

Personal Report on Riots in Cairo, 26 Jan 1952, by Harold Hindle James

Transcribed and Annotated by John Barnard, May 2009

Introduction and Background

This document is a personal account of the riots which took place in Cairo on 26 January 1952, an occasion subsequently described as the "Cairo Fires", during which several members of the British Turf Club were murdered. It seems probable the report, with its appendices, was written for the British Embassy in Cairo. The author is Harold Hindle James, OBE (1895–1969), at the time a retired RAF officer resident in Cairo.

The transcript is based on a typewritten copy, which was probably sent to James's aunt, Ethel de Pearsall James (1879–1960), from whom it passed to her son Robert Clabburn Trevenen James (1917 – 2008), and from him to the transcriber, his nephew.

The riots were a prelude to the Egyptian Revolution of 23 July 1952, when King Farouk was overthrown by a military coup carried out by the so-called "Free Officers" led by General Muhammad Naguib (though the real power behind it was Gamal Abdel Nasser, who became President in 1954).

Transcript

COPY

CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL STATEMENT BY SQUADRON-LEADER HINDLE-JAMES

Early on the morning of January 26th 1952 servants arriving at my flat, which is at 18 Adly Pasha Street, and close to the Turf Club, brought stories of some kind of disturbances in the Muski area. They asserted that there had been firing, though they were not clear as to who was firing upon whom. In view of this and my own expectations of probable disorders I decided as soon as possible to proceed to the Embassy. I also rang up H.E. Husny Pasha, Private Secretary to His Majesty King Farouk¹, to ask him whether he had confirmation of disorders. He replied "We have no confirmation and in any case after what happened yesterday at Ismailia², we are at the moment helpless."

At about 10 a.m. I proceeded by taxi to the Embassy. My servants and other Egyptians who know me had attempted to dissuade me from going out as they stated that there would be danger. I duly reached the Embassy and asked to see Mr. Wardle-Smith with whom I have recently been in contact. He was, however, engaged, and I therefore saw Mr. Stewart to whom I briefly outlined the statements and rumours which had reached me. I then left the British Embassy and proceeded to the Australian Legation where I saw Mr. Massey, the Minister, to whom I gave a similar report. Mr. Massey was discussing the advisability or otherwise of proceeding with arrangements for his Australia Day³ reception and I informed him that I had been rung up the previous day by a prominent Egyptian whom we mutually know and that he had asked me to advise the Minister against holding the reception. I then returned by taxi (with my servant who had accompanied me) to the Turf Club. I there had my morning usual cup of soup and chatted round the fire with Judge Hume-Barne, Mr.

1 James was a personal friend of King Farouk of Egypt (1920-1965, reigned 1936-1952) and claimed to be the only person who dared to beat him at chess.

2 On 25th January 1952, British troops attacked the Egyptian police barracks in the town of Ismailia after the police refused to surrender. Fifty Egyptian police officers were killed and one hundred were wounded. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_Revolution_of_1952]. See also <http://www.britains-smallwars.com/Canal/ISMAILIA-RIOTS.htm>

3 Australia Day is 26th January

Kennedy and other members who are normally there in the mornings. A little later Mr. Craig⁴ arrived and approached one of the members who was about to proceed to England, having lost his appointment with the Egyptian Educational Authorities, and said that he had a useful introduction for him to a possible employer in England and would write this out for him immediately. The member remarked "Isn't he a dear old chap" and they both proceeded to a desk for the purpose of writing the statement. (Both were killed by the mob about 20 minutes later). I then noticed from a window that the employees in the garage behind the Turf Club had left their job and were looking at something at the end of Malika Farida Street. I commented on this and various people had a look but there seemed to be no particular importance in the incident. About a quarter of an hour later, approximately 1.30 p.m. I proceeded to the entrance of the Club to leave. As I reached it, Mr. Boyer (Canadian Trade Commissioner) and Mr. Jones (Administrative Officer, British Council) arrived. They remarked to me that they had seen something that looked like a fire in the distance in Opera Square. We glanced up the road and noticed what appeared to be a small crowd at the far end of Adly Pasha Street, near Opera Square, but nothing outstanding. I then said goodbye and proceeded on foot to my flat at 18 Adly Pasha Street. This I reached some four minutes later. As I reached the entrance of the building an Egyptian who knew me said "get in quickly" (Housh Awwam). I was surprised, but carried out his instruction and ran upstairs to my flat on the 3rd floor. I could then hear the sound of shouting and looking from my window I saw a large crowd emerge from in front of the Miami Cinema. The Cinema was immediately attacked, I could see wood and chairs being thrown in the air; a moment afterwards two separate parties rushed one towards the Turf Club and one towards the Ford Motor Car Agency and Swedish Consulate (approximately 1 o'clock).. Within a matter of moments dense smoke and flames were arising from both sides of the street and the flames rapidly increased in power. I immediately telephoned our Embassy and the Australian Legation, stating that the Turf Club was being attacked and that buildings were on fire. About a quarter of an hour later my servant (Mohiaddin) arrived. He was streaming with perspiration and seemed in a state of collapse. He said "The Turf Club is destroyed and they are all dead". The boy was in this state of collapse for some time, apparently with horror at what he had seen. He then explained that he had believed myself to be still in the Club. He had attempted to get in, of course without success, he had seen the crowd arrive, led by two or three *effendis*,⁵ the chief leader being a man with a big scar on his face whom he thinks he would recognise again. This man organised a small party carrying a lamp-post which was used as a battering ram against the main door. While this was going on a second *effendi* appeared and ran up the steps shouting out "you are making a mistake this is not an English Club." He was however attacked and disappeared. Almost immediately the door gave way and the *effendis* disappeared inside, followed by only a few of the mob. Immediately fire appeared from all the lower windows. My servant saw figures appearing at the windows, some of whom succeeded in getting out. They fell injured and were then attacked and the injured or dead were misused. Some bodies were thrown back into the flames. He then noticed that a lady had been seized by the mob. She was dragged off violently and he then lost sight of her when she reached the turning to Soliman Pasha Street. He said she appeared to be injured but was not speaking or offering resistance. He states that the four policemen at the Turf Club made no effort whatsoever to restrain the mob. It is possibly relevant to record that whereas on many previous occasions when demonstrations seemed likely, as many as fifty police were placed there, on this specially threatening date, only four were "guarding" the Club. My servant then left the scene and ran to my flat where he joined us. I then rang up the Embassy again and briefly described what had happened. I also mentioned that from the sounds outside the mob had now reached our building. I said that there was an Englishwoman (Mrs Dale) in the building as well as other women and children and that if assistance could be got through they should be removed immediately. I also rang up Husny Pasha again. He said he would send assistance if possible, but that at the moment this was not possible. We then watched from the windows while a number of mobs, each apparently under the leadership of two or three *effendi*-type young men proceeded to various shops and premises which were systematically "broken open, furniture thrown out and bonfires lighted in the streets. In each case the mob then

4 James Ireland Craig, CBE (24 Feb 1868 – 26 Jan 1952) was a mathematician and Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He served with the Egyptian Ministry of Finance as Controller General 1925-28, then as Financial Secretary to the Egyptian Census 1928-34. In 1909 he invented the Craig retroazimuthal map projection, sometimes known as the Mecca projection because, as it preserves the direction from any place to other predetermined place, it was invented to help Muslims find the direction of Mecca.

[http://www.gap-system.org/~history/Biographies/Craig_James.html]

5 "Effendi" is an honorific used in some Middle-Eastern countries to denote an educated man, subordinate to titles such as "Bey" or "Pasha"

entered the premises evidently to acquire loot. At about this time I also noticed that the British Institute Buildings had been approached by quite a small party who proceeded in a leisurely manner into the building from which almost immediately flames and smoke began to emerge. Within half an hour I observed flames on the roof of the building, so it was presumably destroyed throughout. I then remembered that I had not told the Embassy of the capture of the English woman from the Turf Club. Our own telephone by then was not working but in an abandoned office on the floor below I discovered that the telephone was still in order and passed through the necessary information.

Soon after I had returned to my flat and while Kodaks next door was being violently attacked and burning, there was a loud knocking on my front door and when eventually we looked out I found that a young fellow who had been in an orphanage in which I had been interested, but who is now working as a carpenter, had arrived to give us assistance. He had been quite badly injured in getting into the building. We gave him first aid and he recovered rapidly. Very soon afterwards, hearing an unusual sound I looked through the doorway of my sitting room which faces Emad el Din Street and there saw a solid sheet of flame leaping up over my veranda and reaching the storey above us. The servants, myself and the carpenter had seized the furniture on the veranda which was already burning, threw some of it over the side, dragged some into the rooms and then the servants cried out that the mob had seen us and that the Europeans must all go to the roof at once, as if they reached the flat, we should certainly all be murdered. There were by now in the premises, myself, an English woman (born Greek) and her husband who works at the Australian Legation, two Greek women, a German youth, a German woman and another Greeko-German young man. We all proceeded to the roof, the servants (by now four in number) saying that they would do whatever possible to protect the flat. We all went by the back staircase which was now enveloped in smoke and almost stifling, up to the roof above the 7th floor. Actually the mob did not break in, I think mainly because the entrance hall was by now on fire and the main staircase partially destroyed. Shortly afterwards my own servant brought up the German youth enveloped in a blanket. He had apparently been found by my servant partially suffocated. The roof is divided by partitions with small openings which led to adjoining buildings. With the smoke and semi-darkness (for by now the electric light had of course failed) our surroundings were rather like a nightmare maze but we discovered another back staircase down which we presumed it would be possible to escape, though we knew that it would lead only to the main street where the mobs were still seething. Both the Greek ladies were in a state of acute hysteria, one threatened to jump from the parapet and the other to run into the street, saying that she would rather be shot than burnt. Of course she probably did not realise that if she had been seized by the mob, her death would not have been by shooting. It soon became evident that some of the party were regarding the English-speaking of their companions as highly undesirable associates and suddenly we found that the two Greek women, the two German women and the Greeko-German youth had disappeared, leaving myself, the Englishman and his wife, an American and also the German young man, who throughout was extremely helpful and self-controlled.

By now the fire had gradually increased in volume and the central courtyard-well was a seething mass of flame and the two first floors burning steadily. Flames were reaching us on the roof on the 7th floor. It was a curious thing that all round this "well" at the windows or the various flats there were figures, many of them screaming but making no constructive efforts about anything. It is noteworthy that the Berbering servants in all the flats appeared to be quite calm and busying themselves in carrying out the only possible measure, which was to pour bucket after bucket of water into the furnace down below. We did whatever possible to direct the proceedings. Fortunately our water supply did not fail us, but my servant informed me that the Fire Brigade though it did arrive, refused to give any assistance. Although the efforts with buckets or water seemed fantastically inadequate, they did in fact keep the fire in partial control and eventually at about 7 p.m. when the Egyptian army arrived and forced the Fire Brigade to take action. It was still possible to control the fire before it went beyond the second floor, i.e. the floor immediately below my premises.

At one point we heard heavy explosions and what appeared to be the sound of sten-gun fire. Everybody on the roof joyfully imagined it was the arrival of the British Army, but when my servant came upstairs he informed us that it actually was a gunsmiths shop which had been set on fire and that its contents were exploding and that also the mob had seized revolvers and other arms which they were firing in all directions. At about 6.30 p.m. I decided to try to get back to the flat to see what was happening and with the assistance of a damp cloth over my head I got down and found our servants still working and although the floor was unbearably hot and the

parquet floor in my bedroom burning in places, there was still no great damage, and the remaining flames we soon put out. The remaining small party on the roof soon followed me and within half an hour we heard rumbling in the streets and the sound of firing, and discovered that the Army had in fact this time arrived, but that it was the Egyptian Army and not the Army we were expecting. I then watched carefully from my veranda and it was impressive to notice the orderly manner in which these forces dealt with the situation. They were not firing indiscriminately and a great deal of the firing was into the air, but within an hour the howling mobs had almost entirely disappeared from the streets, and comparative order reigned around us.

We then paused, sitting on the upturned furniture, and at about this moment all the missing foreign party mysteriously arrived back. It appears that far from committing suicide or rushing into the street, they had known of a secure flat in an adjoining building in which they had quietly hidden themselves without informing the rest of the party! It is possibly interesting to comment upon the fact that the husband of the Greek lady had been absent all day. He is the owner of the whole floor upon which I reside and I have known the family for about two years. They are applying for Australian citizenship. I had been surprised at the lady's lack of anxiety at the absence of her husband, especially when she told me that he was in Choubra in the company of an Egyptian Police Officer. At about this time this man and his Police Captain in uniform and another police officer in mufti returned. They, none of them, in any way approached or attempted to assist any of the English-speaking members of the party. They collected the Greek ladies and the half-German family, and in spite of the indignant protests of the English woman, who refused to leave her husband and who therefore was being left behind with us, remarked that they were leaving the building to spend the night elsewhere. The man himself replied to the English woman's protest (he speaks excellent English) "Surely you don't think we are going to get our throats cut for you".

As all was then quiet except of course for the bursts of firing which went on all night, those of us who remained, attempted to get a little sleep without undressing. It is worth commenting that the German young man who was with us and who had lost an arm in the last war, refused to leave us and continued to be most helpful. The following morning at about 6 a.m. the wife of one of the Egyptian household staff arrived. It appears that she had walked in from an outlying part of Cairo to discover if her husband was still alive.

At about 8 a.m. Colonel Husein Kafafi came to our flat. He is a personal A.D.C. of His Majesty and had come to post a guard. He explained that it had been impossible to get assistance to us until the declaration of martial law, as they had been afraid even to mention the position or friends of the King in case those who were sent allegedly to assist them, might in fact hand them over to the mob. A mob had in fact even attacked the Palace guard.

It is a pleasant point that while we were on the roof, one or two Berberine families (Servants) were most friendly, and an elderly woman gave us chairs in her small room for a while. On the other hand one or two Egyptians who appeared mysteriously from amidst the smoke were heard to be enquiring if there were any English people amongst our party and that if so they must be sent into the street. None of the Berberines showed any inclination to give us away, and we endeavoured to talk French and use our best French accent which was particularly difficult for our American friend!

Later in the morning our Greek "host" returned with his family from their security. He then commented on the destruction of Shepherds Hotel and, rather strangely, in the course of his conversation said that he had met a young Egyptian (I gathered that he already knew him) who had boasted that he was a ringleader in the firing of Shepherds and proudly exhibited a slight burn on his hand as a trophy of war. If in fact our host was in fact all the time with the Egyptian Police Officer, the latter must also have heard this statement but evidently took no action.

In watching the mobs in the streets it became quite clear that the main destruction was part of an organised plan. The mobs were not one disorderly mass but appeared to be in separate groups each under the leadership of one or two *effendi* types. The *effendis* directed the attacks, set going the fires (I could not see how but they appeared to be carrying various materials) and then the mobs were left to carry out the looting. In the early stages I saw two cars stopped and I saw screaming people, apparently Europeans being dragged out. One could not see what happened to them but they disappeared. I do not know either what happened to the cars,

but they eventually also disappeared presumably driven off by members of the mob. I also saw a European dragged from a bicycle. When I last saw him most of his clothing had been torn off. I don't know what happened to him but one or two men did appear to be intervening on his behalf.

It was reliably reported to me next morning that four bodies, apparently Europeans, were lying naked in Malika Farida Street. They had been partially burnt and their stomachs had been slit up. I did not see these bodies myself but I had the reports from three different sources, I think entirely reliable. While on the roof the previous day at one moment I had counted 8 major fires, i.e. whole blocks in flames; and an uncountable number of bonfires in the streets; and shops or vehicles burning. Apart from the organising *effendis* the mob became increasingly frantic and were dancing and shrieking throwing materials about and at one moment, waving aloft costly necklaces and jewellery, which they had just looted from a Jewellers immediately below us. It is worthy of special comment that without exception the Berberines were well disposed towards our English-speaking party and in my opinion without the concerted efforts of these people, not only our own block of buildings, but all the large adjoining blocks, including all their inhabitants would certainly have been consumed. It is also an interesting point that Egyptian friends of mine who apparently reached the entrance of our building in an endeavour to find me, were told that every person had already been evacuated and that there was nobody still in the block of buildings. This deliberately false information was given by Police standing near the entrance. I noticed at different times at least six policemen in pairs walk through the mobs without making the slightest endeavour to interfere with their activities.

A friend of mine, son of the late Dr. Chahbandar the famous Syrian leader has told me the following story. His own office adjoins Barclay's Bank. When this was set on fire, he remembered that one of the Bank's staff occupied with his family a flat on the roof. He therefore rushed to a police Sergeant and urged him to allow some effort to be made to get the family out. The Sergeant replied "if you do not shut up I will hand you over to the mob." At least 17 bodies have already been found in the ruins of this bank.

I mention especially in concluding these notes, that the English woman (of Greek origin) who was with us showed throughout these trying circumstances a most calm and courageous spirit, and at many moments prevented panic increasing amongst the other women; and also was skilful and prompt in any incident when "first aid" was necessary. I suggest that the conduct of the friendly Berberines and Nubians, and of the young Egyptian carpenter-lad who, at no little personal risk, came to assist us, should be recorded and possibly with other similar cases, be officially commended at a suitable time.

I have, myself, no little cause for thankfulness. My flat is not much damaged. I have lost by burning one table, two carpets, a parquet floor is a little scorched and two oil paintings are blurred due to the heat and smoke. I myself, after a period of intermittent headaches and nausea and a curious fogging of my eyesight, am now almost recovered.

In thinking over certain aspects of the mob as I watched during those hours of waiting, I seem to remember that there is a classic description of a similar Egyptian mob (*Said the Fisherman* -by Pickthorne⁶). I think that the Cairo mob today is much the same -except that its potential numbers are now increased by many millions and the social contrast with the few privileged classes is even more glaring. This mob is still liable to exploitation by the unscrupulous. The only new element is the very sinister element of: infiltration or highly trained agitators and leaders from Stalinist Russia.

Cairo today is a devastated city; the sinister smell of smoke and burning still pervades it; there is still a sense of menace everywhere and groups of haggard and hopeless people here and there stand silently surveying their ruined homes or business premises.

Grim accounts of destruction and barbarous murder still continue to come in.

30.1. 52.

⁶ This is presumably a reference to the novel *Said the Fisherman* by (Mohammad) Marmaduke William Pickthall, an English convert to Islam. Published by McClure, Philips & Co., 1904.

Personal & Confidential

Visit to Abdin Palace.

On the morning of Monday 28th January 1952, at about 10.30 I decided that I should pay a visit of courtesy to Abdin Palace to express my thanks for the guard (now two constables at night and two in the day) which had been placed upon my place of residence. In the interval I had also had a telephone call from Husna Pasha⁷ saying that His Majesty was deeply distressed at what had happened at the Turf Club and that he would like all possible details, especially about those who were injured but had survived, so that he could express his sympathy. He had also made a personal enquiry asking me to discover if possible whether Professor Bernard Holman had survived and upon my finding out for him Holman's private address, he had sent an A.D.C. to enquire personally for him. Holman in fact had not been caught in the Turf Club incident. H. M's A.D.C. also assisted two ladies about whose welfare I was concerned. I found Abdin Palace cordoned off by Egyptian Army but in view of the Guard who accompanied me, I was permitted to enter. I signed my name in the book and was cordially welcomed by the Chamberlains on duty. Dr. Yousser Rashad Bey, Naval A.D.C.(Medical) to His Majesty and a personal friend or his then came to me, welcomed me warmly -but spoke with very grave concern on the news that had been reaching them. He then took me to the A.D.C's room where the senior Service Staff were all assembled and evidently much occupied. We had a long discussion in the course of which Rashad Bey spoke of the very dangerous weeks through which His Majesty and his entourage had been passing. He said that they fully realised the intrigues which were being carried on, not only against public order in general, but also against the Royal House and His Majesty in particular. They had been aware that Fouad Sarag el Din⁸ was at the head of these subversive activities but because of the fact that he had succeeded in insinuating his agents into almost every key position, counter measures on the part of the Palace needed to be carried out with utmost foresight and precaution. A fact of which they were particularly aware was the subversion of the Police Force through certain officers who were put in executive positions where they could control all Police movement. These police officers had received bribes from Fouad Sarag el Din and were in touch with Ahmed Hussein and with various disruptive elements including, it was strongly suspected, agents of the Soviet Embassy. During the climax of the latter few days it was realised that Fouad Sarag el Din (using of course Nahas Pasha's name⁹) was manoeuvring to force events in such a way that it should be His Majesty who would have to declare martial law and not the Wafdist Government. In such a case the Wafdist elements would probably have forced a revolutionary opposition and would have posed to the public as patriots who had been betrayed by His Majesty. It was for this reason that the actual declaration of martial law had to be postponed longer than His Majesty had wished. Until it was declared it was of course impossible for the Palace to issue any constructive Orders with any certainty that they would not be distorted or disobeyed.

I refer to my previous reports to Mr. Wardle-Smith at the Embassy concerning His Majesty's wish for British goodwill and to the point of view which had been expressed to me in a long talk I recently had with Aly Maher Pasha. I would again emphasize the opinion expressed to me -by Captain (R.E.N.) Izzedin Atif (former Naval A.D.C. to His Majesty) when I met him and his wife recently in Cairo. This Officer has always been considered both by reasonable Egyptian and British Authorities to be sound and a common-sense man. He also had his early training in the British Service. He has always however been a loyal Egyptian and in no sense exaggeratedly pro-British. He said to me on this occasion in the privacy of his car, but in the presence of his wife, "I am a loyal officer in the active service of His Majesty's Navy and I fully realise the seriousness of what I am saying to you, but it is my considered opinion and that of many other senior officers who have studied the

7 Private Secretary to King Farouk

8 Fuad Sareg El Din was the Interior Minister, Finance Minister and Secretary of the governing Wafd party. In 1954 he was sentenced to 15 years in prison by a court of the Revolutionary Command Council. [*Time Magazine*, 8 Feb 1954]

9 Mustafa El-Nahas Pasha was the Prime Minister up until the day of the riots on 26 January. His Government was dismissed by the King the following day. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_Revolution_of_1952]

situation, that the situation in Egypt has become already radically out of hand.. His Majesty continues to be a possible rallying point but I can think of no person either in the present Egyptian Government or in any Egyptian Government which might follow, who has the strength or will or resources of reconstruction to bring back order unless they have at least the tacit and possible the very active support of the British Government itself, even to the extent of some armed assistance should there be an uprising. This armed force should not of course be called a force of occupation because that word has acquired a particularly distasteful significance but it should be described as 'a Force to assist His Majesty's own Forces in upholding law and order'." An exactly similar point or view was expressed to me -by an Egyptian senior Judge and by an Egyptian Doctor whom I know well through my contacts with him in his capacity as Commissioner for Arab Refugees at Gaza.

I have been told by my servant yesterday that the sack or the Turf Club and the murder under atrocious circumstances of the members including ladies found there, is being spoken of. by Egyptians in Cairo and in Syrian newspapers as "The greatest defeat England has ever had in Egypt". Although this opinion may be a distorted one, nevertheless it seems to need attention. I suggest now that the disaster is over that although some definite improvement is a fact, yet with regard to Zamalek, Heliopolis etc.&:the already-expressed threats of further attacks, conditions do still exist which need the closest watchfulness. The possibility of the appearance of British forces is being much discussed in Cairo. The various aspects or such a possibility are obviously complicated and very serious in implication.

After my call at Abdin Palace I also called on the Prime Minister (Ali Maher Pasha¹⁰) and then with my Guard escort did a tour of Cairo and was appalled at the extent of the damage. Crowds were milling about still and I am afraid it would be quite incorrect to say that the majority or them were regarding the destruction with distress. I got a very definite impression that a good many or the grinning faces who were regarding the devastation were those or the young men who had themselves taken part in it. With the prestige or my personal guard I took a delight (perhaps a little ridiculous) in approaching certain seated police sentries and ordering them to stand to attention while I questioned them. I think the police and the onlookers were much surprised but made no protest.

At Abdin Palace I had been warned that though the position had greatly improved, we are by no means yet out of danger. On a request passed to me through His Majesty's secretary, I also visited our Cathedral, & certain families in Zamalek, to assure safety.

At the end or the morning I visited the British Embassy and made a brief report.

30-1-52

Personal & Confidential

APPENDIX TO REPORT OF 30th JANUARY 1952.

Reference to Page 2 para 2 of my report¹¹ on a visit to Abdin Palace on Monday, 28th January, I have to add the following statement. Definite information has now reached me that when finally the bodies of the victims of the tragedy at the Turf Club had been found at the Cairo Morgue, it was seen that though Egyptian corpses in that place were placed on tables or slabs, all the bodies of the British people had been thrown indiscriminately together in a corner on the ground. It was clearly evident that all these bodies had been brutalized. In one case the legs had been severed above the knee; one had a hand cut off; others had fingers severed; most had their stomachs ripped open. These bodies included that of an English woman.

¹⁰ Ali Maher was appointed Prime Minister on 27 January, but his Government lasted only until 1 March.
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_Revolution_of_1952]

¹¹ i.e. the paragraph "I have been told by my servant ... serious in implication"

I vividly remember these same people as I had seen them and talked with them just before I left the Club, only just before their brutal murder. All were in a peaceful and unsuspecting mood, reading, writing or chatting. None of them were in any way connected with politics. Several had spent many years in faithful service of the Egyptians, in scholastic, scientific and similar occupations.

Mr. & Mrs. Crawford and Mr. Kennedy were about to leave for England due to the recent discharge (itself arbitrary and illegal) of British officials in Egyptian Government service. Mr. & Mrs. Crawford have a young son (some 14 years of age) at school in England. In addition to the grave mental shock to this lad, he is also now left without the financial provision which his parents devoted to him.

Though this grave tragedy must of course be dealt with without hysteria it must not be minimized. Adequate reparation -as far as such is possible, & most solemn and outspoken public protest rendered officially seem to be the least measures to be demanded.

As a person who escaped a similar fate at a margin of moments only, and who was with these friends, fellow members of our British Community here, just before their death, I feel that this tribute of advocacy, however modest its influence, is my duty.

6/Feb/52.