

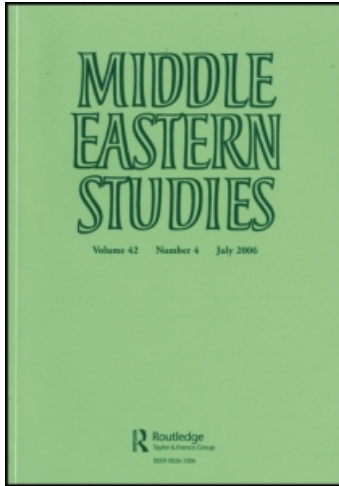
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Helene von Bismarck

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# ‘A Watershed in our Relations with the Trucial States’: Great Britain’s Policy to Prevent the Opening of an Arab League Office in the Persian Gulf in 1965

HELENE VON BISMARCK

In January 1965, the British Government was informed that the Arab League intended to contribute financially to the development of the Trucial States and to open an office there as soon as possible to administer and distribute the money. The Trucial States (today’s United Arab Emirates) were part of Great Britain’s informal empire in the Persian Gulf, which was based on military presence in the region and on treaties with the Gulf States that limited their independence and their rulers’ sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> Geographically, this informal empire consisted of the nine Protected States of Bahrain, Qatar and the seven Trucial States, as well as the Emirate of Kuwait and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman.<sup>2</sup> Great Britain’s military installations in the area in the 1960s included a Royal Air Force (RAF) base, an army camp and a small navy station in Bahrain and RAF airfields and staging posts in Sharjah and on Masirah Island in Oman.

Based on records from the British National Archives, this article describes how the prospect of an Arab League office being opened in the Trucial States resulted in a major crisis for Great Britain’s informal empire in the Gulf.<sup>3</sup> It explains why the British Government regarded an Arab League office in the Trucial States as a major threat to Great Britain’s interests in the Persian Gulf and describes the strategy the British employed to counter the plans of the Arab League. The main argument of the article is that the determination of the British Government to prevent an extension of Arab League influence to the Gulf was the driving force behind the two major political developments in the Trucial States in the first six months of 1965: the creation of the Trucial States Development Office in March and the deposition of Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan Al Qasimi of Sharjah in June. The British Government first employed an indirect strategy to prevent the opening of an Arab League office in the Gulf. Great Britain’s influence on the local rulers was used to found the Trucial States Development Office, an institution through which all foreign development aid was to be channelled and which made an Arab League development office unnecessary. The British Government then tried to pre-empt Arab League aid for the Trucial States from other sources by persuading Saudi Arabia and the richer

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Protected States, Bahrain, Qatar and Abu Dhabi to make large financial contributions to the development of the Trucial States. For the same purpose British development aid was increased in May 1965. However, this indirect strategy did not pay off: the Arab League continued to concretize its plans, now supported by five of the Trucial rulers, most importantly Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah, who refused to take British advice and permitted the opening of an Arab League office on his territory. This major crisis in the British relationship with most of the Trucial rulers was only solved when Shaikh Saqr was deposed on 24 June – officially by his own family – and replaced by his cousin Shaikh Khalid bin Muhammad. The latter, quickly followed by the other four formerly dissident rulers, immediately agreed to restore his allegiance to Great Britain and deny the Arab League the establishment of an office in the Trucial States.

The British struggle in 1965 to keep Arab League influence out of the Gulf has not received much attention from historians. While Fatma Al-Sayegh rightly states that the formation of the Trucial States Development Fund was ‘a reactionary move by Britain’ to counter the plans of the Arab League in the area, she does not elaborate on the subject.<sup>4</sup> Miriam Joyce and Simon C. Smith mention the deposition of Shaikh Saqr and his preceding flirtations with the Arab League, but neither of them awards the issue more than two pages of their respective studies.<sup>5</sup> The historical debate on British policy in the Persian Gulf in the 1960s has been concerned almost exclusively with the reasons for Great Britain’s withdrawal from the region which was announced in January 1968.<sup>6</sup> It is argued in this article that this concentration on the end of Great Britain’s informal empire in the Gulf has led to a neglect of the equally relevant question of how the British conducted their relations with the Protected States before the decision to withdraw from the area was taken. Apart from describing and explaining the events of 1965, this article is an important case study of how the British Government in the 1960s used its influence on the local rulers to safeguard its interests in the strategically and economically highly important Persian Gulf region.

On 22 October 1964, the Secretary-General of the Arab League, the Egyptian Abdel Khalek Hassouna, accompanied by representatives of the governments of Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, arrived in Bahrain for a tour of the Protected States. The professed aim of this ‘mission of brotherhood’ was to gather information about the development situation in the Gulf and to offer economic and technical assistance to the local rulers. The British Government, having been informed about the upcoming visit in June 1964 by the rulers of Qatar and Bahrain, had done nothing to prevent it. The Foreign Office was determined not to give radio stations such as the Egyptian *Voice of the Arabs* and the Iraqi *Bahgdad Home Service* and *Voice of Iraq*, which had in previous months stepped up their propaganda against Great Britain’s special position in the Gulf, additional fuel for their attacks. It was agreed in the Foreign Office that if the rulers denied the Arab League a visit, the latter might react by accusing Great Britain publicly of trying to keep ‘Arabism’ out of the Gulf. This was a situation which the British Government hoped to avoid.<sup>7</sup>

The British representatives in the Gulf were therefore instructed to persuade the local rulers to welcome the Arab League delegation in a polite and friendly manner.

Shortly before Hassouna's mission arrived, the Political Resident, Sir William Luce, toured the Gulf and met the rulers one by one, instructing them how to treat the Arab League delegates: they were to receive them, entertain them, listen politely to their propositions, but not to commit themselves to any further cooperation.<sup>8</sup> While the British considered a polite reception of Hassouna and his colleagues as necessary on presentational grounds, they were determined that the establishment of formal relations between the Arab League and the Protected States had to be prevented. Neither the opening of an Arab League office in the Protected States nor Arab League membership of the Gulf shaikhdoms could be tolerated.<sup>9</sup>

Most of the nine Protected rulers behaved in their discussions with the Arab League delegates exactly as the British had asked them to: polite, yet non-committal.<sup>10</sup> The exceptions to this rule were Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah and his namesake and cousin, Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah. The latter – eager to get funds for the development of his shaikhdom – welcomed the Arab League's offer to provide the Gulf States with aid and made specific requests for assistance to his own development projects.<sup>11</sup> Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah's sympathy for the Arab League had already worried the British before Hassouna arrived in the Gulf. The rulers of Qatar and Bahrain had informed Sir William Luce earlier in October that Saqr had recently spoken in favour of cooperating with the Arab League.<sup>12</sup> He had then prepared his shaikhdom for an enthusiastic welcome for the 'mission of brotherhood': buildings were covered in arches and flags, many of them United Arab Republic flags. The British also believed that Saqr was responsible for the way the delegation was welcomed on its arrival in Dubai. When Hassouna and his colleagues landed at Dubai airport, they were greeted by more than 3,000 people, most of them not from Dubai, but from neighbouring Sharjah. A pro-Arab League demonstration started shortly afterwards in Dubai city during which Adeni and Yemeni labourers shouted pro-Nasser and anti-imperialist slogans. The demonstration had to be dispersed by the police. Shaikh Saqr's personal preferences were demonstrated during a lunch he hosted for Hassouna and his colleagues in Sharjah on 30 October: when several Egyptian school teachers used the occasion to make speeches demanding that Sharjah should join the Arab League at once, Saqr did not demur to these propositions. All this led the British to conclude that Saqr had shown more sympathy to the Arab League mission's propositions about cooperation and development aid than he had let on.<sup>13</sup>

On 2 December 1964, the Foreign Office received a translation of the official report Hassouna had submitted to the Arab League about his visit to the Gulf States.<sup>14</sup> The report concluded that while the wealthier, oil-producing shaikhdoms of Bahrain, Qatar and the Trucial State Abu Dhabi were not in need of assistance from abroad, the other six Trucial States, i.e. Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain, hoped for and depended on aid for their development provided by the Arab League. It was therefore recommended in the report that an aid fund should be established through which all Arab countries willing to help the Trucial States could channel their financial aid. It was also proposed that a delegation consisting of experts in roads, water, electricity, agriculture, commerce and economic development should be sent to the Gulf. The mission should prepare a comprehensive plan for the development of the Trucial States which would then be presented to the Arab League heads of state at their summit meeting in January

1965.<sup>15</sup> As a result of these recommendations, a technical mission of the Arab League travelled to Sharjah on 17 December and toured the Trucial States for nine days, visiting every ruler except Shaikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi. At a dinner given for the delegation by the ruler of Sharjah, the Political Agent in Dubai, Glen Balfour-Paul, learnt more about the Arab League's plans for the development of the Trucial States. The head of the technical mission, Dr. Mohammad Salim, informed Balfour-Paul that the Arab League heads of state would at their summit meeting on 9 January 1965 vote in favour of contributing several million pounds to Trucial States development. Salim also stressed that the Arab League had no intention of paying this money into a central fund under the supervision of the Trucial States Council. Glen Balfour-Paul concluded from what he had learnt during the technical mission's visit that 'finance permitting (or perhaps even not permitting), the Arab League is bent on setting up a Development Office in the Trucial States'.<sup>16</sup>

In the following weeks, reports reached the Foreign Office which confirmed Balfour-Paul's conclusion. At the meeting of the Arab League heads of state in Cairo on 9 January 1965, a permanent committee was created which was to be in control of a newly-created fund for the development of the Trucial States, to which all Arab countries – members and non-members of the League alike – were invited to contribute.<sup>17</sup> On 11 February, the new committee met in Cairo to concretize its plans. At that meeting, it was decided to offer £5 million in aid to the Trucial States over five years. Letters were to be despatched to the Trucial rulers conveying the Arab League's offer and asking them for their consent.<sup>18</sup> These messages were then to be followed up by a visit of the Assistant Secretary-General of the League, Dr. Sayed Nofal, who was supposed to discuss the possibility of opening an Arab League office in the Trucial States with the rulers.<sup>19</sup>

The prospect of an Arab League office in the Trucial States was perceived by the British Government as a serious threat to Great Britain's special position in the Gulf. The opinion in London was shaped to a large degree by Sir William Luce, who sent a detailed analysis of the motives behind the Arab League offer to contribute to the development of the Trucial States to the Foreign Office on 25 January 1965. Luce was convinced that the driving force behind the Arab League's interference in the Trucial States was the president of the United Arab Republic (UAR), Gamal Abdel Nasser. The latter's aim was to drive the British out of the Gulf and to destroy the system of shaikhly rule in order to establish Arab socialist regimes subservient to Cairo in the Protected States. The Political Resident stressed that there was no point distinguishing between the threat emanating from the Arab League and the one from Cairo. Both of them threatened British interests in the Gulf and had to be confronted with equal determination:

While it may be arguable that the Arab League is something different from the UAR and Nasserism and that a man like Abdul Khaliq Hassouna is not necessarily pursuing the same aims as Nasser it would be naive to say the least to think that Nasser will not exploit Arab League penetration to the utmost for his own aims. For practical purposes I therefore lump Arab League, UAR and, in the present state of UAR/Iraqi relations, Iraqi activities in the Gulf together as constituting what can conveniently be called the Egyptian threat.<sup>20</sup>

The Political Resident warned that an Arab League office in the Trucial States would be used by the Egyptians as a permanent base from which to plan subversive activities in the Gulf. According to Sir William Luce, the discussion about an Arab League office in the Trucial States was the first round in an open struggle with Nasser for domination in the Protected States. He regarded it as vital that the British Government presented itself as strong in this situation. If the British allowed the opening of an Arab League office now, other and even more aggressive attempts by Nasser would follow trying to drive Great Britain out of the region. As a result, Great Britain's power in the Gulf would ultimately be diminished.<sup>21</sup>

Luce's analysis of the motives behind the Arab League offer was accepted in the Foreign Office and confirmed by the British ambassador in Cairo.<sup>22</sup> It was agreed that urgent measures had to be taken to counter the Arab League's plans.<sup>23</sup> The British strategy that was devised to this end in January 1965 centred on the foundation of a new institution: the Trucial States Development Office. It was believed that the best way to prevent the Arab League from opening an office in the Trucial States was to tell the Secretary-General that there was already an institution in existence there which was responsible for the supervision of the use of foreign aid and for the implementation of development plans. The Arab League should be informed that whilst financial contributions to development projects were welcome, the opening of an Arab League office in the Trucial States was counterproductive. The coordination of all development aid activity by the Trucial States Development Office was the best way to avoid the duplication and overlapping of development projects.<sup>24</sup>

The British plan was to establish the Trucial States Development Office before the Arab League had concretized and implemented its plans. As a result, the previous practice of British development policy in the Gulf had to be changed very quickly. Great Britain had begun in 1956 to give development aid to the Trucial States.<sup>25</sup> Until 1965, this money had been under the control of the Political Agency in Dubai. In 1964, a British citizen had been appointed as Development Secretary to deal with the increasing workload. Even though he was not a British diplomat, his office was attached to the Political Agency.<sup>26</sup> In the interest of saving time, it was now decided that the Development Secretary and his staff should be separated physically from the Political Agency and installed in separate premises to form the nucleus of the future Trucial States Development Office.<sup>27</sup> The next step in the British plan was the creation of the Trucial States Development Fund. This was a central bank account administered and controlled by the Trucial States Development Office through which all development aid for the Trucial States was to be channelled, beginning with Britain's annual contributions.<sup>28</sup> The idea was to make the acceptance of Arab League money conditional on its payment to the Trucial States Development Fund. This would make the establishment of an Arab League office to supervise the distribution of its money unnecessary. The Trucial States Development Fund would also serve as proof for the centralization and efficient organization of international development aid in the Trucial States.<sup>29</sup>

The British Government depended for the implementation of its strategy upon the cooperation of the Trucial States rulers. It was believed that the Trucial States Development Office and the Trucial States Development Fund could only serve as convincing arguments against the opening of an Arab League office if they appeared to be set up and controlled by the rulers of the Trucial States instead of the British

Government. The Political Agent in Dubai, Glen Balfour-Paul, therefore scheduled a session of the Trucial States Council, the only forum for regular meetings of all seven rulers, for 1 March 1965.<sup>30</sup> Balfour-Paul and Sir William Luce toured the Trucial States in the weeks before the council session, reminding the rulers in several personal conversations of the responsibility Great Britain had for the external affairs of their shaikhdoms and of the rulers' consequent obligation to discuss their relations with the Arab League with the representatives of the British Government. The rulers were warned that the opening of an Arab League office in their territories would pose a significant risk to their security and asked not to permit the establishment of such an institution in the Trucial States. Sir William Luce and Balfour-Paul urged the rulers to attend the meeting of the Trucial States Council on 1 March and to vote in favour of a resolution welcoming aid from any source but requiring it to be paid into the Trucial States Development Fund and to be administered by the Trucial States Development Office.<sup>31</sup> The wording of this resolution was in the meantime prepared by Balfour-Paul in discussion with the Political Residency.<sup>32</sup>

The official record of the Trucial States Council meeting on 1 March and Balfour-Paul's own account of it prove that the Political Agent did not restrict himself to exercising merely his duties as a chair.<sup>33</sup> He opened the session by repeating the reasons that supported the creation of the Trucial States Development Fund and reminding the rulers of their obligations towards the British Government. He frequently intervened during the ensuing discussion between the rulers, especially when Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah, supported by the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, opposed the British plan. Saqr informed the other rulers that the Deputy Secretary-General of the Arab League, Dr. Sayid Nofal, would arrive in the Trucial States in the next few days, bringing £1.5 million of development aid with him. Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah added to this that the Arab League would probably withdraw its offer of aid if the Trucial rulers passed the resolution, because it would be unwilling to contribute to a fund that was controlled by the Political Agent. Balfour-Paul countered this argument by emphasizing that the Trucial States Development Fund would be under the complete control of the seven rulers. How the Political Agent manipulated the decisions of the rulers during the meeting on 1 March is shown in the following quotation from Balfour-Paul's own report:

If, I then said, they were all agreed on the principle, perhaps someone would like to propose a form of words to embody it. There was no response from Shaikh Rashid [of Dubai], who had by arrangement a copy of the draft resolution in his pocket; so I said that the Arab Adviser [of the Political Agency], who was sitting next me, had a possible form of words which they might find helpful. He then read out our prepared draft ... and distributed copies.<sup>34</sup>

The suggested resolution was then – after an unsuccessful attempt by Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah to delay the proceedings – unanimously approved by all seven rulers. The council formally welcomed development aid from any source, but – in order to avoid the duplication of projects – resolved to create the Trucial States Development Fund to which all contributions to the development of the Trucial States had to be credited. This resolution provided the British Government with the legitimacy it

needed to present the Trucial States Development Fund to the Arab world as an initiative of the Trucial States rulers.

Neither Sir William Luce nor his colleagues in the Foreign Office ever believed that the Arab League would agree to contribute financially to the Trucial States Development Fund. The British had only urged the Trucial rulers to accept Arab League aid in principle as a tactical move designed to forestall the Egyptian propaganda attacks that would have been the result of a complete refusal of Arab League aid by the rulers.<sup>35</sup> It followed that other financial contributors had to be found in order to get the new Trucial States Development Office working. Pre-empting Arab League aid to the Gulf with money from other sources was regarded as the best way to stop Arab League penetration of the Trucial States. Even though all seven Trucial rulers had voted in favour of the Trucial States Council resolution which made acceptance of foreign aid conditional upon it being channelled through the Development Fund, the British were in doubt whether all of them would eventually insist on these conditions when the League made them a concrete offer.<sup>36</sup>

The British started their efforts to raise funds by trying to exhaust the financial resources that were available within the Protected States. The Political Resident and the four Political Agents pressurized the rulers of the four bigger Protected States, Qatar, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, to contribute to the development of the five smaller and poorer ones. The reasons for this move were more political than economic. Only Qatar and Abu Dhabi were rich enough to donate large sums to the Trucial States Development Fund. However, the British Government regarded contributions from Bahrain and Dubai, however small, as useful on the presentational level. They were an example of the existing cooperation among the Protected States of the Gulf in their dealings with development issues. In January 1965, the rulers of Qatar, Bahrain and Abu Dhabi had received letters from Hassouna asking them to contribute to the Arab League fund for Trucial States development. The British asked the rulers to decline Hassouna's request, explaining this decision with the contributions they already made to the existing Trucial States Development Fund. The ruler of Bahrain and the ruler of Qatar agreed to play the British game and write the requested letter to Hassouna. They also both promised to make a financial contribution to the Trucial States Development Fund.<sup>37</sup> So did Shaikh Rashid of Dubai. Shaikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi, however, was more difficult to deal with. While he happily complied with the British strategy in declining Hassouna's request for a contribution to the Arab League fund, his cooperation with Great Britain was less forthcoming when it came to money.<sup>38</sup> He only agreed to pay £25,000 into the Trucial States Development Fund, which was an extremely small sum given Abu Dhabi's recently acquired oil wealth.<sup>39</sup> Faced with continuous pressure from the British Government over the following months, Shakhbut finally agreed in May 1965 to donate another £100,000.

The most promising contributors to the Trucial States Development Fund outside the Protected States were in British eyes Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Both countries had as a result of their oil wealth enormous financial resources at their disposal and were therefore able to make donations substantial enough to convince the Trucial rulers that they did not depend on Arab League aid. Apart from these economic considerations, the British Government had political reasons for encouraging Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to contribute to the new fund. Both countries were members of



the Arab League and potentially the largest contributors to the planned Arab League Fund for Trucial States development. Their positions were therefore crucial for the success of the Arab League's plan.<sup>40</sup> The British Government hoped to persuade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia not to participate in the Arab League's scheme but to donate their money to the Trucial States Development Fund instead. The British also wanted Kuwait, which had already contributed to the development of the Trucial States for several years and maintained an office in Dubai for this purpose, to change the practice of its development policy. Instead of providing the Trucial States with aid on a bilateral basis, Kuwait should in the future channel all its contributions through the Trucial States Development Office, thereby adding to the centralization of international aid activity in the Trucial States and to the importance of the new institution. In British eyes, both countries had every reason to oppose the extension of Nasserist influence in the Persian Gulf: Saudi Arabia, because its own territorial ambitions in the Arabian Peninsula were endangered by the extension of Egyptian influence; Kuwait, because the subversion that Nasser planned to stir up in the Gulf against the shaikhly regimes of the Protected States would eventually spread to Kuwait and endanger the Amir's position in his own country.<sup>41</sup>

However, the discussions with the governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait turned out to be much more difficult than expected. In the case of Kuwait, British attempts to dissuade the Amir from cooperating with the Arab League were futile. Even though the Amir agreed with the British that the Arab League development plans for the Trucial States were a cover-up for Egyptian plans to penetrate the Persian Gulf politically, he could not be persuaded to abstain from cooperating with the Arab League.<sup>42</sup> On 4 February the Amir's close adviser, Badr Al Khalid Al Badr, informed Sir William Luce that Kuwait had promised to make a financial contribution to the Arab League fund for Trucial States development. Badr explained to Luce that Kuwait was too small and too young a country to risk openly standing up to the Arab League.<sup>43</sup> The British proposition that Kuwait's existing aid programme for health and education in the Trucial States should in the future be channelled through the Trucial States Development Office was declined. Kuwait preferred to continue this separate programme by giving aid on a bilateral basis and maintaining an office in Dubai.<sup>44</sup>

The discussions with the Saudi Government were also difficult. Saudi Arabia had from the beginning been critical of the Arab League's development plans in the Gulf. At the Arab League summit meeting on 9 January 1965, the Saudi delegate abstained over the resolution setting up the Gulf committee and the fund for development aid.<sup>45</sup> He also made it clear that Saudi Arabia would not contribute to the Arab League fund.<sup>46</sup> The Saudi Government assured its British counterpart repeatedly that Great Britain's and Saudi Arabia's interests in the matter of Arab League penetration of the Gulf were identical. The Saudis were afraid of an extension of Egyptian influence in the Gulf, because it would open the door to the spread of communism in the area. They were therefore willing to cooperate with Great Britain in its attempts to keep the Arab League office out of the Gulf.<sup>47</sup> However, the Saudi Government made it clear that it had to treat carefully, as Saudi Arabia could not afford to take an openly negative attitude towards the plans of the League. Therefore, until the end of May 1965, Saudi Arabia remained unwilling to make a donation to the Trucial States Development Fund.<sup>48</sup>

Despite all their efforts to gain Arab contributors, the British believed that the key to the Trucial States Development Fund's political success lay in a large British contribution. The Political Resident therefore proposed to make an immediate donation of £1 million, which he regarded as the minimum sum to get the new office working.<sup>49</sup> However, it was difficult for the Foreign Office to obtain the required funds, because the Treasury was reluctant to dedicate such a large sum to an area where Great Britain had just increased aid in 1964.<sup>50</sup> The Treasury found it 'quite absurd to suggest an increase in aid to the Trucial States at a time when we are likely to have to reduce our total overseas aid and at a time when Abu Dhabi is beginning to receive oil revenue on a considerable scale'.<sup>51</sup> Unimpressed by the political arguments of the Foreign Office, the responsible officials in the Treasury believed that if the Arab League was determined to open its own office in the Trucial States and possessed the necessary resources, the increase of British aid would certainly not prevent it from doing so.<sup>52</sup> As a result of the Treasury's objections, no additional British contribution was made to the Trucial States Development Fund before the Deputy Secretary-General of the Arab League, Dr. Sayed Nofal, arrived in the Trucial States on the evening of 9 May 1965.

In the days before Nofal's arrival, Glen Balfour-Paul visited the rulers of Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah and Umm al-Qaiwain, trying to persuade them to stand their ground in the discussions with Nofal and to refuse Arab League aid unless it was channelled through the Trucial States Development Fund. Balfour-Paul's mission was not facilitated by the fact that at the moment of Nofal's arrival the account of the Trucial States Development Fund stood at only £330,000. Nofal, on the other hand, claimed during his visit that the Arab League now had £900,000 at its disposal for the first year of expenditure in the Trucial States, including contributions from Kuwait, Iraq and the United Arab Republic. He presented every ruler with a separate 'Plan for Arab Technical Cooperation', which listed development projects that were designed to meet the particular needs of each shaikhdom and to be financed by the Arab League.<sup>53</sup> Nofal then asked the rulers to sign letters addressed to Hassouna, welcoming Arab League aid without making any reference to the Trucial States Council resolution of 1 March. He succeeded in obtaining the signatures of five of the six rulers in question. Only the ruler of Dubai refused.<sup>54</sup> Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah and Shaikh Saqr of Ras-al Khaimah not only welcomed Arab League aid, but formally invited the Arab League to open offices on their respective territories.<sup>55</sup>

Nofal's visit coincided with the tour of the Persian Gulf by the British Minister of State in the Foreign Office, George Thomson, who arrived in the Trucial States when the five letters opening the doors to the Arab League development scheme had just been signed. The Minister of State spoke separately to the five rulers in question, repeating the position of the British Government to them. While the ruler of Ras al-Khaimah remained evasive during his discussions with Thomson, Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah did not even try to conceal his actions. He confirmed that he had given his agreement to the opening of an Arab League office in Sharjah and did not regret having broken the Trucial States Council resolution of 1 March. Saqr's uncompromising position was recorded by Glen Balfour-Paul:

[H]e [Saqr] had little or nothing to thank the British Government for over the years; the Trucial Oman Scouts were of no value to him and were intended only

to protect Britain's oil interest; he refused to accept that the development of the Trucial States (if foreign agencies were involved) affected the responsibilities of H.M.G. . . . ; and he blandly rejected the Minister's strictures that, by allowing the Arab League to open an office on his soil against the repeated advice of the Political Resident and myself, he was in breach (as Mr. Thompson made emphatically clear) of his obligations under the Treaties.<sup>56</sup>

The Minister of State concluded from what he had learnt during his tour of the Persian Gulf that the opening of an Arab League office in Sharjah was imminent. He agreed with Sir William Luce that Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah had clearly made his choice between allegiance to Great Britain and open cooperation with the United Arab Republic, to which he had shown strong sympathy for several years. After his conversations with the rulers Thomson despatched a telegram to London in which he warned that:

We are not faced simply with a rival aid programme which will lead to invidious comparisons with our own modest efforts, but with a determined attempt to undermine our whole position in the Trucial States, and to supplant it with the dominating influence of the U.A.R. and Iraq working through the League.<sup>57</sup>

Thomson stressed that the rulers of the Persian Gulf states now expected a strong reaction from Great Britain, and that a failure on the British side to display strength at such a critical time would drive them even more into the arms of the Arab League. According to the Minister of State, the British Government had to start its counter-measures against the extension of the League's influence by bringing itself into a position to compete with the Arab League aid programme.<sup>58</sup>

The most immediate consequence of Nofal's and Thomson's coincident visits to the Trucial States was the reconsideration on a ministerial level of Sir William Luce's proposal to donate £1 million to the Trucial States Development Fund. In reaction to Thomson's telegram and the report he had received from the Political Resident about Nofal's visit, Prime Minister Wilson called in a special session of the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee on 26 May 1965.<sup>59</sup> Before the meeting, Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart circulated a memorandum among the committee members, in which he stressed that the pending decision whether or not to substantially increase British aid for the Trucial States had far-reaching consequences for the future of the Persian Gulf. The British Government had now reached a 'watershed' in its relations with the Trucial States, facing a choice between competing with the Arab League in order to contain its activities and facing the gradual erosion of Great Britain's special position in the entire Persian Gulf area.<sup>60</sup> Stewart warned that if the British Government failed to withstand the pressure coming from the Arab League and allowed Nasser to push the British out of the Gulf, the consequences would be catastrophic: a situation of territorial disputes and armed conflict would arise in which not only the Gulf States, but also the larger regional powers Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq would become embroiled. Especially Iran, Great Britain's important CENTO ally, expected the British Government to show strength in this situation. If the Shah was disappointed by Great Britain there was a possibility that he would turn his back on CENTO and decide to make his

peace with the Soviet Union instead. The policy Great Britain adopted during the conflict with the Arab League therefore had important regional implications and considerable influence on the development of the Cold War.<sup>61</sup> Stewart's case was fully accepted by the Defence and Overseas Policy Committee, which authorized the Political Resident to offer the Trucial rulers additional aid amounting to £1 million. The committee also decided that if the policy of competing with the League's offer proved unsuccessful, the British Government should 'enforce' its decision to prevent the opening of the Arab League offices.<sup>62</sup>

While the discussions in London in the aftermath of Nofal's visit centred on the increase of British aid, Britain's 'men on the spot' in the Gulf tried to persuade the five rulers who had signed Nofal's letters to change their mind. While Sir William Luce considered the British chances in the cases of the two Saqrs to be remote, he was convinced that the rulers of Umm al-Qaiwain, Ajman and Fujairah would be willing to stop cooperating with the Arab League if they were satisfied that they would receive sufficient funds for the development of their states from elsewhere.<sup>63</sup> The British were supported in their attempts to convince the three rulers by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Alarmed by Nofal's visit and by the concretization of the Arab League's plans, Faisal now changed his mind about a Saudi contribution to the Trucial States Development Fund. On 20 May, Balfour-Paul was authorized to inform the rulers of Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain and Fujairah that Faisal was willing to pay £1 million into the fund, provided that they and Shaikh Rashid of Dubai sent telegrams to Hassouna demanding that Arab League aid was channelled through the Trucial States Development Fund.<sup>64</sup> However, only the ruler of Fujairah could be prevailed upon to sign the requested telegram. The rulers of Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain refused to do so, explaining their position in a conversation with Balfour-Paul on 20 May: they could not risk losing the money the Arab League had promised them by making its acceptance subject to conditions. Nobody had helped them so far with the development of their states and they were in no position to refuse the extensive development programme of the League and the funds they were being offered. They were unimpressed by the news Balfour-Paul brought to them about the Saudi offer, because it was only presented to them 'second-hand'. Unwilling to take an independent decision without consulting the two Saqrs, the rulers of Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain assured the Political Agent that the British Government had no reason to fear the Arab League development scheme for the Gulf, because they would guarantee to prevent the Arab League from political interference.<sup>65</sup>

In the two weeks following this conversation, the British Government was faced with increasingly bad news about developments in the Trucial States. The rulers of Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain were reported to be meeting daily. On 30 May the British received information from Shaikh Rashid of Dubai that the four had agreed on a joint policy towards the British Government, which included the ending of the treaty relations with Great Britain, requesting the United Arab Republic to act as a protecting power for them, and accepting an offer by the Soviet Union – which was reported to have been conveyed to them through United Arab Republic channels – to supply them with contraband arms.<sup>66</sup> While the Residency dismissed the last rumour as dubious, it considered the first two reports as entirely possible.<sup>67</sup> A few days later, on 6 June, the British were informed that the four rulers had agreed to apply very soon for full membership in the Arab League.

To make matters worse for the British Government, the pro-British position of the rulers of Dubai and Fujairah began to waver. The Foreign Office was informed on 6 June that the ruler of Fujairah – after an all-night session with the four dissident rulers – had written to Hassouna informing him that he had only despatched his previous telegram under duress from the British Residency.<sup>68</sup> Shaikh Rashid of Dubai, who had previously agreed to despatch a telegram to the Arab League insisting on the Trucial States Council resolution of 1 March, changed his mind, having been informed about the rulers of Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain's resistance against this step. Afraid of isolating himself among the other Trucial rulers and provoking Egyptian propaganda attacks against his rule, Rashid explained his dilemma to Sir William Luce: 'He [Rashid] said his attitude had already been made quite clear in previous letters and he saw no point in sticking his neck out further.'<sup>69</sup>

The British Government now saw its last chance to turn the situation around in the Trucial States Council meeting that was scheduled by Glen Balfour-Paul for 9 June. In preparation of this meeting, the British Government concentrated on obtaining a payment of £1 million into the Trucial States Development Fund from King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. Even though at least four of the rulers had refused to meet the Saudi condition for a contribution and send telegrams to the Arab League, the British Government continued to press King Faisal to donate a large sum to the fund. It was hoped that a large Saudi contribution would in combination with the British donation of £1 million convince the rulers that they now had sufficient funds at their disposal to ignore the promises made by the Arab League. The British ambassador in Jeddah was therefore instructed 'to let King Faisal know that Her Majesty's Government are ready to stand firm against the establishment of an Arab League Office in the Trucial States provided that the Saudi Arabian Government contribute £1 million to the Trucial States Development Fund at an early date'.<sup>70</sup> It took the British Government two weeks and a lot of persuasion to convince King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. The latter was reluctant to act while at least four out of seven Trucial rulers were lined up against Great Britain and in favour of an Arab League presence in the Gulf.<sup>71</sup> He eventually agreed on 8 June that the Trucial rulers should be informed of an unconditional Saudi offer to pay £1 million into the Trucial States Development Fund.<sup>72</sup>

However, this announcement made by Glen Balfour-Paul on the following day at the Trucial States Council meeting in Dubai did not have the desired effect. In consultation with the Political Residency, Balfour-Paul had prepared an extensive list of development projects for the rulers to agree upon now that they had received so large contributions from Saudi Arabia and from the British Government.<sup>73</sup> Despite these preparations, however, the meeting of the Trucial States Council turned out to be anything but a success from the British perspective. Balfour-Paul reported that even though all seven Trucial rulers attended the meeting, only Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah and Shaikh Saqr of Ras-al Khaimah spoke up. They showed themselves unimpressed by the Saudi and the British offers and repeated that they would never agree to break their agreement with Nofal. They also announced that if the British Government forcibly prevented the opening of Arab League offices in the Trucial States, they would deprive the area of £7.5 million of development aid. How this sum could enter the discussion when Nofal had only offered the Trucial rulers £900,000 during his visit in May was not explained. As for Balfour-Paul's list of

development projects, the two Saqrs insisted that the Development Office should not go ahead with any projects which were included in the 'Plans for Technical Cooperation' Nofal had presented the rulers with in May. In the end, the Political Agent adjourned the meeting without any firm decisions having been reached. A few days later, the dissident shaikhs, now joined by the ruler of Fujairah, sent Glen Balfour-Paul a reply to the questions he had raised during the meeting:

In brief they reject *in toto* the Development Office as now constituted or envisaged, since they consider it controlled by me and not by the Council. They say it should be reconstituted either

- (a) As British Development Office working separately from them but receiving (of course) their cooperation, or
- (b) As their own affair with a local director of their own choosing, administering funds with no interference from me.<sup>74</sup>

Balfour-Paul concluded that his position vis-à-vis the Trucial rulers had now been brought close to 'breaking point'.<sup>75</sup> Every British attempt to dissuade the rulers from cooperating with the Arab League had been unsuccessful. The whole complicated British strategy of creating the Trucial States Development Office and buying the rulers' loyalty with British and Saudi Arabian money had not paid off at all.

Given the reluctance of the five dissident rulers to break their agreements with Dr. Nofal, the only way left open to the British Government to prevent the establishment of an Arab League office seemed to be to physically prevent any Arab League personnel from entering the Trucial shaikhdoms. On 24 May, Luce was instructed to do this by taking 'administrative action' to interfere with the Arab League officials' travel arrangements. This meant that the Political Resident should use Great Britain's control of immigration and air traffic in the Gulf to prevent any Arab League personnel from arriving in the Trucial States.<sup>76</sup> It was a long-established practice in the Gulf that the British Government, by virtue of its responsibility for the external affairs of the Protected States, controlled the issue of visas for the nine shaikhdoms.<sup>77</sup> This practice gave the British Government considerable power over immigration to the Gulf, because only citizens of the United Kingdom, Yemen, Kuwait and the nine Protected States were permitted to enter the Trucial States, Bahrain or Qatar without a visa.<sup>78</sup> On 25 May Luce despatched a telegram to several British embassies in the Middle East, asking them not to issue any visas for the Trucial States to 'northern area Arabs (i.e. Egyptians, Syrians, Iraqis, Lebanese and Jordanians)' without prior reference to him.<sup>79</sup> Convinced that any citizen of a northern Arab state travelling to the Trucial States could turn out to be employed by the Arab League and planning to open an office for the organization in Sharjah, Luce was determined not to let anybody in un-scrutinized. The plan was to immediately turn back anybody who arrived in the Trucial States without a valid visa.

The problem with the policy of 'administrative action' was that it was not fool-proof in the long term. Luce warned the Foreign Office that the agreed strategy presented him and the Political Agent in Dubai with serious practical difficulties, because its effectiveness depended on immigration control at Dubai and Sharjah

airports. At Sharjah, the problem was that the immigration officer, who was employed by the ruler, would let anybody in whom Shaikh Saqr wanted to enter his shaikhdom, regardless of whether or not the person concerned had a visa. Shaikh Rashid of Dubai had instructed his police to turn back anybody without a visa, but the passenger handling arrangements at Dubai airport remained rudimentary, as there were only two immigration officers. The Political Resident warned that in the normal muddle after the landing of a large plane it would be only too easy for a visa-less passenger to slip out of the airport undetected.<sup>80</sup>

The insecurity of immigration control at the airports in Dubai and Sharjah resulted in another problem for the British representatives in the Gulf: what were they to do in case an Arab League official slipped through the British 'administrative cordon' and managed to enter and install himself in the Trucial States? This problem was discussed intensively in the Foreign Office and in the Ministry of Defence. The central question was whether the staff of the Political Residency should be authorized to arrest and expel Arab League officials from the Trucial States. The expulsion would have to be carried out by the Trucial Oman Scouts, who were under the control and direction of the Political Resident.<sup>81</sup> Operationally, it was uncomplicated to arrest the persons concerned and to escort them to the airports in Sharjah or Dubai. However, the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence were reluctant to permit the use of the Trucial Oman Scouts because of the unclear legal implications. Great Britain's responsibility for the external affairs of the Protected States only entitled the British Government to ask a particular ruler for the expulsion of Arab League officials. If the ruler refused, however, as was likely in the case of Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah, the Political Resident and his staff had no legal authority to act in his place. Another problem was that the involvement of the Trucial Oman Scouts could from a legalistic point of view be regarded as a use of troops to enforce Great Britain's treaty rights in the Trucial States, which was 'in the international sphere, regarded as unlawful'.<sup>82</sup> The British Government felt uncertain about leaving the realm of legality with their actions in the Trucial States because the arrest and expulsion of Arab League officials was sure not to remain unnoticed internationally.<sup>83</sup> The British embassy in Cairo warned the Foreign Office that the likely consequences were an increase of anti-British propaganda in the Egyptian press and radio, a stepping-up of Nasser's support for the terrorism in Aden and, worst of all, an attempt by the United Arab Republic to bring the conflict over Arab League offices in the Trucial States to the attention of the United Nations Committee of 24.<sup>84</sup> The British Government was especially afraid of the last possibility, because it had been its policy for years to prevent Great Britain's special position in the Persian Gulf being discussed at the United Nations.<sup>85</sup>

After lengthy discussions, the Political Residency was only authorized to make use of the Trucial Oman Scouts in situations where Arab League personnel could be removed speedily and discreetly without causing a major disturbance. However, in cases when the use of the Trucial Oman Scouts was likely to be noticed by many people and risked provoking a strong public reaction, for example if there was a large reception committee present to greet the Arab League delegates, the Trucial Oman Scouts should stand aside and the Arab League mission should be allowed to enter the Trucial States.<sup>86</sup> This half-hearted permission was immediately rejected as impracticable by Balfour-Paul in Dubai who informed the Foreign Office that a large

reception committee and other major disturbances were inevitable in case of the arrival of an Arab League delegation.<sup>87</sup> Balfour Paul's position was supported in the Residency, which warned the Foreign Office on 13 June that the time for complicated manoeuvre and indirect action had passed. The British Government could no longer hope to safeguard its interests in the Persian Gulf if it refused to make a direct stand in its dealings with the Arab League:

We have so far hoped to avoid, by various manoeuvres, a clash with the League and yet to achieve our aim of keeping the League out of the Trucial States. This no longer appears possible . . . The handling of the arrival of the Arab League will be our first confrontation and it seems crucial to our standing in this area.<sup>88</sup>

Faced with the complaints of the British diplomats in the Gulf that as a result of their unworkable instructions limiting the use of the Trucial Oman Scouts they had no choice but to let an Arab League delegation in if it arrived in the Trucial States, the British Government decided on a new policy designed to avoid such a situation. On 16 June, the airports at Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah were closed down for all traffic until further notice, officially because of 'repair works'.<sup>89</sup> The real reason was that the Political Residency had received several new reports that Arab League personnel would definitely arrive in the Trucial States in the coming days, possibly avoiding all Gulf Aviation flights and travelling by charter plane.<sup>90</sup> The airport at Sharjah remained closed for the next two weeks, while those at Abu Dhabi and Dubai were re-opened a few days later. In the case of Abu Dhabi, Sir William Luce had been convinced that the risk of Arab League personnel flying there and proceeding to Sharjah by road was remote.<sup>91</sup> As for Dubai, the airfield was only opened for Gulf Aviation flights transiting Bahrain and every aircraft landing in Dubai had to receive clearance by Glen Balfour-Paul. The latter only gave permission to land after he had been assured by the Political Agency in Bahrain by telephone in each case that there were no passengers without visas on the respective plane.<sup>92</sup>

However, on 22 June the British Government was eventually faced with a scenario where none of its measures to prevent Arab League personnel from entering the Trucial States were sure to be watertight. Sir William Luce reported to London that Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah was preparing to provide representatives of the Arab League with Sharjah passports. As a result, the officials would not need visas and therefore be able to evade immigration control and travel to the Trucial States undetected. The Arab League party in question was expected to arrive in the Trucial States on 25 June.<sup>93</sup>

The report of 22 June about Shaikh Saqr's plan to issue Sharjah passports to Arab League personnel is the last available source about the events in the Trucial States before Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah was deposed on 24 June. All records of 23 June and the morning of 24 June are still closed in the National Archives. The next open source is a guidance telegram despatched by the Foreign Office on the afternoon of 24 June to all British diplomatic missions in Europe, the Middle East and the United States, informing them that '[o]n 24 June, Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah was deposed by the leading members of his family on grounds of his neglect of his subjects, misgovernment of the State, extravagance and his dissolute way of life'.<sup>94</sup> A letter



signed by the leading members of the Qawasim family expressing their wish to depose Saqr as ruler had been presented to the Deputy Political Resident at the Political Agency in Dubai on the evening of 23 June.<sup>95</sup> Carrying out the wishes of the ruling family to replace Saqr with his cousin Shaikh Khalid, the Deputy Political Resident had summoned Saqr to the Agency on the following morning and informed him about the situation. He had told Shaikh Saqr that the new ruler Shaikh Khalid wished him to leave the country immediately and then escorted Saqr to the airport, from where the latter was flown to Bahrain on a Royal Air Force plane. The guidance telegram warned that these events would certainly result in anti-British propaganda claiming that the deposition had been engineered by the British Government to prevent the ruler of Sharjah from accepting Arab League aid. The British missions were given clear instructions how to counter these allegations: 'You should take the line that this is a straight-forward case of the deposition of an unpopular ruler by family consensus, a traditional procedure for which there have been many precedents in the history of the Arab world.'<sup>96</sup>

Given the events in the days and months preceding Saqr's deposition, this official description of the deposition is extremely doubtful. Even though the exact course of events from the afternoon of 22 June to the morning of 24 June has to remain unclear, the available sources strongly suggest that the British had a much bigger hand in the developments than they let on. On 24 July Glen Balfour-Paul sent a despatch to Sir William Luce, formally reporting the events in the Trucial States leading to Saqr's deposition. In this document, Balfour-Paul recalled that the British Defence Secretary, Denis Healey, had on 22 June 'considered the attitude which H.M.G. should take towards any movement of the members of the Qasimi family to replace Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan on the grounds of his misrule and of his personal misconduct'.<sup>97</sup> According to Balfour-Paul, the Political Agency had in the two preceding weeks heard of three different conspiracies designed to remove Saqr. Healey then decided on 22 June that if the ruling family of Sharjah wanted to depose the ruler, the British Government should take no steps to oppose this.<sup>98</sup> Balfour-Paul's despatch is a very useful source, because by implying that the British Government had a choice whether to support the Qawasim family over the deposition of Saqr or not, it proves the official British version of the events, in which Saqr's replacement had been entirely the doing of his family, to be untrue.

The possibility of solving Great Britain's problems with the Arab League by deposing Shaikh Saqr was discussed in the Foreign Office for months before the ruler was replaced by Shaikh Khalid on 24 June. Especially the Political Resident Sir William Luce was in favour of this solution. In a letter to Stewart Crawford of 8 February, Luce warned that Shaikh Saqr was and would remain the weakest point in the British front and might one day allow an Arab League delegation to enter his territory and establish an office there. In this case, the Political Resident proposed,

we should then let Shaikh Rashid of Dubai know privately that we were withdrawing our recognition from Saqr and that he (Rashid) was free to take what action he thought fit in the interests of the security of the Trucial States. This would in fact be the tip-off to him to take over Sharjah with our blessing which I have little doubt he would be ready to do. We have quite a lot of

evidence that important elements in Sharjah would welcome this and I would not expect any real difficulty in the process.<sup>99</sup>

The advantage of this course of action, Luce argued, would be that it would 'have a salutary effect on any other possible back-sliders', i.e. bring other Trucial rulers opposing Britain's position vis-à-vis the Arab League back into line.<sup>100</sup> Even though the scenario discussed by Luce remained theoretical, the source proves the readiness of the Political Resident to urge his government to interfere with the internal affairs of the Trucial States and if necessary to support the removal of a local ruler.

Luce's view on this matter was shared by the Minister of State in the Foreign Office, George Thomson. During the latter's visit to the Gulf in May 1965, he discussed Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah's behaviour towards the Arab League with the Political Resident. Thomson concluded 'that the alternatives must be the withdrawal of our protection or to stimulate some sort of revolution'.<sup>101</sup> Luce on the other hand suggested that the British 'ought to try to frighten Shaikh Saqr first', by reminding him of the Trucial States Council resolution he had supported and Great Britain's responsibility for Sharjah's foreign relations. If these measures failed, Luce proposed, the British should consult with Shaikh Rashid of Dubai on Saqr's replacement by another member of the Qawasim family.<sup>102</sup> In view of the events during the weeks following the meeting of Thomson and Luce in Bahrain on 9 May this source is most illuminating. It has been shown earlier in this article how the first part of Luce's suggestions was carried out after this discussion: Thomson and after him the Political Resident indeed tried to pressurize Saqr to end his cooperation with the Arab League. Both of them failed and in the weeks leading up to 24 June it became evident that the Arab League would sooner or later manage to establish an office in Sharjah. Both Luce and Balfour-Paul now urged the British Government to restore the situation by deposing Shaikh Saqr. Balfour-Paul informed the Foreign Office on 13 June that 'our friends here still think we could and should take direct and immediate action against dissident Rulers by arrest and removal'.<sup>103</sup> Luce agreed with Balfour-Paul that the rulers of Qatar, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai all expected the British Government to show strength in its dealings with Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah and Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah, whom he called 'a couple of insignificant, self-seeking Sheikhs'.<sup>104</sup> In a very explicit telegram despatched on 21 June, Sir William Luce warned that the conflict with the Arab League had developed into a test of Great Britain's reputation and prestige in the Persian Gulf. If the British Government wanted to pass this test and regain the confidence of its allies, the Arab League had to be prevented from establishing an office in Sharjah. Since it was impossible to keep Arab League personnel out of the Trucial States for much longer, the only option left for the British Government was to depose Saqr as soon as possible:

For years our position in the Gulf has been based on prestige and belief in our power and will to maintain our predominance. If this is proved after all to be a mere bubble by unwillingness or inability to restore the present situation we shall have nothing left with which to influence the future course of events. ... The key to the problem is the removal of Saqr of Sharjah and if we are going to act at all to bring this about we must act within the next seven days at most.<sup>105</sup>

Three days after Luce had sent this telegram to London, Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah left the Trucial States on a Royal Air Force plane. Both the timing of the events and the fact that the Political Resident, supported by Minister of State Thomson, had for months advocated the deposition of Saqr, strongly suggest that the British Government actively worked towards the replacement of the ruler of Sharjah. There is one more source available in the National Archives to support this conclusion. Two weeks after the deposition, George Thomson sent a personal letter to Luce:

I am sorry not to have written before. I was out of the country when the news of Saqr's departure from Sharjah came through. I would like to convey my warmest congratulations to you and Balfour-Paul and everyone else concerned for the way you have handled this. I know how great your anxieties and difficulties have been and you have every reason to feel satisfied with the degree of success you have had.

We now have a good chance to push ahead with constructive developments in the Gulf, and to seek Saudi cooperation. I hope the 'oil' rulers have had a big enough fright from recent events to make them willing to keep their poor brethren on a fixed percentage basis – and to keep themselves by taking your advice on modernization etc.<sup>106</sup>

Put into the context of Thomson's discussion with Luce in Bahrain on 9 May, when the Minister of State had suggested solving the problems with Shaikh Saqr by stimulating a revolution in Sharjah, this letter speaks for itself.

While the exact form of Great Britain's influence on the events leading up to the deposition of Shaikh Saqr has to remain unclear as long the relevant records remain closed in the National Archives, it can be stated with certainty that the replacement of the ruler of Sharjah was equal to the solution of Great Britain's problems with the Arab League in the Trucial States. The British Government did not lose time after Saqr's departure: the professed aim was 'to build as speedily as possible on what has been achieved' – another statement hinting that the deposition of the Ruler of Sharjah had been the result of a British initiative.<sup>107</sup> The Political Resident and his staff concentrated in the days following Saqr's replacement on bringing the other four Trucial rulers, who had welcomed the Arab League's plans in the Gulf, back into line. Luce visited the rulers of Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman first, who immediately agreed to come back into full agreement and cooperation with the British Government. They both sent telegrams to the Secretary-General of the Arab League, welcoming its aid but insisting that it had to be channelled through the Trucial States Development Fund. Luce then had a similar discussion with the new ruler of Sharjah, who agreed to do the same.<sup>108</sup> As for Fujairah, the Political Resident saw no necessity to pay the ruler a visit. This was due to the fact that the latter had already changed his position two days before Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah was deposed. He had called on the Political Agent in Dubai on 22 June to reaffirm his solidarity with the British Government, claiming that his change of heart had been brought about by the success that the British had had in preventing Arab League personnel to enter the Trucial States. He had also offered to spy on the

other four dissident rulers and to report the content of their meetings back to the Political Agent.<sup>109</sup> In view of these assurances, Luce felt certain that the ruler of Fujairah would abstain from cooperating with the Arab League in the future.<sup>110</sup> The most difficult discussion Luce had to face was the one with Shaikh Saqr of Ras al-Khaimah, who had been the only ruler to protest openly against Saqr of Sharjah's replacement. On 26 June, the Political Resident called on the ruler, informing him that the British Government was willing to continue its longstanding friendship with him as before, provided that he cooperated over the question of preventing Arab League offices in the Trucial States and immediately sent an according telegram to Hassouna. Luce offered Shaikh Saqr an additional incentive to re-establish his allegiance to Great Britain: he promised that the Trucial States Development Scheme would reimburse the ruler for the debts he had already made to pay for development projects in his shaikhdom. Shaikh Saqr consented and sent off the requested telegram on 27 June. Sir William Luce concluded from the meeting that Shaikh Saqr was now 'certainly a frightened man' who was therefore despite his previous sympathies for the Arab League likely to cooperate with the British Government in the future.<sup>111</sup> The remarkable velocity with which the British Government managed to regain the allegiance of the formerly dissident shaikhs after Shaikh Saqr's departure indicates that the rulers were frightened by the latter's replacement and insecure about their own future if they continued their cooperation with the Arab League.<sup>112</sup>

The effectiveness of the re-established cooperation of the Trucial rulers with the British Government was tested immediately. On 26 June, Shaikh Rashid of Dubai received a telegram from a delegation of Arab League technicians announcing that they would arrive in Dubai on 27 June. The three technicians, an Egyptian, an Iraqi and a Kuwaiti citizen, had attempted to fly to Dubai transiting Doha on 24 June. However, as a result of the British precautions at Dubai airport, their flight had not received the necessary clearance to proceed from Doha to Dubai. Having unsuccessfully attempted to charter another aircraft in Doha, the delegation had instead flown to Bahrain, where the Egyptian and the Iraqi were denied entry because of their lack of visas. The three technicians then returned to Kuwait and despatched their telegram to Shaikh Rashid. The latter, however, responded that it would not be appropriate for them to come to the Trucial States at all, since all the rulers were now agreed that the execution of development projects should be carried out by their own development office. After that, the technicians made no further attempt to enter the Trucial States.<sup>113</sup>

Having averted the immediate danger of an Arab League office being opened in Sharjah, the British Government now wanted the Trucial States Development Office to begin its work on concrete projects as soon as possible.<sup>114</sup> The British believed that putting the money that was now available in the Trucial States Development Fund to immediate use was necessary to avoid accusations that Great Britain was depriving the poor Trucial States of necessary aid and thereby perpetuating their under-development. It was feared that failure to improve the development standards of the Trucial States would in the long term result in renewed flirtations of the rulers with the Arab League and in another chance for the organization to open an office in the area. Therefore, a meeting of the Trucial States Council was convened by the Political Agent in Dubai on 30 June. Glen

Balfour-Paul reported afterwards that the atmosphere of the session could not have been more different to that of the last Trucial States Council meeting on 9 June. The rulers were this time ready for a constructive discussion and decisions were reached on several important issues. The discussion centred on the way the nearly £2.5 million should be spent, which were now – after Great Britain and Saudi Arabia had agreed to make large contributions to the Trucial States Development Fund – at the disposal of the Trucial rulers. The Political Agent distributed a list of suitable development projects. It was the same list he had circulated on 9 June, only extended by the projects in Ras al-Khaimah for which the Political Resident had promised Shaikh Saqr reimbursement. This time, none of the rulers refused to consider Balfour-Paul's list. After a lengthy yet constructive discussion, 15 projects which were to be carried out first were singled out from the list.<sup>115</sup> The Trucial States Council meeting on 30 June was a clear indication that the British Government had regained the loyalty and cooperation of the Trucial rulers. At least for the time being, Great Britain had reasserted its authority in the Trucial States.

The Arab League's plan to open an office in the Trucial States was regarded by the British Government as a major threat to Great Britain's informal empire in the Persian Gulf, because it was believed in London that this institution would be nothing more than a cover-up for subversive activities controlled by Gamal Abdel Nasser designed to drive the British out of the region. From January to June 1965, the British determination to prevent the extension of Arab League influence to the Gulf dominated Great Britain's policy in the area and the relations between the British Government and the rulers of the Trucial States. The British Government initiated the creation of the Trucial States Development Office, raised Arab funds for this new institution and increased its own development aid for the Trucial States as part of an indirect strategy designed to forestall the implementation of the Arab League's plans whilst avoiding a direct confrontation with the organization. The problem with the British plan was that it depended on the cooperation of the Trucial rulers. When five of them refused to play the British game, the British Government was forced to abandon its indirect strategy. It now resorted to desperate measures, trying to prevent any Arab League personnel from entering the Trucial States. However, it was realized in London that these measures would certainly not be fail-proof in the long term and that the Arab League would sooner or later manage to establish itself in the Trucial States. In the middle of this (from the British perspective) desperate situation, the problem was solved by the deposition of Shaikh Saqr of Sharjah on 24 June. Even though it remains impossible to reconstruct the precise form of Great Britain's involvement in Saqr's replacement due to the continued closure of relevant documents, the available sources strongly suggest that – contrary to the official presentation of the events by the British Government – the deposition of the ruler was not exclusively the doing of his own family. What can be stated with certainty is that the replacement of Saqr was hugely beneficial to Great Britain's interests in the Persian Gulf, because it ended – at least for the time being – the danger of an Arab League office being opened in the Trucial States.

## Notes

1. A note on terminology: since the 1950s the name of the Gulf has been the subject of a politicized dispute. While 'Persian Gulf' is the more commonly used term in most international treaties, documents and maps, the name 'Arabian Gulf' is widespread in many Arab countries. This article adopts the usage of the British Government records it is based upon and uses the name 'Persian Gulf' to describe the area comprised of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the Trucial States (today's United Arab Emirates) and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman.
2. The most important treaties between Great Britain and the Gulf States are listed in: 'Relations between Her Majesty's Government and the Rulers of the Persian Gulf States. List of Principal Agreements', August 1961, FO 371/156674. For the constitutional status of the Persian Gulf States see H.M. Albaharna, *The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States. A Study of their Treaty Relations and their International Problems* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968) and J.B. Kelly, 'The Legal and Historical Basis of the British Position in the Persian Gulf', *St. Antony's Papers*, Vol.4 (1958), pp.119–40. For the historical background of Great Britain's special position in the Gulf see J. Onley, *The Arabian Frontier of the Raj. Merchants, Rulers, and the British in the Nineteenth Century Gulf* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and U. Rabi, 'Britain's Special Position in the Gulf: Its Origins, Dynamics and Legacy', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.42 (2006), pp.351–64.
3. All archival references in this article refer to documents from the British National Archives, London.
4. F. Al-Sayegh, 'International Relations and the Formation of the UAE', *Journal of Social Affairs*, Vol.21 (2004), pp.43–60, see p.47.
5. M. Joyce, *Ruling Shaikhs and Her Majesty's Government. 1960–1969* (London/ Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003), pp.20–22; S.C. Smith, *Britain's Revival and Fall in the Gulf. Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the Trucial States, 1950–71* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp.22–4.
6. See W.R. Louis, 'The British Withdrawal from the Gulf, 1967–71', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol.31 (2003), pp.83–108; S. Sato, 'Britain's Decision to Withdraw from the Persian Gulf, 1964–68: A Pattern and A Puzzle', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol.37 (2009), pp.99–117; S. Dockrill, *Britain's Retreat from East of Suez. The Choice between Europe and the World?* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); J. Pickering, *Britain's Withdrawal from East of Suez. The Politics of Retrenchment* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998).
7. 'The Iranians, the Arabs and the Persian Gulf', FO Minute by M.S. Berthoud, 13 June 1964, FO 371/174492.
8. Telegram from Abu Dhabi to FO, No.108 Confidential, 24 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492.
9. 'Relations between the Southern Gulf States and the Arab League', FO Minute by Frank Brenchley, Confidential, 14 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492.
10. Letter from P. McKearney (Political Agency, Doha) to F.D.W. Brown (Political Residency, Bahrain), Confidential, 31 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492; letter from Hough Boustead (Political Agency, Abu Dhabi) to Sir William Luce (Political Residency, Bahrain), Confidential, 29 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492; letter from Peter Tripp (Political Agency, Bahrain) to Luce, 27 Oct. 1964, FO 371/173392.
11. Letter from M.A. Marshall (Political Agency, Dubai) to Luce, Confidential, 10 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492.
12. Telegram from Abu Dhabi to FO, No.108 Confidential, 24 Oct. 1964, FO 371/174492.
13. Letter from Marshall to Luce, Confidential, 2 Nov. 1964, FO 371/174492.
14. The British embassy in Cairo obtained the Arabic version of this report from the American embassy and translated it before sending it to the Foreign Office. See letter from H.B. Walker (British Embassy, Cairo) to R.M. Posnott (FO), Secret, 2 Dec. 1964, FO 371/174492.
15. 'Report of the Mission of the League of Arab States on its visit to the Shaikhdoms of the Arabian Gulf. November 10, 1964', FO 371/174492.
16. Letter from Glen Balfour-Paul (Political Agency, Dubai) to Luce, Confidential, 19 Dec. 1964, FO 371/179754.
17. Letter from M.S. Weir (FO) to R.J. Owen (British Embassy, Washington), Confidential, 15 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
18. Telegram from Kuwait to FO, No.56 Confidential, 24 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.

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19. Telegram from Kuwait to FO, No.65 Confidential, 3 March 1965, FO 371/179755.
20. Letter from Luce to Stewart Crawford (FO), Confidential, 25 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
21. Ibid.
22. Telegram from Cairo to FO, No.104 Confidential, 5 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
23. Telegram from FO to Bahrain, No.122 Confidential, 3 Feb. 1961, FO 371/179754.
24. Letter from Luce to Crawford, Confidential, 25 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
25. From 1956 to 1963, Great Britain had contributed £100,000 annually to development programmes for the Trucial States. In 1964, annual aid was increased to £200,000. See 'Development Aid to the Trucial States', Treasury Minute by R.C. Simpson to J. Lucas, 5 April 1965, T 317/666.
26. 'Development Aid to the Trucial States', Treasury Minute by Lucas, 26 Feb. 1965, T 317/666.
27. Letter from Brenchley to R.L. Sharp (Treasury), Confidential, 23 Feb. 1965, T 317/666.
28. Ibid.
29. Letter from Luce to Brenchley, Confidential, 1 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
30. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.4 Confidential, 3 March 1965, FO 371/179902. The Trucial States Council, which had been founded as a result of a British initiative in 1952, was a regular meeting of all seven rulers of the Trucial Shaikhdoms chaired by the Political Agent in Dubai. Even though it was a merely consultative body with no executive powers, the rulers could issue joint decisions in the form of resolutions. See Al-Sayegh, 'International Relations', p.47.
31. Telegram from FO to Bahrain, No.122 Confidential, 3 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754; telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.77 Confidential, 5 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754; telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.109 Confidential, 15 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
32. Letter from Balfour-Paul to Philipps, 20 Feb. 1965, Confidential, FO 371/179916.
33. 'Minutes of the twenty-first meeting of the Trucial States Council held at the Political Agency, Dubai, on 1 March, 1965', FO 371/179902; despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.4 Confidential, 3 March 1965, FO 371/179902.
34. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.4 Confidential, 3 March 1965, FO 371/179902.
35. Letter from Luce to Crawford, Confidential, 8 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179743.
36. Letter from Luce to Brenchley, 11 Jan. 1965, Confidential, FO 371/179754.
37. Letter from Peter Tripp to Luce, Confidential, 30 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754; letter from McKearney to Philipps, Confidential, 30 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
38. Telegram from Abu Dhabi to Foreign Office, No.14 Confidential, 31 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754. A copy of Shaikh Shakhbut's letter to Hassouna is enclosed with a letter from Boustead to Luce, 6 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
39. Letter from Luce to Brenchley, Confidential, 11 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
40. 'Arab League Aid to the Trucial States'. FO Minute by Brenchley, 4 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
41. Letter from Luce to Crawford, Confidential, 25 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
42. Telegram from Kuwait to FO, No.45 Confidential, 8 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
43. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.74 Confidential, 4 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
44. Telegram from Kuwait to FO, No.56 Confidential, 24 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
45. Telegram from Doha to FO, No.7 Confidential, 25 Jan. 1965, FO 371/179754.
46. Telegram from Jeddah to FO, No.73 Confidential, 7 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179754.
47. Letter from Donald Maitland (British Embassy, Cairo) to Snellgrove, 12 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179755.
48. Letter from Balfour-Paul to Luce, 6 March 1965, FO 371/179755.
49. Minutes of a meeting of Treasury, Foreign Office and Ministry of Overseas Development officials held in Mr. Sharp's room in the Treasury on 30 April 1965 at 11.30 a.m., T 317/666.
50. Letter from Sharp to C.R.A. Rae (Ministry of Overseas Development), 8 April 1965, T 317/666.
51. 'Development Aid to the Trucial States', Treasury Minute by Lucas to Sharp, 29 April 1965, T 317/666.
52. Letter from Sharp to Rae, 8 April 1965, T 317/666.
53. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.5 Confidential, 15 May 1965, FO 371/179916.
54. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.354 Confidential, 16 May 1965, PREM 13/3326.
55. The text of the five letters is quoted in the appendix to the report Sayed Nofal submitted on 20 May 1965 to the Secretary-General of the Arab League about his visit to the Trucial States. A translation of this report was obtained by the Foreign Office and can be found at FO 371/179917.
56. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.5 Confidential, 15 May 1965, FO 371/179916.
57. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.355 Secret, 16 May 1965, FO 371/179916.

58. Ibid.
59. 'Aid to the Trucial States', FO Minute by Brenchley, Secret, 20 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
60. 'Trucial States. Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs', Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Papers (65) 85, 24 May 1965, CAB 148/21.
61. Ibid.
62. Defence and Overseas Policy Committee Meetings (65) 27, 26 May 1965, CAB 148/18.
63. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.354 Confidential, 16 May 1965, PREM 13/3326.
64. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.376 Confidential, 21 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
65. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.382 Confidential, 21 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
66. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.108 Confidential, 30 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
67. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.428 Confidential, 31 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
68. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.131 Confidential, 6 June 1965, FO 371/179917.
69. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.402 Confidential, 26 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
70. Telegram from FO to Jeddah, No.522 Confidential, 24 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
71. Telegram from Jeddah to FO, No.258 Confidential, 29 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
72. Telegram from Jeddah to FO, No.268 Confidential, 8 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
73. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.6 Confidential, 13 June 1965, FO 371/179903.
74. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.146 Confidential, 14 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
75. Ibid.
76. Telegram from FO to Bahrain, No.590 Confidential, 24 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
77. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.411 Secret, 28 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
78. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.494 Confidential, 12 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
79. Telegram from Bahrain to FO and to Cairo, Damascus, Bahgdad, Amman, Jeddah, Beirut, Jerusalem, Tehran, Kuwait, Basra and Doha, No.396 Confidential, 25 May 1965, FO 371/179917.
80. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.494 Confidential, 12 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
81. Founded in 1951 and headquartered in Sharjah, the Trucial Oman Scouts were a security force under the direct control of the Political Resident designed to preserve law and order in the Trucial States. See T. Walcott, 'The Trucial Oman Scouts 1955 to 1971: An Overview', *Asian Affairs*, Vol.37 (2006), pp.17–30; and G. Balfour-Paul, *The End of Empire in the Middle East. Britain's Relinquishment of Power in her Last Three Arab Dependencies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.110.
82. Letter from Tom Bridges (FO) to D. Nairne (Ministry of Defence), Secret, 2 June 1965, FO 371/179917.
83. Letter from Nairne to Bridges, 'Trucial States', Secret, 9 June 1965, FO 371/179917.
84. Telegram from Cairo to FO, No.391 Confidential, 26 May 1965, FO 371/179917; telegram from Cairo to FO, No.383 Confidential, 25 May 1965, FO 371/179917; telegram from Lord Caradon (United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations in New York) to FO, No.1291 Confidential, 29 May 1965, FO 371/179917; telegram from Cairo to FO, No.451 Confidential, 12 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
85. Having passed UN Resolution 1514 calling for the immediate liberation of all colonies in 1960, the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1961 founded the Committee of 24, which soon became famous for its violent attacks against the Western colonial powers. Even though Great Britain was represented on the Committee, the British Government greatly feared its intervention in areas where Great Britain still maintained a position of imperial power. See W.R. Louis, 'Public Enemy Number One: The British Empire in the dock at the United Nations, 1957–71', in M. Lynn (ed.), *The British Empire in the 1950s. Retreat or Revival?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp.186–213.
86. Telegram from FO to Bahrain, No.734 Confidential, 12 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
87. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.142 Confidential, 13 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
88. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.501, 13 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
89. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.515 Confidential, 16 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
90. Ibid.
91. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.519 Confidential, 17 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
92. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.524 Confidential, 19 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
93. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.536 Secret, 22 June 1965, FO 371/179918. It is unclear from where Luce received this information. Only a copy of his telegram to London is available in the National Archives, while the original remains closed. In this copy, the first few lines of the telegram have been deleted.



94. FO and CRO to Certain Missions, Guidance Telegram No.266, 24 June 1965, PREM 13/3326.
95. In the guidance telegram it is reported that the letter was presented to the Political Agent Balfour-Paul. However, an internal report about the events written by Balfour-Paul in July and the latter's memoirs show that he was sick and had to be replaced by the Deputy Political Resident from Bahrain. See despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.8 Confidential, 14 July 1965, FO 371/179920; also see G. Balfour-Paul, *Bagpipes in Babylon. A Lifetime in the Arab World and Beyond* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2006), pp.198–9.
96. Guidance Telegram from FO and CRO to Certain Missions, No.266 Confidential, 24 June 1965, PREM 13/3326.
97. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.8 Confidential, 14 July 1965, FO 371/179920.
98. Ibid.
99. Luce to Crawford, Secret, 8 Feb. 1965, FO 371/179943.
100. Ibid.
101. Record of a Meeting held at the Political Residency in Bahrain, on Sunday, 9 May 1965, Secret, FO 371/179740.
102. Ibid.
103. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.142 Confidential, 13 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
104. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.528 Confidential, 21 June 1965, PREM 13/3326.
105. Ibid.
106. Letter from Minister of State George Thomson to Sir William Luce, Personal and Top Secret, 7 July 1965, FO 371/179739.
107. Telegram from FO to Bahrain, No.809 Confidential, 25 June 1965, FO 371/179903.
108. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.166 Confidential, 25 June 1965, FO 371/179919.
109. Telegram from Dubai to FO, No.156 Confidential, 22 June 1965, FO 371/179918.
110. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.555 Confidential, 28 June, FO 371/179919.
111. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.553 Confidential, 28 June 1965, FO 371/179919.
112. See R.S. Zahlan, *The Making of the Modern Gulf States. Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman*, revised and updated edition (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1998), p.117.
113. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.554 Confidential, 28 June 1965, FO 371/179919.
114. Telegram from Bahrain to FO, No.555 Confidential, 28 June 1965, FO 371/179919.
115. Despatch from Balfour-Paul to Luce, No.7 Confidential, 1 July 1965, FO 371/179919.