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SUBJECT Fu'ad Siraj al-Din and the Ikhwan

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1. Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din Pasha, the Egyptian Minister of the Interior and of Finance, said privately at the end of December 1950 that all decisions regarding the Ikhwan had been suspended for the present. There were many reasons for this decision, but the chief one was the revelations in the current "jeep case," which had proved that the Ikhwan was planning the overthrow of the present regime in order to establish a purely Moslem state. He admitted that he himself was now in a quandary as he had made a definite promise to the Ikhwan to reinstate it and restore its assets. However, in view of the seriousness of the revelations he would not hesitate to go back on his word; he was also somewhat afraid of the reaction of the Opposition, were he to allow the Ikhwan to function again.
2. Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din Pasha's policy toward the Ikhwan was to split it by sowing dissension within its ranks. Hence the reason for his support of Mustafa Mu'min. When this had served its purpose he continued his attempts to divide the Ikhwan by getting in touch with Husan al-Hudaibi Bey and Salim Ashmawi and offering them what he had refused Mustafa Mu'min, namely, the restoration of the Ikhwan under its former title provided that it undertook to restrict its activities to religious matters and not to engage in politics. However, they refused his offer and insisted on the unconditional restoration of the Ikhwan. Siraj-al-Din Pasha has therefore since got in touch with a third group headed by Shaykh al-Bakuri, using Shaykh al-Darraz as intermediary, even though he knew that this group was already in touch with the Sa'dist Party. By these approaches Siraj-al-Din hopes so to disorganize the Ikhwan that by the time of the coming elections it will have no standing in the country.

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3. The leaders of the various factions in the Ikhwan (including Mustafa Mu'min) are now well aware of Siraj al-Din's intentions. Thus, the very thing that Siraj-al-Din wished to avoid has occurred, namely, the leaders have been thrown closer together and are now constantly in touch with each other in order to try to repair the damage done to the movement by Siraj-al-Din's intrigues - and to recreate their old front.
4. In the meantime, according to a senior official of the Ministry of the Interior, Siraj-al-Din Pasha is planning to strike a blow against the Ikhwan. To this end he has instituted surveillance of all its activities and particularly of the Friday meetings at Wadi Huf near Helwan (south of Cairo) where military training is given. Outwardly however he pretends to be unaware of what the Ikhwan is up to, as he is anxious to leave it freedom of action in which to commit itself and thus justify his taking drastic action. He plans to destroy the movement before May 1951.
5. In mid-January 1951 other Ministry of the Interior officials reported instances of apparent tolerance of Ikhwan activity. Both Siraj-al-Din Pasha and his Undersecretary of State, 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, for instance had issued instructions not to interfere with a meeting of the Ikhwan which took place without the necessary permit at Helma (northeast of Cairo), just before Christmas 1950. Lt. Colonel Zahran Rushdi, Director of the Special Section at Alexandria, said that his office had received instructions from the Ministry of the Interior not only not to interfere with Ikhwan meetings, but to assist, and protect them from outside interference. He was puzzled by this order, which he felt could only strengthen the influence of the Ikhwan.
- 25X1A 6. More recently, [REDACTED] reported that Siraj-al-Din is not too pleased with the way that things are going and considers that the Ikhwan is rapidly regaining power. Taking advantage of Siraj-al-Din's promise to allow it to resume activities, the Ikhwan has already begun to prepare for the day when it will be allowed to do so. Attempts to check these efforts in the provinces have met with the reply that the Ikhwan, having been promised reinstatement by Siraj-al-Din, was merely getting things ready in time. Therefore, to strengthen the hands of the mudirs (provincial governors), Siraj-al-Din sent a secret circular to all Governorates, asking them to watch the Ikhwan, but to take no action against it.
- 25X1A 7. There is no doubt that the Ikhwan is becoming impatient to have the promises made to it by Siraj-al-Din implemented. Therefore, if the law sanctioning the resumption of its activities is not passed early in the present parliamentary session, it will go into all-out opposition to the Government, [REDACTED]
8. The high tribute paid to the part played by members of the Ikhwan during the Palestine war, by two senior Egyptian Army officers when giving evidence in the "jeep case," has greatly stimulated the Ikhwan. In private conversation at the end of December, Tahir al-Khashab, leading Ikhwan lawyer, drew attention to this and said that it was now up to the Wafd

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Government to decide what to do. It must either rescind the order dissolving the Ikhwan and restore its money and property, or be prepared for it to adopt other means of attaining its ends. When asked whether its new Guide, Hudaibi, as a judge, would allow it to resort to other means, al-Khashab said that the rule of the Ikhwan is for the Guide to submit to the decision of the majority. Therefore, if the Ikhwan as a body decided out of despair to resort to violence, the Guide would have to submit to this decision, in accordance with Islamic principles. In commenting on a remark that the Ikhwan had been stripped of all its arms and that heroism without arms would not get it very far, al-Khashab remarked that when the Ikhwan started it had neither arms nor money, yet within a very short time it was in possession of considerable quantities of both. He therefore did not foresee any great difficulty on this score, particularly as the favorable evidence given by the two senior Egyptian Army officers would be likely to attract supporters and thereby facilitate the Ikhwan in its task of procuring the required money and arms.

9. In private conversation on 10 January an official of the Ministry of the Interior said that there is a definite split in the Guidance Office of the Ikhwan. There are now two factions, one led by Salah Ashmawi, the other by Hudaibi. The official stated that there was the possibility that an effort might be made in the near future to expel Salah Ashmawi from the Ikhwan. He further asserted that Mustafa Mu'min had no influence whatever in the Society.

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