
8. Hussein Hasîb
9. Muṣṭafâ Bakîr
10. 'Ata 'Afîfî
11. Dr. Aḡmad Mâhir
12. Maḡmûd Fahmî al-Noḡrâshî
13. Maḡmûd Basyûnf
14. Muḡammad Zaghlûl 'Alî Sâlim
15. 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Goma'a
16. Maḡmûd al-Atrîbî
17. Ibrâhîm Sayyid Aḡmad
18. Muḡammad al-Shinnâwî
19. Dr. Hâmid Maḡmûd
20. Aḡmad Hamdî Sayf al-Nasr
21. Muḡammad 'Azz al 'Arb
22. Kâmil Sidqî
23. Muḡammad Yûsuf

2. Ibid. p. 224.

High Command in 1935³

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (President)
2. Maḵraṃ Ebied (Secretary)
3. Maḥmûd Basyûni
4. 'Abd al-Salâm Fahmî Gom'aâ
5. Aḥmad Hamdî Sayf al-Nasr
6. Maḥmûd al-Atribî
7. Muḥammad Yûsuf
8. Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Shinnâwî
9. Dr. Aḥmad Mâhir
10. Maḥmûd Fahmî al-Noḵrâshî

High Command 1937⁴

1. Muṣṭafâ al-Nahhâs (President)
2. Maḵraṃ Ebied (Secretary)
3. Maḥmûd Basyûni
4. 'Abd al-Salam Fahmî Gom'aâ
5. Aḥmad Hamdî Sayf al-Nasr
6. Maḥmûd al-Atribî
7. Muḥammad Yûsuf
8. Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Shinnâwî
9. Muḥammad Sabrî Abu 'Alam
10. 'Abd al Fattâh al-Tawîl
11. Yûsuf al-Gindî
12. Muḥammad Sulaimân al-Wakîl
13. Muḥammad al-Maghâzî
14. 'Abd Rabbuh

3. Ibid. pp. 224-5.

4. Ibid. pp. 225-6.



15. Bushrî Hannâ
16. Muḥammad Hifnî al-Tarazî
17. Kamâl 'Alma
18. Aḥmad Muṣṭafâ 'Amr
19. Fahmî Wîsâ
20. Sayyid Bihnâs
21. 'Uthman Muharam
22. 'Alî Zaki al-Urâbi
23. 'Alî Hussein Fahmî
24. Aḥmad Nagîb al-Hilâlî
25. Muḥammad Maḥmud Khalîl

In 1942 Sabrî Abu 'Alam assumed Party Secretaryship also Amin Osmân was taken as a member in the High Command. In 1946 the former died and was replaced by 'Abd al-Salam Fahmî Gom'aâ (and latter resigned). The two vacancies were filled by Fûád Sirâj al-Dîn and Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Wakîl in June 1948 Gom'aâ relinquished his post to Sirâj al-Dîn.

Appendix 4

J

553

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

[CYPHER]

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION.

FROM: EGYPT.

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE.

Sir M. Lampson. D. 10.30 a.m., 3rd February, 1942.
No. 453.

2nd February, 1942. R. 11.50 a.m., 3rd February, 1942.

5 3 3

IMMEDIATE.

Unfortunatly your telegram No. 572 and the immediately preceding telegram reached me too late: the latter only after midnight. As already reported events had led the Prime Minister to throw in his hand this morning instead of to-morrow, hence my insistence on an audience with King Farouk at 1 p.m. to-day (my telegram No. 449). J 541/28/K
It is thus no longer possible to act on that part of your instructions.

2. The only subsequent development up to to-night is that, late this evening, I got a message to Hassanein by Mr. Shone that I trusted that neither King Farouk nor he were under any misapprehension as to the serious importance of summoning Nahas Pasha before noon to-morrow, as stipulated by me this morning. This drew from Hassanein a statement late to-night that King Farouk was seeing Nahas Pasha at 5 p.m. to-morrow, the press and other party leaders thereafter the same afternoon.

3. As events have developed and as I see things to-night I gravely doubt the wisdom of my getting in direct touch with Nahas Pasha in advance of his audience: nor do I fancy he would be willing to see me at the moment as it might embarrass him. It might even deter him from going to see the King, if he knew that we were pressing him in advance to make terms with us. My inclination therefore is to allow things to take their course to-morrow (they hardly ever work out as one anticipates) and reserve action on the lines you suggest (which I welcome and regard as admirable) until the situation clears and I know better than I do to-night what I am up against.

4. Meantime, may I record my grateful thanks for the wide discretion you give me? You can rely on me to deliver the goods to the best of my ability in a situation liable to change almost hourly.

(INDIV)

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

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION.

From EGYPT.

[Cypher]

From CAIRO to FOREIGN OFFICE.

Sir M. Lampson,

No. 461.

3rd February, 1942.

D. 5.35 p.m.

R. 10.35 p.m.

3rd February, 1942.

3rd February, 1942.

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 572 and my telegram No. 453.

Very opportunely Amin Osman Pasha asked to see me this morning. I have purposely avoided seeing him during the past 3 months to prevent any foundation for rumours of intrigue with the Embassy. Position is now entirely changed and he is once more particularly valuable as the Homme de Confiance of Nahas.

2. I defined my attitude clearly and took the opportunity of making the points in your telegram No. 572. If and when Nahas took office I should be making them direct with him. Amin fully agreed that they were very necessary points and did not anticipate that there should be any real difficulty over any of them. He concurred that it would have been a mistake to see Nahas before he was seeing King Farouk.

3. I sent message through him to Nahas that he should turn down the proposal for transition Government but that he should offer to do his best to form coalition Government. That would greatly strengthen his position both with the Egyptian public and with us. Coalition under Nahas was ideal. In reply to question from Amin I advised Nahas strongly against making a condition of fresh election - that would necessarily follow if he took office, seeing that he has only some dozen seats in the Chamber. Actually fresh elections just now were most undesirable and when it came to the point Nahas should revive his idea of allocating seats to other parties which could no doubt be duly legalised. He could tell Nahas that provided he played his hand reasonably well I was behind him. But I was sure that Nahas would agree I should for the time being keep in the background. It would be time to emerge when my support was needed.

4. Amin told me that Nahas was fully determined if he came in to clean up the Palace and have no further nonsense from King Farouk.

5. I expect to be informed this evening of what passes with Nahas at the Palace this afternoon.

6. To complete the record Sirri Pasha rang me up this morning. He is definitely against transition Government; which is Palace trick to gain time for further intrigue against us. He believes that the chances of coalition are nil, but from internal political angle it should be played for as ideal. He remains convinced that reform of Government will be the final solution.

INDIV

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

[Cypher]

WAR CABINET DISTRIBUTION

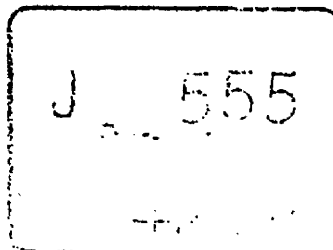
FROM: EGYPT

FROM CAIRO TO FOREIGN OFFICE

Sir M. Lampson
No. 462.
3rd February, 1942.

D. 8.50 p.m. 3rd February, 1942.
R. 11.20 p.m. 3rd February, 1942.

[][][][]



IMMEDIATE

My telegram No. 453.

Amin has just returned from Nahas Pasha with the following message:-

2. Nahas Pasha when he sees King Farouk will definitely refuse coalition: he was formerly in favour of neutral [sic] cabinet but is now against that also, owing to the illness of Ahmed Maher.

3. Nahas Pasha wished me to know his reasons for refusing coalition. The state of the country was now very bad. Even under Hussein Sirri (who had every family advantage) Palace intrigue was rife. Some members of any coalition were bound to be King's men and Nahas Pasha would be "unable to deliver the goods" to us.

4. As to working whole-heartedly with us he has always done so and will always do so, treaty or no treaty. The spirit of the treaty was mutual co-operation by both sides "in every sense". If, on this, Hussein Sirri was useful to us Nahas Pasha feels that he will be much more so. Nahas Pasha who worked loyally with us in peacetime will be "tenfold" more co-operative in time of war. But for that he must have a free hand, especially with the Palace. What he wants is real democracy and real co-operation with us to get it. King Farouk stands against both. This means that he will have the opposition of the King: if we back him up he will see it through. Nahas Pasha does not wish to be vindictive to King Farouk and doubtless he and I can hold each other back from time to time.

5. In the light of all the above Nahas Pasha cannot accept coalition and be fair both to himself and to us. He would, however, be ready, if it helped us, to have coalition elements in some consultative body but he alone must govern. He would accept a neutral [sic] government if I wished, but it would not work he was sure. Reverting to the dangers of coalition, compare the incident of Assuan Hydro Electrical scheme where the cabinet was wrecked by three Ministers: compare the Briggs case.

6. Amin asked whether I wished to insist on coalition? Or, as alternative, on consultative body containing elements of the other parties. I replied that it must primarily be a matter for Nahas Pasha to judge. For myself, I should have thought that a serious attempt to form a coalition would have strengthened Nahas Pasha's hand with the country. But he must decide. Amin said that Nahas Pasha left to his own judgment, would not agree to coalition.

7. Finally, I agreed that the following should be put to Nahas Pasha as the best line to take with King Farouk. Nahas Pasha to tell His Majesty that the position is so bad and he has so very little faith in the loyal co-operation of the other parties, and such fear of possible intrigues, that he would suggest, as the only remedy, a purely Wa'fdist Government when he will assume all responsibility and feel that he can do so. That he is ready (1) to allocate certain seats in the [group undec.] to other parties and (2) that he is ready to consider also later on the advisability as a symbol of coalition, of forming a consultative body selected from other parties.

8. In reply to a query from Amin, I repeated that I would back Nahas Pasha over this: and see him through.

9. Hardly had I drafted the above when I had a telephone call that Nahas Pasha (who has no sense of time) had been so late that he had missed him and that he had presumably gone straight down to the Palace. I send it none the less as each move may later have its importance.

INDIV.

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