

1960

V

LEVANT DEPARTMENT

VG. 1019/7.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

FROM Damascus, basis to
Levant Department.

SUBJECT:

Israeli spy ring in the U.A.R.
threats - summary of details as revealed by the
press since April 21.

Confidential.

No. 1014/60.
Dated April 26.
Received April 28.

References
VR1074/33(22).
VG.1014/19.

MINUTES

Copy J.I.B.

The U.A.R. are obviously playing this up for
propaganda purposes, probably both internal and
external. As the reports on President Nasser's visits
to India and Pakistan showed, he is anxious to enhance
his standing at home. At present, any stick that can
be used to beat the Israelis is being applied. As
Mr. Crowe pointed out elsewhere this may make it more
difficult to get Zarb out, though this is not necessar-
ily so.

(Printing Instructions)

PUSD (Mr. Day)
RHB 17/5

R. Arculus
(R. Arculus)
April 29, 1960.

(Outward Action)
[copied to J.I.B. on May 18]

There has also been some mention in press
reports of an Englishman "Peter" in Rome being involved
(in accord Mr. Day's comment on this).

2. The Israel Embassy has been received instruction
from Jerusalem to say, in reply to press and
other enquiries, that there is no truth in
any of the Cairo allegations (not surprising).

(Action completed)

(Main Indexed)

12.5.60.

JM 8.61
84-

St. John
29/IV.

Apr 29

-12/10

J55 53659-3



BRITISH DIPLOMATIC MISSION,
CAIRO.

(1014/60).

April 26, 1960.

CONFIDENTIAL

RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVES
28 APR 1960
V41019/7.

Dear Department,

V41019/19

Would you please refer to paragraph 5 of Cairo telegram No. 49 Saving about the Israeli spy ring operating in the United Arab Republic. (This is, incidentally, the same affair which we reported in Cairo telegram No. 482 of November 21, 1959).

V41074/33(SA)

2. The following is a summary of the details as revealed by the press since April 21.

3. Ten United Arab Republic nationals and six foreigners have been arrested. The United Arab Republic nationals include mechanics in the United Arab Republic Air Force, an ex-pilot of Misrair and a lawyer. The foreigners consist of a Dutchman, Meewis Goudswaard, a German, Dr. Katz, two Italians (the Manager of a hotel in Alexandria and one other), and two Greeks (a waiter in one of Cairo's leading restaurants and a shop assistant). Goudswaard is a Dutch businessman who has lived in Alexandria and Cairo on and off for some years. Dr. Katz is the head surgeon at an Alexandria hospital. He is said to be a Jew.

4. According to the press the United Arab Republic Intelligence Services have been on the track of this spy ring for three years; arrests began late last year and the State Security Prosecution authorities have just completed a six months investigation of the case. The Intelligence Services are said to have penetrated the spy ring and to have passed false information through it to the Israeli authorities.

5. Houses and offices of the accused have been raided and equipment such as invisible ink, cameras, developing equipment, and wireless transmitters and receivers have been seized.

6. The accused are alleged to have been in contact with Israeli agents in Europe particularly in Rome and Geneva and to have been supplying information about the political and economic situation in the United Arab Republic, United Arab Republic relations with Russia and details of port installations, naval movements, airports, ammunition dumps and factories, and general military intelligence. The trial is due to begin on May 7 and the prosecution has demanded the death penalty for nine of the accused, including the Dutchman, the two Italians and the two Greeks. A confused story has also emerged that the Greek waiter was under orders to try to poison President Nasser.

/7.

Levant Department,
FOREIGN OFFICE,
LONDON, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

©2005 The National Archives, London.

(Page 2 of 3).



CONFIDENTIAL

7. There are two points of interest on the publicity side. First the Government could have released the news about the arrest of the spy ring at any moment during the past three or four months. They chose to do so, however, just when the press was boiling up to a full-blooded campaign about the S.S. Cleopatra incident. The spy ring story effectively relegated the Cleopatra to second place as an item of news interest for some days, although it has now returned to prominence. It is possible that the Government wished to play down the Cleopatra case at least until the American Judge had issued his decision on the injunction, and released the spy story in order to swamp it. Secondly, we have been struck by the inordinate amount of space given to the spy case in the press. For three or four days all papers devoted many full pages to reports of the confessions of the accused, photostats of captured documents, photographs of bottles of invisible ink, etc., and editorials praising the vigilance of the United Arab Republic Intelligence Services. However important the spy ring may have been, it is difficult to understand why it got quite such lavish treatment.

8. The true significance of the spy ring may emerge to some extent during the trial. So far we get the impression that the whole affair has probably been exaggerated. There must be something in the accusations, but some of the evidence adduced seems too good to be true. Equally, we are reliably informed that the Dutchman, who has been represented as the Machiavellian leader of the ring, is in fact a rather stupid and unbalanced person who makes a practice of airing anti-Nasser views at the top of his voice in public places. Dr. Katz is also said to be a highly respected figure in Alexandria society.

*He looks
ga ga*

9. We are enclosing an extra copy of this letter and are sending copies to the Chanceries at Bonn, Athens, The Hague and P.O.M.E.F.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY. *M.*

CONFIDENTIAL