

Words

English policy in Egypt will not change because of this transfer that took the former High Commissioner by surprise—or perhaps was carefully prepared for him and slowly ripened over months rather than weeks. This transfer will not alter Anglo■Egyptian policy. Upon this the English newspapers have agreed unanimously in a manner so suspicious that, if it proves anything at all, it proves only that the unanimity itself was deliberate and orchestrated.

Whether this unanimity is sincere or not, some of the English newspapers nevertheless reveal that it is artificial—no less artificial than the “neutrality” the English once proclaimed and repeatedly insisted they would observe faithfully.

The *Daily Telegraph*—and how many wonders the *Daily Telegraph* has produced in recent days!—reported yesterday that Sir Percy Loraine would return to reside temporarily in Egypt before departing for Ankara. The paper claimed that his brief stay in Cairo would be extremely beneficial if the Egyptian Ministry were changed, since such a change was supposedly inevitable because the Prime Minister’s continuing illness would no longer allow him to conduct affairs of state.

We should like to know by what right the new High Commissioner interferes in the affairs of the Egyptian Ministry if the English have indeed declared their neutrality and insist upon maintaining it, claiming concern only with the well■known “reservations.” Since when has the illness of Sidqi Pasha, his resignation, or Egypt’s choice of another prime minister become part of those reservations to which England supposedly confines its attention?

What everyone knows—and what supporters of the Ministry constantly affirm, something we sincerely hope is true—is that the appointment, dismissal, and retention of ministers are not English matters and should never be English matters. They are solely Egypt’s concern.

But the English newspapers do not truly believe this, because the English themselves do not truly believe it. They proclaim neutrality openly while secretly rejecting it. They announce to the world that they stand aside from Egyptian affairs, yet insist at the same time upon intervening—or at least supervising closely—whenever an Egyptian minister falls ill, resigns, or is replaced.

Thus the English consensus that replacing the High Commissioner will not change English policy in Egypt is meaningless, much like the English insistence over recent years that they had withdrawn their

hands from Egypt's internal affairs and adopted complete neutrality.

Even more amusing than this empty declaration is another statement made by the same *Daily Telegraph*. Its political correspondent claimed that the choice of a new High Commissioner from among career diplomats proves that Britain does not wish to change its policy and intends to postpone negotiations indefinitely.

Yet he also claimed that this appointment demonstrates Britain's determination to preserve its "firm yet moderate and sympathetic policy" that will not permit "disturbers of order" to obstruct Egypt's steady and organized progress.

And who are these "disturbers of order" whom England opposes? They are none other than the Egyptian nation itself: the very nation England and its High Commissioners resisted again and again. Whenever England imagined that resistance had weakened Egypt's spirit and dulled its resolve, it advanced toward Egypt carrying olive branches and banners of peace, hoping to deceive the nation into surrendering its rights. And when peace failed to deceive Egypt, England returned once more to harsh resistance, alternating endlessly between conciliation and coercion until it became clear—if indeed it has not already become clear—that England seeks something impossible.

These "disturbers of order" are the same Egyptian people whom England fought under Allenby until resistance exhausted her, whereupon she attempted reconciliation through George Lloyd. When conciliation failed to produce the desired results, England returned to confrontation through George Lloyd himself. When confrontation again failed, George Lloyd was dismissed and Percy Loraine was sent bearing promises of peace and goodwill.

England hoped to profit from this new policy as well. But when she discovered that peace could not deceive Egypt just as war could not frighten her, she transformed Percy Loraine from a symbol of peace into an instrument of conflict, from gentleness into severity, and set him against the Egyptian nation for three full years.

Now England has either wearied of conflict or despaired of its results and fears its consequences. Thus she wishes once again to return to conciliation.

These supposed "disturbers of order" whom the English accuse of obstructing Egypt's progress were in fact the very people who once governed Egypt without disorder, without decline, without hunger or

deprivation, without Egyptian blood staining Egyptian soil, without citizens assaulting one another, without murders occurring openly in the streets, and without the machinery of government collapsing into empty appearances and propaganda as it has today.

These men did not destroy order; they restored it. They did not hinder progress; they advanced it. Yet precisely for this reason—or rather because of this—they are hated and condemned. For England, it appears, does not desire for Egypt a healthy political order or genuine progress. Instead England desires the kind of order she herself prefers and we ourselves reject: an order that extends British and foreign control openly at times and secretly at others.

England desires the kind of “progress” that reduces Egyptian independence to empty words, keeps Egypt in a state of dependency requiring foreign advisers and officials, and leaves Egypt with only two choices: either to seek reform through foreigners or to attempt independence and thereby provide foreigners with excuses for intervention.

These “disturbers of order” are condemned because they refused to approve the ■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ Dam, because they would not commit Egypt to financing British rule in Sudan at Egypt’s expense, because they resisted the preparations for the Tana Dam, and because they refused to flatter foreign companies or open new opportunities for them.

And for all this they are called enemies of order and obstacles to progress.

But all of this, as we have said, is merely empty talk. The choice of a High Commissioner from the diplomatic corps proves nothing about negotiations or treaties. Percy Loraine himself was chosen from among diplomats not to delay negotiations but to accelerate them, not to postpone a treaty but to secure one quickly.

When England found itself incapable of obtaining either fruitful negotiations or a stable treaty while opposing the Egyptian people and supporting governments they rejected, she postponed negotiations unwillingly and delayed treaties reluctantly.

Thus choosing a High Commissioner from among diplomats proves nothing at all. It is merely language used by the political correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, who wishes to say something—anything—rather than present the truth as it is.

Nor had a single week passed since that same newspaper confidently declared that Sir Percy Loraine would remain in Egypt permanently before the Foreign Office suddenly announced that he had been transferred from Egypt altogether.

Egyptians therefore ought not to attach too much importance to what the *Daily Telegraph* or other English newspapers publish. Frivolity, disregard for truth, and the desire merely to entertain readers now seem to have infected even the great English newspapers that once prided themselves on seriousness, caution, and precision.

They now resemble ordinary newspapers: affirming something one day and denying it the next, expressing certainty today and doubt tomorrow.

If Egyptians must imagine for themselves what England's position toward them truly is at present, then perhaps the most accurate description is simply this: the English are confused.

They know perfectly well that there is no hope of securing stable relations with Egypt unless they deal honestly with Egypt herself. Yet some among them fear such honesty because they prefer immediate advantages to honorable agreement.

British policy therefore wavers between recognition of the truth, fear of the truth, and attachment to temporary and petty benefits.

Otherwise they would not have suspended their High Commissioner in uncertainty for months, transferred him suddenly, and then instructed him to return once more to Egypt for a few additional weeks.

All this reveals confusion in London mirrored by the confusion of England's friends in Egypt. Only one group remains free from uncertainty, fear, and hesitation: those very "disturbers of order" whom England opposes.

They alone continue firmly along a straight path without crookedness or hesitation, and inevitably England will one day be forced to return to them—whether willingly or unwillingly.