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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 March, 1985

Dear Charles, Egypt

The Prime Minister has agreed exceptionally to receive Dr Rif'at al Mahgub, Speaker of the Egyptian People's Assembly for a brief courtesy call at 15.45 on 20 March. He will be accompanied by Dr Mohammed Abdellah, Chairman of the People's Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee. They are visiting Britain as Category I Sponsored visitors.

We understand that the Prime Minister met Dr al Mahgub when she visited Egypt as Leader of the Opposition in 1976. Dr al-Mahgub ranks second in the Egyptian hierarchy after the President whom he would succeed if President Mubarak should die suddenly. He is widely tipped to be the next Prime Minister if the present incumbent, Kamal Hassan Ali, is forced to resign through ill-health. Despite his ostensibly neutral role as Speaker, Dr al-Mahgub plays an important role in the formation of Egyptian foreign policy. He has been directly involved in President Mubarak's initiatives and attended the President's meeting with King Hussein on 6 March. President Mubarak briefed him personally on his own visit to Britain and his meeting with Mrs Thatcher last week.

Dr Mohamed Abdellah has also been directly involved in President Mubarak's initiative and was sent as the President's envoy to see Prime Minister Peres in Bucharest. He knows Mr Peres well and has been an important channel of contact with Israel.

I attach personality notes of Dr al Mahgub and Dr Abdellah and a copy of the programme for the visit.

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts
(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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MAHGUB, DR RIF'AT

Speaker of the People's Assembly since June 1984.

Born 1926 in the Delta. Studied law at Cairo University and then 1949-1953 at the Sorbonne, gaining a PhD for a thesis on Keynes. Thereafter he returned as lecturer - subsequently professor - of economics in Cairo University. 1971 Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science. March 1973 relinquished his University appointment while retaining professorial status when appointed Arab Socialist Union Secretary of Ideology, Religion and Propaganda which was combined with the post of Minister for Political Affairs in the Presidency. August 1973 appointed to the Committee to draft revision of the National Charter. February 1974 appointed to National Council for Production and Economic Affairs. April 1975 First Secretary of the Arab Socialist Union, but after a disagreement with Sadat returned to Cairo University in 1976. He seemd to have left the political stage for good until Mubarak unexpectedly brought him out of retirement in June 1984, first appointing him simultaneously a member of the People's Assembly and its Speaker. At the time of writing strongly tipped to take over as Prime Minister should Kamal Hassan Ali's ill-health force him to relinquish the post.

Married, speaks adequate though not fluent English. Basically friendly and well-disposed. His wife is a law don at Cairo University. A sponsored visitor to Britain in 1974.



ABDELLAH, DR MUHAMMAD AHMAD

Chairman of the People's Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee
(May 1980).

Born 1946 in Alexandria. Attended Victoria College, Alexandria. Doctorate in economics from Alexandria University where he now works occasionally as a lecturer in economics. During Nasser's rule spent eight years in France, gaining a diploma in higher political studies from the Sorbonne, and then working for five years as an AFP correspondent. Founder member of the Franco-Arab Union of Journalists. Member of the Politbureau of the old Egypt Party, responsible for Alexandria youth. Founder member of the National Democratic Party and was its Secretary-General for Alexandria. Elected for the Montazah and Mamurah division of Alexandria in 1979, and is now head of the Alexandria Parliamentary Group. Led a parliamentary delegation to Israel in January 1981, and was a member of the group which subsequently visited Britain on a COI tour.

Married (in late 1981) to the daughter of a millionaire businessman. Abdallah speaks excellent French and good English. His wife was formerly a moneybroker in London and Cairo. Though primarily French orientated he enjoys good relations with the Embassy.



Background Note

OVI/249

HIS EXCELLENCY DR RIF 'AT AL MAHGOUB
President, People's Assembly

and

His Excellency Dr Mohammed ABDELLAH
Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee, People's Assembly

Accompanied by

Mr Sharif KHAFAGI
Chief of Protocol, People's Assembly

and

Colonel Mahmud NASSER
Security Officer

Cairo

EGYPT

17 - 22 March 1985

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has invited HE Dr Rif'at al Mahgoub and HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah to Britain to enable them to meet those with whom they share professional interests and to encourage good Anglo-Egyptian relations. The Central Office of Information has been requested to arrange the programme.

At present there is no Vice-President in Egypt and HE Dr Rif'at al Mahgoub ranks immediately after the President and would automatically assume the Presidency should misfortune befall the present incumbent. HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah is also a high-ranking and influential official. Accordingly, they will be received at ministerial level and will be meeting senior politicians and representatives of organisations interested in Egypt.

HE Dr Rif'at Al Mahgoub was elected President of the People's Assembly in 1984 and his position equates to that of Speaker of the House of Commons. Additionally, he has further duties to organise the work of the Assembly and to advise the President on party political and other matters.

Formerly, he led a distinguished academic career at Cairo University where he was Lecturer in Law from 1949-54 before becoming Professor, then Dean, in the Faculty of Economy and Political Science from 1964-72. He was appointed Minister of Political Affairs at Presidency from 1972-75 and returned to Cairo University until 1984. He had studied at Cairo University and graduated with a Bachelor of Law degree in 1948 before studying at Paris University, where he received Diplomas in Law, in 1949 and 1950, and his PhD in Economics and Political Science in 1953. He is 58 years of age.

HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah was appointed Chairman of the People's Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee in 1980. Formerly, he was foreign correspondent in Paris for several years. He is a founder member of the National Democratic Party and has been a member of the People's Assembly since 1979. He has a Doctorate in Economics from Alexandria University and a Diploma in Higher Political Studies from the Sorbonne, He is 39 years of age.

Both Dr al Mahgoub and Dr Abdellah speak fluent English and are Muslim with the usual dietary restrictions of no pig meat or alcohol. They will be accompanied by Mr Khafagi and Colonel Nasser to all appointments and, also, by their wives to any sightseeing or social engagements in the evening.

Programme Organiser: Miss Christine MacLean
Overseas Visitors and Information Studies
Central Office of Information
Hercules Road, London SE1 7DU

Tel: 01-928 2345 Ext 480

15 March 1985



*Prime Minister
ref. p 6.*

OV1/249

Programme of arrangements made by the
Central Office of Information for the
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

HIS EXCELLENCY DR RIF'AT AL MAHGOUB
President, People's Assembly

and

His Excellency Dr Mohammed ABDELLAH
Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee, People's Assembly

with

Mr Sharif KHAFAGI
Chief of Protocol, People's Assembly

and

Colonel Mahmud NASSER
Security Officer

Cairo

EGYPT

17 - 22 March 1985

Accompanied by Mr Roger Nicholson, Central Office of Information

Programme Organiser:

Miss Christine MacLean
Overseas Visitors and Information Studies
Central Office of Information
Hercules Road
LONDON SE1 7DU

Tel: 01-928 2345, Ext 480

Sunday 17 March

1135

ARRIVAL

Arrive with Mrs al Mahgoub and Mrs Abdellah, at London Heathrow Airport, Terminal 3, by Egypt Air, flight MS 777 from Cairo.

Met in the Hillingdon Suite and welcomed to Britain by Sir Edwin Arrowsmith KCMG, Special Representative of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

Also present will be:

His Excellency Mr Yousef Sharara
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
for the Arab Republic of Egypt

and

Miss Christine MacLean
Central Office of Information

Continue in cars to the Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (Tel: 01-235 2000), where accommodation has been reserved.

The remainder of the day is free.

Monday 18 March

11.30 - 1200 noon

PROGRAMME DISCUSSION
THE SPEAKER
OFFICIAL LUNCHEON
WESTMINSTER ABBEY
THEATRE VISIT

Met at hotel for a brief discussion of the programme arrangements by:

Mr John Crompton
Deputy Director
Overseas Visitors and Information Studies
Central Office of Information

Mr Tim Holmes
Near East and North Africa Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Miss Christine MacLean
Programme Organiser

and

Mr Roger Nicholson
Central Office of Information

Monday 18 March cont'd

1220 Leave hotel in car with Mr Roger Nicholson, Central Office of Information, who will accompany HE Dr Rif'at al Mahgoub and HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah to their official appointments in London.

1235 Arrive at the Speaker's House, House of Commons, Palace of Westminster, SW1.

1240 Received by The Speaker, the Right Honourable Bernard Weatherill MP.

1300 Leave House of Commons in car.

1315 Arrive at Lancaster House, SW1.
for
1330 Attend an official luncheon given in honour of HE Dr Rif'at al Mahgoub by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Host: Mr Richard Luce MP
Minister of State for Foreign and
Commonwealth Affairs

Later Leave Lancaster House in car for return to hotel.

1545 Leave hotel in cars with Mrs al Mahgoub and Mrs Abdellah.

1600 Arrive at Westminster Abbey, SW1.
Welcomed by the Very Reverend Dr Edward Carpenter, Dean of Westminster.
Accompanied on a tour of Westminster Abbey.

1645 Leave Westminster Abbey in cars for return to hotel.

1850 Leave hotel in cars with Mrs al Mahgoub and Mrs Abdellah.

1900 Arrive at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1.
Met in the main foyer by:
Mr David Crouch MP
Chairman
Anglo-Egyptian Parliamentary Group
Refreshments will be served.

1930 Attend a performance of "The Way of the World", a play by William Congreve.
Host: Mr David Crouch MP

Later Leave Haymarket in cars for return to hotel.

Tuesday 19 March

HM TOWER OF LONDON
SIGHTSEEING DRIVE
THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
LUNCH WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS GALLERY
DINNER: THE SPEAKER

- 0825 Leave hotel in cars with Mrs al Mahgoub and Mrs Abdellah.
- 0855 Arrive at HM Tower of London, EC3 (West Entrance).
- 0900 Welcomed by Major General A P W MacLellan CB MBE, Resident Governor and Keeper of the Jewel House, and Mrs MacLellan.
- Accompanied on a private visit to the Jewel House, the Chapel of St Peter Ad Vincula and the Queen's House.
- 1030 Leave HM Tower of London for a short sightseeing drive around the City of London, to include St Katharine's Dock and St Paul's Cathedral.
- 1125 Arrive at the Mansion House, EC4.
- 1130 Received by the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Sir Alan Traill, GBE MA.
- 1145 Leave Mansion House in cars for return to hotel.
- 1230 Leave hotel in car.
- 1240 Arrive at the House of Commons, Palace of Westminster, SW1 (St Stephen's Entrance).
- Continue to the rooms of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Westminster Hall.
- 1245 Welcomed and introduced to members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union by:
- Mr Peter Temple-Morris MP
Chairman
- Sign the Visitors' Book.
- 1255 Continue to the Harcourt Room.
- Luncheon with Members of Parliament.
- Host: Mr Peter Temple-Morris
Conservative Member of Parliament for
Leominster, and Chairman,
Inter-Parliamentary Union

Tuesday 19 March cont'd

Guests:

Mr David Crouch
Conservative Member of Parliament for
Canterbury, and
Chairman, Anglo-Egyptian Parliamentary Group

Mr Dennis Canavan
Labour Member of Parliament for
Falkirk West, and
Member, Select Committee on Foreign Affairs

Mr Roy Hughes
Labour Member of Parliament for
Newport East

Mr T Holmes
Near East and North Africa Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

and

Miss Christine MacLean
Central Office of Information

- 1420 Continue to the Central Lobby.
- 1425 Watch The Speaker's Procession.
- 1430 Continue to The Speaker's Gallery to attend the
afternoon's proceedings in the House of Commons,
including presentation of the Government's Budget
Speech by the Right Honourable Nigel Lawson, MP,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- Later Leave Palace of Westminster in car for return to
hotel.
- 1900 Leave hotel in cars with Mrs al Mahgoub and
Mrs Abdellah.
- 1915 Arrive at the Speaker's House, Palace of
for Westminster, SW1.
1930
- Later Attend a dinner in the State Rooms given in honour
of HE Dr Rif'at al Mahgoub by The Speaker and
Mrs Bernard Weatherill.
- Leave Palace of Westminster in cars for return to
hotel.

Wednesday 20 March

BBC: ARABIC SERVICE
LUNCHEON: COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT OF ARAB-BRITISH
UNDERSTANDING (CAABU)
THE PRIME MINISTER
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH
AFFAIRS
DINNER ENGAGEMENT

1115

Leave hotel in car.

1130

Arrive at the BBC External Services, Bush House,
Aldwych, WC2 (Centre Block Entrance).

Met in reception by Miss Vanda Elliott, Arabic
Service.

Welcomed by Mr Eric Bowman, Head of the Arabic
Service.

Tea and introduced to senior representatives of the
Arabic Service for general discussions on matters
relating to Middle Eastern affairs.

1230

Leave Aldwych in car.

1300

Arrive at The Arab-British Centre, 21 Collingham
Road, SW5.

Luncheon as guests of the Council of Advancement of
British-Arab Understanding (CAABU).

Host: Mr David Watkins
Director

Later

Leave Collingham Road in car.

1545

[Received by the Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher,
FRS, MP, Prime Minister. (NO 10)

1600

Leave 10 Downing St. in car.

1655

Arrive at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King
Charles Street, SW1 (Ambassador's Entrance).

1700

Received by the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Howe,
QC MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and
Commonwealth Affairs and Minister of Overseas
Development.

1720

Leave King Charles Street in car for return to
hotel.

Wednesday 20 March cont'd

1945

Leave hotel in cars with Mrs al Mahgoub and Mrs Abdellah.

2000

Arrive at the residence of the Egyptian Ambassador, 75 South Audley Street, W1.

Attend a dinner as guests of His Excellency Mr Yousef Sharara, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for the Arab Republic of Egypt, and Mrs Sharara.

Later

Leave South Audley Street in cars for return to hotel.

Thursday 21 March

HE Dr Rif'at Al Mahgoub and
Colonel Nasser

DEPARTURE

1015

Leave hotel with Mrs al Mahgoub (and luggage), for London Heathrow Airport, Terminal 3, (Hillingdon Suite).

1200 noon

Leave Britain by Trans World Airlines, flight TW 703, for Washington.

HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah

SELECT COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Morning

Free.

Early afternoon

Arrangements are being made for a meeting with Sir Anthony Kershaw, MP, Chairman, Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

(Details to follow).

1600

Arrive at the Royal Institute of International Relations, Chatham House, St James's Square, SW1.

Met by Mr Keith Kyle, Meetings Secretary.

Tea and introduced to members for discussions relating to current events in the Middle East.

1730 approx

Leave St James's Square in car for return to hotel.

Mr Khafagi

Day

Free.

Friday 22 March

HE Dr Mohammed Abdellah

DEPARTURE

Depart Britain for Paris with Mrs Abdellah.

(Details to follow).

Mr Sharif Khafagi

DEPARTURE

Depart Britain for Cairo.

(Details to follow).

15 March 1985