Truce

It appears that the delicate and tangled negotiations taking place between Alexandria and Versailles have taken a step toward success, as people say. The resigned Prime Minister has agreed to prolong the causes of the crisis until he reaches Egypt, and has also agreed that a celebration may be held in his honor—but only after his arrival, not on the very day he returns.

Apparently Egypt's political situation stood exposed to the gravest dangers, and a series of immense and terrifying disasters was preparing to descend upon this unfortunate country had God not intervened in His mercy and compassion, softening the heart of Sidqi Pasha and guiding his tongue to words that neither solve nor abolish the crisis, but merely postpone it for a time.

Egypt will therefore be able to breathe, to fill its lungs with fresh air, and to gather in these few days enough strength and endurance to withstand the violent shock that must inevitably come on Tuesday or Wednesday, or shortly thereafter. Egypt owes this temporary relief and this limited respite to the tact, activity, skill, and brilliance shown by the Egyptian Legation in Paris.

The Legation therefore deserves congratulations and praise. One of the two negotiating parties has already fulfilled this duty: the resigned Prime Minister warmly praised our Legation while boarding the train yesterday. It remains only for the other negotiating party to offer the thanks and commendation that are equally due.

Perhaps the Ministry will even issue an official communiqué enumerating the successful efforts exerted by our minister plenipotentiary in Paris, who managed to soften the Prime Minister's stubbornness sufficiently to allow Egypt the joy of greeting him upon his return—whereas he might instead have postponed his ■■■ after having already hastened it—and to allow the ministers the happiness of meeting their chief and discussing matters with him, perhaps persuading him to withdraw this resignation which, as the French say, has fallen "like a hair in the soup."

Whatever the case, we are now living through a truce that began yesterday when the Prime Minister boarded his train. It will continue for three full days, perhaps a little longer. Yet this truce will not relieve the fearful of fear, nor the ambitious of ambition, nor those hurrying between both camps of their intrigues.

The hearts of the ministers will continue trembling with anxiety and apprehension. The hearts of

aspiring ministers will continue beating with hope and expectation. And the political maneuverers will continue their efforts of alliance, formation, reconciliation, and negotiation in hopes of preparing a Ministry capable of succeeding Sidqi Pasha—one that at least appears to satisfy some of the conditions loudly proclaimed in order to deceive the people, though in truth no one is deceived by them, not even those who proclaim them.

It seems that the Cairo correspondent of *The Times* is giving expression to the wishes of certain groups when he tells his newspaper that the coming Ministry will be composed of all parties except the Wafd, and that by virtue of this coalition and the nature of its participating parties it will be able to bear the heavy burden that Sidqi Pasha himself could no longer endure and was forced to cast from his exhausted shoulders.

This would therefore be the "national government" in which, as one former minister once remarked, there is nothing truly national. It would also represent an incomplete version of the formula once desired by Sir Percy Loraine but never successfully realized. In any case it amounts to yet another attempt to conceal the blatant and scandalous failure to which the policy of this "happy era" has ultimately led.

And like all such attempts, it will demand from its authors immense effort and exhausting labor, only to end in disappointment, bitterness, regret, and the painful realization of how much they have sacrificed both their country and themselves.

Every Egyptian who attempts to prolong the policy of this "happy era" betrays his country, because the country has reaped from this era no good whatsoever. Egypt has received from its policies only the worst forms of oppression, coercion, despotism, and the preference for immediate interests over enduring national duties.

Had Egypt truly gained even the slightest benefit from this policy, English newspapers would not approve of it so enthusiastically or defend it so eagerly. These newspapers cannot possibly be more Egyptian than the Egyptians themselves. They are English newspapers before all else, devoted above all to English interests.

Thus when we see them praising the political structure built by Sidqi Pasha and Sir Percy Loraine and applauding the results it has produced, we know with certainty that they do so only because this policy has secured for England the immediate benefits and advantages it desired.

Anyone reading what *The Times* has published cannot doubt that an alliance exists between seekers of advantage in Egypt and seekers of advantage in England in support of this policy imposed upon Egypt against its will and contrary to its desires.

The Egyptian allies receive offices and the prestige and authority attached to them. The English receive fulfilled ambitions, protected interests, expanded influence, and consolidated power. Egypt herself is left to provide for the wishes of both, no matter the effort required, no matter the hardship endured, no matter the humiliation, hunger, deprivation, and suffering imposed upon her.

Every Egyptian who assists, directly or indirectly, in prolonging the regime established by Sidqi Pasha and Sir Percy Loraine betrays his country, because he merely helps perpetuate what even *The Times* openly admits: the rule of Egyptians against the wishes of Egyptians themselves.

Such a man also betrays himself, because he sacrifices his dignity, peace of mind, duty, and conscience for immediate gains of no lasting value, only to discover in the end the same miserable outcome now confronting those who governed Egypt through these policies for more than three years and who today face public resentment and failure.

It is extraordinary folly for these ambitious and impatient men to imagine they will enjoy better fortune than those who preceded them in greed and haste. They imagine they will succeed where the resigned Prime Minister and his associates failed.

Yet the Egyptian people, who exhausted one ministry after another and destroyed the efforts of those who oppressed them and coveted power over them, remain unchanged. They have not weakened or surrendered. They have not abandoned their rights or neglected themselves. Indeed, their victory over ministries of violence and coercion has only strengthened their faith in their rights, their confidence in themselves, and their readiness for patience, struggle, and resistance.

Those whose mouths water with longing for office and whose hearts leap impatiently toward authority would do well to think carefully, reflect deeply, and learn from the examples of those who came before them. They should understand that anyone who enters a ministry founded against the will of the nation merely enters a path already traveled by others, a path that has led only to disaster.

As for you, Egyptian people, you must see, read, and understand what you see and read. Your English adversaries openly proclaim their satisfaction with these three years during which you have tasted humiliation and suffering. They claim you have never been happier than under this regime, and they seek allies and coalitions to prolong it indefinitely.

Do you truly believe the English sincere? Do you believe you have prospered beneath the rule of the resigned Prime Minister? Do you believe you have become fed after hunger, wealthy after poverty, honored after humiliation? Do you truly wish for this “happy era” to continue so that your happiness, comfort, and satisfaction may increase?

No. If you had truly been content and prosperous, the English themselves would not have been forced to transfer their representative, nor would the Prime Minister himself have been forced to resign.

No—you are neither satisfied nor should you be. You are not afraid and should not be afraid. You are a patient and steadfast people who prefer peace and well■being, and who know that victory depends upon preserving peace and well■being without despair, weakness, division, or surrender.

Therefore continue in your patience, for nothing angers your enemies more than patience. Continue in your faith in your rights and your confidence in yourselves, for nothing defeats your enemies more surely than faith and confidence. And smile mockingly at the ambitious and impatient, just as you once smiled mockingly at the defeated and discarded.