

## **The Damages to the British Official Posts in the Middle East and North Africa Arising out of the Arab-Israeli War in 1967**

**Asaad A. Zaki<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Department of Tourism Guidance, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels,  
University of Sadat City

### **Abstract**

On 5 June 1967, Israel attacked the Arab states of Egypt, Syria and Jordan through extensive airstrikes which crippled the air forces of the three Arab states. Nasser declared in his resignation speech "Israel was lying on something more than his normal strength to protect his skies from any retaliation from us." Based on what the British did in 1917, the Balfour Declaration, and in the Suez Crisis of 1956, when they aligned with Israel, the Arabs believed that Britain continued in supporting Israel in the war of 1967. Following the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, the British came under violent and persistent propaganda attacks from main Arab countries. Anti-British demonstrations and riots erupted throughout the North Africa and the Middle East, the consequences were severe; many British official posts in the Arab countries were attacked by masses, these attacks resulted in different damages in those official posts. The problems arising out of the 1967 war such as the closing of the Suez Canal, the blocking of the British ships, the detention of their cargoes and other related matters are dealt with by many research papers. This research is dealing only with damages to the British official posts including the embassies, consulates, commercial and cultural centres, and employees' houses as a result of civil agitation, riots, and public disturbances following the Israeli-Arab War in June 1967. This article depends in its narratives on primary sources represented in immediate first-hand accounts of the reports, letters and notes related to the damages arising out of the Middle East Crisis of 1967. These documents are archived in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in London and many of them were unpublished. This study relies on the historical and analytical research methods through interpretation and criticising the relevant sources and presumption of events.

**Keywords:** 1967 War, the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Anti-British Demonstrations, Damages to British Official Property.

### **Introduction**

On 5 June 1967, a squadron of Israeli combat aircrafts took off and headed towards the Egyptian bases in Sinai and via the Red Sea to an Egyptian base at Luxor, almost all the Israeli air forces were involved in that attack. The Israeli planes flew at low altitudes to avoid Egyptian radar detection. After having hit the Egyptian runways, the interceptors jets were destroyed by cannon fire and rockets; 286 out of Egypt's 420 warplanes were destroyed and nearly a third of the Egyptian pilots were killed while nine Israeli planes were destroyed and six Israeli pilots were killed towards the noon of 5 June 1967.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leslie Stein, *the Making of Modern Israel 1948-1967* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 291, 292.

The United Kingdom delivered emergency tank ammunition to Israel shortly before the beginning of the war. The British Prime Minister Harold Wilson asked Levi Eshkol, the Israeli Prime Minister, to keep this secret because any public knowledge of this affair would damage Anglo-Arab relations. These relations were badly affected because the Jordanians saw on their radar Israeli planes returning to refuel after their raids on Egyptian airfields. The Jordanians were surprised by the planes numbers and interpreted them as British and American planes to fight alongside Israel. The Jordanian reports were delivered to Egypt which was broadcasted through Cairo Radio and other Arab broadcasts. Nasser declared in his resignation speech “Israel was lying on something more than his normal strength to protect his skies from any retaliation from us. It can be said without fear of exaggeration that the enemy was operating an air force three times its normal strength”.<sup>2</sup>

Based on what the British did in 1917, the Balfour Declaration, and in the Suez Crisis of 1956, when they aligned with Israel against the Arab interests, the Arabs believed that Britain continued in supporting Israel in the war of 1967; the Arab point of view concluded that Israel alone could not achieve such military victory over the Arab countries.<sup>3</sup>

The British authorities claimed that the Arabs and Muslims wanted an Arab and Muslim victory, but most of them did not feel involved personally while the minority who were the few educated people were involved in such riots against the British in the different Arab countries. The hostility feeling in the Middle East and North Africa against Britain during the 1967 crisis stemmed from the British identification with Israel, “Israel being the final anathema to the Arabs,” as described by one of the British officials in Muscat. The Arabic hostility feeling was seen by the British as a depressing thought and seldom voiced but needed to be recognized in any consideration of the problem.<sup>4</sup> Following the outbreak of the Arab Israeli war of 1967, the British came under violent and persistent propaganda attacks from main Arab countries.<sup>5</sup>

Anti-British demonstrations and riots erupted throughout the North Africa and the Middle East, the consequences were severe;<sup>6</sup> there were many attacks on British Embassies and Consulates. Iraq, Syria, and Sudan broke off their diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom on 5 and 6 June 1967, while Egypt, Algeria and Mauritania had already broken their relations with the United Kingdom since 1965 because of the British policies towards Rhodesia. Oil exports to the United Kingdom were prohibited for about three months in early June 1967 by Libya, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and

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<sup>2</sup> Frank Brenchley, *Britain, the Six-Day War and its Aftermath* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 41,42.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Brenchley, *Britain, the Six-Day War and its Aftermath* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 50.

<sup>4</sup> D. C. Carden, Middle East Crisis, a note on 13 July 1967 to Stewart Crawford, the British Residency in Bahrain, FO 1016/780, Middle East Situation: UAR/Israel Dispute (Volume 1), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>5</sup> The British Residency in Bahrain, a note to the Foreign Office on 2 July 1967, FO 1016/780, Middle East Situation: UAR/Israel Dispute (Vol. 1), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>6</sup> Roger Louis and Avi Shlaim, *The 1967 Arab-Israeli War: Origins and Consequences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 17.

Qatar.<sup>7</sup> Many British official posts in the Arab countries were attacked by masses as a subsequent to the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East commencing 5 June 1967 in opposition to the British policies in the Middle East and the British standing by Israel in her war against the Arab countries in 1967, these attacks resulted in different damages in those official posts.

The British Government considered these attacks on their official posts as interference “with the whole basis of normal international relationships between states,”<sup>8</sup> while one of the Parliament Members, Clark Hutchison, described the public disturbances by “hooliganism” on 17 July 1967.<sup>9</sup>

This research is dealing only with damages to the British official posts including the embassies, consulates, commercial and cultural centres, and employees’ houses as a result of civil agitation, riots, and public disturbances following the Israeli-Arab War in June 1967. This article depends in its narratives on primary sources represented in immediate, first-hand accounts of the reports, letters and notes related to the damages arising out of the Middle East Crisis of 1967; these documents are archived in the National Archives of the United Kingdom in London and many of them were unpublished. This study relies on the historical and analytical research methods through interpretation and criticising the relevant sources and presumption of events.

### **Method of collecting information about Damages**

There were two categories of losses; the first one was losses in the track of war, in the case of an Israel-Arab peace treaty, the Claims Department officials did not expect that either side accepting the responsibility for losses suffered by nationals of states not involved in the war. The second category of losses resulted in civil commotion, riots or public disturbances.<sup>10</sup> This research paper focuses only on damages to the British official posts as a result of civil commotion, riots, and public disturbances following the Israeli-Arab War in June 1967. The Claims Department in the British Foreign Office had the responsibility of registering the losses and dealing with the initial enquiries.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Frank Brenchley, *Britain, the Six-Day War and its Aftermath* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 50.

<sup>8</sup> A Parliamentary Question on 22 January 1968, Oral Answers, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>9</sup> A Parliamentary Question on 17 July 1967, Oral Answers, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>10</sup> F. C. S. Bayliss, Claims Department, Claims Arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967 U. A. R., FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>11</sup> Minutes of the Meeting held at the Foreign Office on 20 June 1967 to discuss losses etc. resulting from hostilities in the Middle East Commencing 5 June 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The British Claims Department made plans to collect information about loss or damage to British property in the countries directly or indirectly affected after the hostilities broke out between Israel and the Arabs in 1967.<sup>12</sup> Three separate forms were designed by the Claims Department for recording losses; for individuals, for Government Departments, British Council, military establishments, etc. and for companies, corporations, un-incorporated associations, firms and partnerships. The British Foreign Office asked the British official posts in the Middle East and North Africa to provide a comprehensive statement about damage to buildings, furniture, office equipment and transport arising out from the 1967 crisis. The Foreign Office confirmed in their circulating telegraph that details of furniture should include which items were destroyed or lost and which items were damaged and could be repaired locally. Although the previous request of the Foreign Office related only to embassies and consulates, they asked also for details of damage to official staff residence and furnishings and to British Council premises.<sup>13</sup>

The British Government prepared a list of the British official posts in the Middle East and North Africa classified into three groups according to the extent of the damage to them; none, slight, and extensive damage. The posts in Aleppo, Port Said, Alexandria, Benghazi and Tunis were classified as posts with extensive damages. The British posts in Jerusalem, Damascus, Basra, Sofia, Port Sudan, Port Tawfik, Algiers, Rabat, Kuwait, Doha, Dubai, Beirut and Tripoli were described as posts with slight damages, while the posts in Jeddah, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Baghdad, Amman, Khartoum, Casablanca, Bahrain, Muscat and Abu Dhabi were categorized as posts with none damages.<sup>14</sup>

The British Government decided to arrange a visit only to those posts which suffered extensive damage.<sup>15</sup> The visits were arranged to be made by British architects and supplies officers.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> F. C. S. Bayliss, Claims Department, Notes for Supplementaries on 7 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>13</sup> The Foreign Office, telegraph no. 735 to the British Posts in Tripoli, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Muscat, Benghazi, Cairo, Algiers, Khartoum, Beirut, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Jeddah, Tunis, Rabat, Amman, Dubai, Kuwait, Doha, Sofia, Stockholm and Berne on 30 June 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967(Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

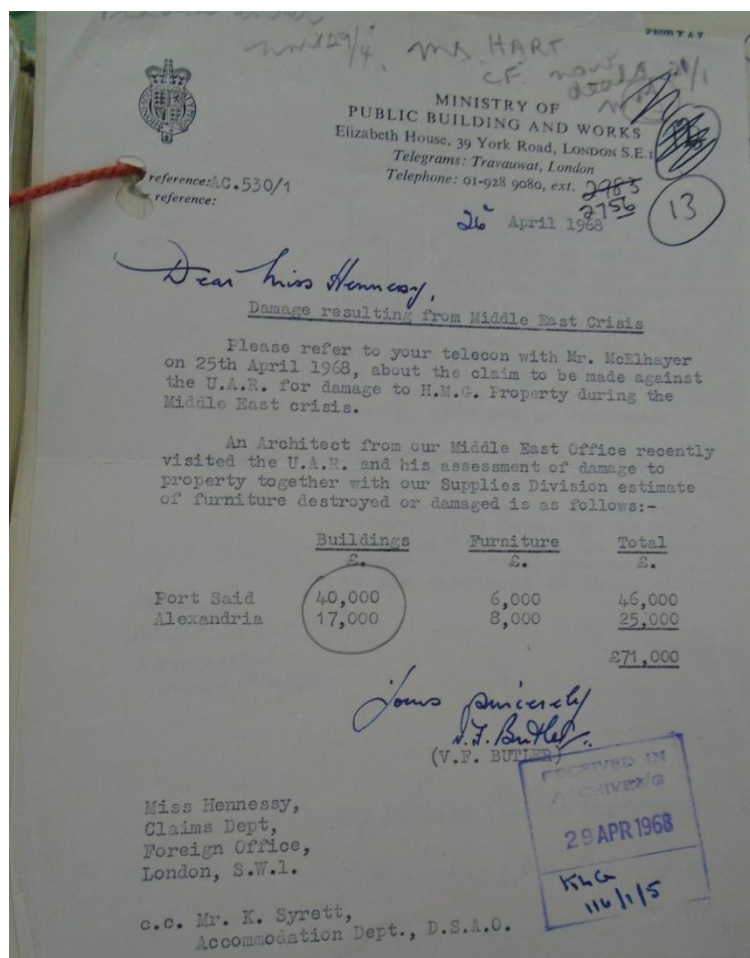
<sup>14</sup> List of damages in British posts, 8 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>15</sup> Damage- M.E. Crisis, 8 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>16</sup> P. F. Soper, the Ministry of Public Building and Works, a letter to D. G. Mitchell on 3 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

## The Damages to the British Official Posts in Egypt

Extensive damage was done to the Consulate General in Alexandria and the Shipping Office at Port Said, these British premises were examined in December 1967 by an Estate Surveyor<sup>17</sup> as a representative of the British Ministry of Public Building and Works who estimated the damage to the property and furniture for both buildings at approximately £71,000<sup>18</sup> as follows: £40,000 in Port Said and £17,000 in Alexandria, while the cost of the damage to furniture was estimated at £6,000 in Port Said and £8,000 in Alexandria.<sup>19</sup>



### Assessment of damage to the British property in Port Said and Alexandria<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> J. C. Cloake, Accommodation Department, a note to F. C. S. Bayliss, Claims Department on 10 January 1968, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>18</sup> Notes for Supplementaries, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>19</sup> V. F. Butler, Ministry of Public Building and Works, a note on 26 April 1968 to A. M. Hennessy, Claims Department, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>20</sup> V. F. Butler, Ministry of Public Building and Works, a note on 26 April 1968 to A. M. Hennessy, Claims Department, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The Consulate General offices and residence in Alexandria were badly damaged which would cost £17.000; with one or two exceptions including 4 typewriters and one Verifax Copier, all furniture and furnishing in Alexandria Consular offices except for furniture in three offices were destroyed, its cost was estimated at £8.244.2.6.,<sup>21</sup> but inner and outer walls were in good condition, three members only of staff remaining.<sup>22</sup>

An official car was destroyed during the riots; it was set alight and burnt out completely which costed £585 (special factory price) to be repaired in addition to £79 freight to Alexandria and two private cars of the officials which costed £1506 to be repaired.<sup>23</sup> The Consular offices in Alexandria were temporarily transferred to one of the staff houses.<sup>24</sup>

The British Shipping Office at Port Said was destroyed,<sup>25</sup> the building was “completely” gutted by fire,<sup>26</sup> assessed by £40.000. the British authorities assumed that all furniture and equipment were destroyed or damaged beyond repair,<sup>27</sup> estimated at £6.000.<sup>28</sup> The Imperial Office typewriters were considered “a write off,” and their replacement would cost £113.10.<sup>29</sup> a private car of an official called Mr. Morgan was damaged and costed £613.4.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Reports of Loss and Damage to Property as a result of Civil Disturbances after June 1967, 6 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>22</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, “Damage to Property” U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>23</sup> U. A. R - Loss of Cars, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>24</sup> J. C. Cloake, Accommodation Department, a note to Lord Chalfont on 21 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>25</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, “Damage to Property” U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>26</sup> The British Embassy in Cairo, telegraph no. 626 to the Foreign Office on 1 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>27</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>28</sup> Reports of Loss and Damage to Property as a result of Civil Disturbances after June 1967, 6 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>29</sup> Office Machines – Port Said Consulate, 4 November 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>30</sup> U. A. R – Loss of Cars, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.



*Damage to Property Middle East.*

Post	Damage	Estimated Cost			
		DSAO	MPBW	Staff	Land-Lord
<u>Tel Aviv</u>	None				
<u>Tripoli</u>	30 square feet window glass. Information Section: 2 chairs/carpet structural damage pictures		£12		£350
		£53	£25		
<u>Kuwait</u>	Broken windows Official cars Private cars	£38	£110	£202	
<u>Doha</u>	16 windows/extractor fan		£60		
<u>Cairo</u>	None				
<u>Port Said</u>	Building gutted All furniture and equipment damaged beyond repair			Estimates cannot be made before visual inspection	
<u>Alexandria</u>	Residence and offices badly damaged Furniture and fittings minus 3 offices destroyed. Ford Zephyr written off	£425			
<u>Jedda</u>	None				
<u>Khartoum</u>	None				
<u>Port Sudan</u>	Damage to Gellatly Hankey Building				£400
<u>Amman</u>	None				£20,618
<u>Tunis</u>	Damage to offices Damage to office furniture Damage to official cars Damage to private cars 2 16mm projectors 4 Typewriters 1 Duplicator Library books destroyed Re-installation of telephone system	£2000	£270	£144	£93
			£144	£93	£2500
			£300		
<u>Rabat</u>	British Council window	£71			
<u>Bahrain</u> <u>Abu Dhabi</u> <u>Muscat</u>	None				
<u>Dubai</u>	Windows commercial office, sign board and Land Rover damaged.		£90		
<u>Sofia</u>	Broken window and display case Damaged cars		£2		£140
<u>Benghazi</u>	<i>As list on attached telegram No 199 p. Benghazi Libyan Govt to repair office left into instrument.</i>				

*Contributions accepted 9/5/67*

*Revisions required by not covered next items by Tunis Govt*

*£1525 / 705 £400*

Post	Damage	DSAO	MPBW	Staff	Land-Lord
<u>Algiers</u>					
<u>Beirut</u>	Broken glass etc.	£20	£230		
<u>Jerusalem</u>		£230	£20		
<u>Baghdad</u>					
<u>Basra</u>	Broken glass, damaged paintwork		£150		
<u>Damascus</u>					
<u>Aleppo</u>					

*British Council 1/6/69*

*Building firm estimate / damage assessed visual inspection*

*5823 5719 4842 21868 + 70/60*

*Basra VC's report*

A list of damages to the British property in the Middle East<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The Shipping Office and the Consulate building at Port Tawfik, at the entrance of the Suez Canal, was damaged during the events of June 1967; the Office was in a military area and access was not permitted although the damage was probably the cause of Israeli shells.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Damages to the British Official Posts in Syria**

The British Consulate in Aleppo was situated on the north side of the Tour De Ville of Aleppo, it was the property of a Syrian citizen called Subhi Ghazi and rented by the British Government on 9 February 1964 to be the Consulate Headquarters.<sup>33</sup> The British General Consulate in Aleppo was damaged when the Consulate was looted and burnt in the troubles followed the 1967 War; the entrance counter was broken, the proconsul office which was located on the left-hand side of the entrance was ransacked, the boxes which contained the visas applications were taken away. The windows of the Consul office were broken while the office interior was intact. The wall cladding, the ceiling, and the metallic cabinets of the hall on the right-hand side of the entrance were burnt, while the movable objects “objets mobiliers” were ransacked. The library which contained the names of the merchants in the office of the Commercial Official was found empty. The small office next to the Office of the Secretary was damaged by smoke and water.<sup>34</sup>

A British report described the damage to the British General Consulate in Aleppo by “totally destroyed.”<sup>35</sup> The stairwell and the exit to the garden suffered extensive damage; the doors were burnt, the staircase was demolished by fire, the window grille was bent by the fire heat. At this spot, there was a tank, contained about 150 litres of oil, which ignited and caused huge flames. Twenty carpets which had been stored were entirely burnt, the burning of the wool caused a thick smoke which rendered all the rooms of the house unobtrusive; people were suffocating.

The stairwell of the ground floor suffered damage; the windows were broken and the walls were damaged by fire and the water used to extinguish it. The door and the paint leading from the stairwell to the kitchen were burnt. The small room overlooking the corridor suffered some damage due to the smoke and water. Five bottles of butane gas, three of which were full, were found intact and had not been exploded; these bottles were transferred to the shed

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<sup>32</sup> A. M. Hennessy, Claims Department, A note on 7 April 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>33</sup> Lease Contract between Subhi Ghazi and the Minister of Public Building and Works of the United Kingdom, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>34</sup> Rapport Sommaire sur l'Etat des Lieux du Consulat General de Grande-Bretagne A Alep, Ambassade de Suisse en République Arabe Syrienne, Intérêts Britanniques, 9 Août 1967, 1, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>35</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, “Damage to Property” U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.



area behind the garage at the back of the garden.<sup>36</sup> The first-floor rooms suffered a little damage due to smoke and water, but it was nevertheless habitable.<sup>37</sup> The second floor had little damage and it was habitable. The roof of the garage, which was in the garden, fell completely. All the windows of the car were broken, the front and rear headlights and flashers were also broken, the doors were working, but should be adjusted.<sup>38</sup>

The Consulate building was not the property of the British Government; claims were only related to the furnishings and equipment.<sup>39</sup> The British authorities saw that there was no reason to retain and pay rent for the Consular offices at Aleppo as they had the right to terminate the lease in the event of the severance of diplomatic relations<sup>40</sup> and to consider the question of staffing the Embassy at Damascus and the Consulate at Aleppo when diplomatic relations with Syria could be restored. The landlord asked a permission to survey the building so that he could formulate his claim against the Syrian authorities.<sup>41</sup>

The Department of the British Interests at the Embassy of Swiss in Damascus proposed some suggestions regarding the protection of the British Consulate offices in Aleppo; the simplest one would be to isolate the offices in the lower floor from the outside and from the rest of the building itself through sealing the grids again in some places in the wall because they suffered from heat and disintegrating by time. The screen of metal bars, which was placed in front of the consulate walls as protection, was bent by heat and it should be restored by a blacksmith and a partition could be placed to protect the windows. The destroyed door should be replaced.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Rapport Sommaire sur l'Etat des Lieux du Consulat General de Grande-Bretagne A Alep, Ambassade de Suisse en République Arabe Syrienne, Intérêts Britanniques, 9 Août 1967, 2, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>37</sup> Rapport Sommaire sur l'Etat des Lieux du Consulat General de Grande-Bretagne A Alep, Ambassade de Suisse en République Arabe Syrienne, Intérêts Britanniques, 9 Août 1967, 3, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>38</sup> Rapport Sommaire sur l'Etat des Lieux du Consulat General de Grande-Bretagne à Alep, Ambassade de Suisse en République Arabe Syrienne, Intérêts Britanniques, 9 Août 1967, 4, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>39</sup> Notes for Supplementaries, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>40</sup> J. P. Lee, Ministry of Public Building and Works, a note on 13 September 1967 to K. H. Syrett, Accommodation Department, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>41</sup> K. H. Syrett, Accommodation Department, a note on 18 October 1967, to J. G. Thompson, Ministry of Public Building and Works, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>42</sup> Suggestions concernant la protection des bureaux du Consulat de Grande-Bretagne à Alep, Ambassade de Suisse en République Arabe Syrienne, Intérêts Britanniques, 9 Août 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The British Embassy at Damascus suffered damage during the riots in June 1967; twelve panes of glass were broken in the Embassy, Diplomatic relations were broken off, all British staff were withdrawn.<sup>43</sup>

### **The Damages to the British Official Posts in Libya**

The British Embassy in Tripoli suffered damage in June 1967; total cost of damages was £440 including damages in thirty square feet window glass, the riot grille and windows were also broken in the Reading Room which suffered some fire scorching,<sup>44</sup> two chairs, carpet and some pictures were damaged.<sup>45</sup> The British Ambassador suggested the installation of a sprinkler system although it would be very costly because the British had never installed such a system in the consular premises. J. C. Cloake from the Accommodation Department recommended putting sprinkler systems in buildings as a matter of policy.<sup>46</sup>

The Consulate and Commercial offices in Benghazi were burnt; half of the Consular and Commercial building including one flat became uninhabitable, the Libyan Government as a lessor was obliged to reinstate it for reoccupation, the cost was £200, immediate repairs to windows, shutters and doors estimated at £300. After a survey, it was found that many furniture items were completely destroyed including the entire furniture of the Commercial and Information Centre, 80 stacking chair, 4 desks with drawers at one end, 3 tables with steel supports, 1 desk typist, 2 typists swivel chairs, 1 trolley steel supports, 1 four-drawer filing cabinet with locking bar, 1 four-drawer card index cabinet, 6 steel chairs with arms, 1 waiting room writing table, 6 plastic wire trays, 2 desk lamps, 1 carpet, 1 wooden desk with drawers at both ends, 1 side table en suite, 4 armchairs, 8 ex-dining chairs and 3 open book chairs. Other items were damaged but could be repaired including 4 steel cupboards and 1 four-drawer filing cabinet. Many items of the office equipment were completely destroyed including projectors, 2 amplifiers, valves, belts, lamps, rectifiers, 4 screens, 2 ferrograph tape recorders, 500 films, 443 Arabic newsreel films, 3 microphones, 1 microphone stand, 3 typewriters, 1 portable Dictaphone, information material, and pictures valued at £100, while 4 typewriters were damaged and could be repaired at total cost of £25. All the official cars suffered damage to windows and body; the three Landrovers were repaired at cost of £167, the Humber and Zephyr cars needed to be repaired at cost of £91. Some miscellaneous items were damaged including the coils of 4 air-

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<sup>43</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>44</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>45</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of Progress Meeting held on 28 June 1967, p. 2, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

conditioners, 1 table fan, 1 ceiling fan, garage tools to value £25 missing and 5 soda acid fire extinguishers unserviceable. The staff accommodation flat was gutted by fire causing damage to 3 bedside rugs, dressing table mirror and wardrobe exterior; the cost of reinstating these damages was estimated at £40. The British Council lost furniture and equipment at amount of £8,500.<sup>47</sup> The Reading Room and Commercial Centre were destroyed, and the Embassy flats suffered some damage.<sup>48</sup>

### **Damages to other British Official Posts in the Middle East and North Africa**

A gathering of secondary school students attacked the British Consulate in Port Sudan at 11 o'clock in the morning of 6 June 1967, they were chanting and threw stones and other debris, they destroyed fences, signs and "anything removable they could find." The wooden Sheesh covering the windows were smashed, in some places glass was broken, the doors at the front of the building suffered damage and the main door needed to be replaced, the wooden fences at the side of the office was destroyed and two air conditioning units were damaged. There was no attempt to enter the building. The Police Riot Squad arrived about ten minutes later and broke up the demonstrators with tear guns and batons. No serious damage was done, and no one was hurt.<sup>49</sup> Although the aim was to hurt the British Consulate and because the Consulate was housed in the Gellatly Building of the firm of Gellatly, Hankey & Co., the whole of the Gellatly Hankey Building office suffered including the flats over the offices<sup>50</sup> and it would cost £400 to be restored.<sup>51</sup>

A damage had been occurred to the British Political Agency in Dubai, caused by the demonstrations of 7 June 1967. The Political Agent in Dubai had the right of the British Government to claim for the damages to British official posts sustained in Dubai; the Commercial Office windows, 1 sign board and Landrover car were damaged,<sup>52</sup> but he recommended that they should not claim

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<sup>47</sup> The British Embassy in Benghazi, telegraph no. 199 to the Foreign Office on 5 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>48</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>49</sup> A. H. Tidy, the British Consulate at Port Sudan, a letter to J. Kerr, the British Interests Section of the Italian Embassy at Khartoum, on 7 June 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>50</sup> A. H. Tidy, the British Consulate at Port Sudan, a letter to R. F. Coleman, the British Interests Section of the Italian Embassy at Khartoum, on 22 June 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>51</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

R. Fowler, the British Interests Section of the Italian Embassy at Khartoum, a telegraph to the Foreign Office on 1 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>52</sup> S. Crawford, the British Agency in Bahrain, telegraph no. 456 to the Foreign Office on 4 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

for the small damages to “the Crown property” which were estimated at £90. The British Claims Department at the Foreign Office suggested that they should not press claims in view of the fact that two out of three British companies which suffered damages decided not to press claims; those companies were the British Bank of the Middle East, African and Eastern Limited, and Gray Mackenzie.<sup>53</sup> The British officials did not want the British Agency to be the only sufferer of damage in Dubai to make a claim, however it was considered the least sufferer according to the British estimates,<sup>54</sup> the British authorities preferred not to present a formal claim because the amount involved was small,<sup>55</sup> the claims were waived.<sup>56</sup>

In Algeria, a mob of about 400 young people, from 15 to 25 years old, attacked the British Council premises at about 4 p.m. of Monday 5 June 1967, the British authorities claimed that these young people were incited and directed by older ones. Just before their arrival, the officials succeeded in locking and bolting all doors in the library and the first-floor offices and classroom and they lowered all shutters. The Police attended and stationed about 20 yards below the Council Institute, but they made no action and they did not intervene, the British officials criticized the Police attitude towards the demonstrators by claiming that the Police did not appear until the last demonstrators were leaving the parking out of the Council, a British document described the police reaction to the demonstration “they behaved more like a farm wife shooing hens than police dealing with rioters.” The British officials disapproved the performance of the Algerian Fire Brigade; they claimed that the Fire Brigade arrived long after the protesters had dispersed and the fire which was gutted in the library had been extinguished by the Council staff and the Algerian Fire Brigade officials further damaged the private car of the Representative which was damaged and overturned by the protesters by rocking it to put it back on its wheels. The rioters were able to break through the library, the high library windows adjacent to the parking which were covered by a steel mesh grille; the rioters used an iron drum with a small amount of mazout to batter in the grille and smash the window frames. They tore the curtains from the rails and opened the library door from the inside.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> D. A. Roberts, the British Political Agency, Trucial States in Dubai, a letter to M. R. Melhuish, the British Residency in Bahrain on 27 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>54</sup> M. R. Melhuish, the British Residency in Bahrain, A letter to the Claims Department in the Foreign Office on 4 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>55</sup> F. Ide, Accommodation Department, Dubai: Political Agency, 24 August 1967, to L. W. Allen, Ministry of Public Building and Works, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>56</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>57</sup> The Swiss Embassy in Algeria, the British Interests Section, Damage to Official Property, a letter to Accommodation Department on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

The British documents explained in detail the damages to the Council Library; the steel book shelves were torn from the walls, books, periodicals and card index were scattered, stage foot lighting was smashed. curtains, newspapers and books were sprayed with mazout and a fire started, the staff could extinguish it with extinguishers from the library; the books suffered more by being soaked in mazout than by fire.<sup>58</sup> No damaged was reported in Algeria during the events of June 1967 except for British Council property<sup>59</sup> which costed £375.<sup>60</sup> The British asked the Algerian Police to leave a guard as a precaution against any potential protest or looting of the building, this request remained without response.<sup>61</sup>

Minor damages occurred to the British Embassy in Beirut on 6 June 1967; the damage to this Embassy resulted from a bombardment of the windows by stones and home-made fire bombs, none of these fire bombs got inside the building, the interior had minor damages represented in scratching of furniture and tearing of blinds and curtains. Great deal of glass broken in Embassy building was reported, 68.44 square meters, No damage was done in the official staff residence and furnishings and none to the British Council premises.<sup>62</sup> The total assessment of the costs of damage was amounted at £230 including contractor's account for 68.44 sq.m. glass, painting external area of 250 sq. m. which included making good to damaged surface, venetian blinds, supplying and rehang 100 sq.m., replacement of broken telephone instrument case, cleaning of floors, walls, verandas of broken glass and stones, repairing damage to furniture caused by missiles and flying glass and repairing damage to plants in the Embassy garden.<sup>63</sup> curtains The Ambassador was withdrawn but diplomatic relations were maintained.<sup>64</sup> The claims were discussed during the Lebanese Foreign Minister, Fouad Boutros, visit to London in May 1968.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Estimate of Damage to British Council Premises, Equipment and Stock Resulting from the attack on the Council Institute in Algiers on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>59</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>60</sup> The Swiss Embassy in Algeria, the British Interests Section, Damage to Official Property, a letter to Accommodation Department on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>61</sup> Estimate of Damage to British Council Premises, Equipment and Stock Resulting from the attack on the Council Institute in Algiers on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>62</sup> A. J. M. Craig, the British Embassy in Beirut, a note to D. G. Mitchell, Accommodation Department, on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>63</sup> Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, Assessment of costs of Damage Caused to the British Embassy on Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, 67, on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>64</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>65</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

Reference.....

Assessment of Costs of Damage Caused to the  
British Embassy on Tuesday the 6th. of June, 67

<u>Glazing :</u>	Contractor's account for 68.44 sq.m. of glass	LL. 889.70
<u>Painting External :</u>	An area of 250 sq.m. at LL.2.50 per sq.m. which includes making good to damaged surface	LL. 625.00
<u>Venetian Blinds :</u>	15 sq.m. damaged at LL.4 per sq.m.	LL. 60.00
<u>Curtains :</u>	100 sq.m. torn and damaged, supply and re-hang at 1.50 per sq.m.	LL. 150.00
<u>Telephone Instrument Case :</u>	Broken-replacement costs including installation charges	LL. 85.00
	Cleaning of Floors, Walls, Verandahs etc., of broken glass, stones and lemonade stains :	LL. 100.00
	Damage to furniture caused by missiles, flying glass etc.	LL. 125.00
	Damage to plants etc., in Embassy Garden	LL. 25.00
		LL. 2059.70 =====

*Say 230 sterling*

Ministry of Public Building & Works  
3 July, 1967

*[Signature]*

ARR/FD

Assessment of costs of damage caused to the British Embassy in Beirut on  
Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, 1967<sup>66</sup>

The British posts in Kuwait suffered minor damage; the total bill for damage came to about £350 including damages in windows and doors, about £110, official cars, about £38, and private cars about £202.<sup>67</sup> The British did not report any damage to staff accommodation or British Council property.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, Assessment of costs of Damage Caused to the British Embassy on Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, 67, on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>67</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>68</sup> The British Embassy in Kuwait, telegraph no. 380 to the Foreign Office on 2 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

No damage was reported in Jordan; the Ambassador and Counsellor were withdrawn from compound; post hiring was authorized.<sup>69</sup> No damage to the British official premises in Amman,<sup>70</sup> but the aircraft of the Air Attaché was destroyed on Amman airfield,<sup>71</sup> claims were not presented.<sup>72</sup> The British reports confirmed that no British official property of any category was damaged in Saudi Arabia.<sup>73</sup>

The British Consular offices in Sofia suffered damage to windows, display case and damaged cars as a result of attack by African students,<sup>74</sup> these damages costed £142 to be repaired. The Bulgarian authority accepted responsibility for these costs.<sup>75</sup>

No damage was reported to the British Embassy and Residence in Baghdad. The Diplomatic relations were severed, and all staff evacuated.<sup>76</sup> Mob entered the British Consulate in Basra; the flag was burnt, glass was broken, paintwork was damaged, and the building was stoned,<sup>77</sup> cars belonging to the staff were also damaged,<sup>78</sup> the damage was amounted at £150.<sup>79</sup>

### **House of Commons Interests and Concerns Regarding the Damages**

Several British Members of Parliament were interested in the effects of the Middle East Crisis of 1967 on the British official possessions in the Middle East and North Africa. Lord Segal and Alexander W. Lyon, the members of Parliament, asked the British Government a question in the British House of

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<sup>69</sup> List Referred to in Item 1 of Minutes, "Damage to Property" U. A. R., FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>70</sup> The British Embassy in Amman, telegraph no. 798 to the Foreign Office on 1 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>71</sup> J. C. Cloake, Accommodation Department, a note to Lord Chalfont on 21 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>72</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>73</sup> The British Embassy in Jedda, telegraph no. 479 to the Foreign Office on 1 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>74</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>75</sup> The British Post in Sofia, telegraph no. 150 to the Foreign Office on 3 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>76</sup> List of damages in British posts, 8 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>77</sup> List of damages in British posts, 8 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>78</sup> Notes for Supplementaries, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>79</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.



Lords on 25 July 1967 regarding the damage which had been sustained by the British diplomatic and consular properties in North Africa and the Middle East since the outbreak of the Middle East crisis and hostilities, they asked about the assessment of the repairing cost of this damage. Lord Chalfont, the British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs told the House of Commons' members that the consular buildings at Alexandria, Port Said and Aleppo were gutted by fire, the Embassy offices at Tunis and the commercial and consular offices and the British Council buildings in Benghazi suffered major damage, while eleven other Diplomatic Service premises in the Middle East and North Africa suffered minor damage. The British Minister estimated the total cost of damage at £120.000, of which about £80.000 was in respect of properties owned by the British Government, while the cost in the loss of personal effects to Embassy officials abroad was £8.500,<sup>80</sup> most of which was in respect of private cars.<sup>81</sup>

In January 1968, another Parliament question was asked by W. O. J. Robinson about the compensation for damage to the United Kingdom embassies during the Middle East crisis which should be paid by the countries involved. William Rodgers, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told him that the Governments of Libya, Tunisia, Qatar and Bulgaria paid for the cost of repairing British official posts in their respective countries, other notes were sent to Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria and the United Arab Republic reserving the British rights to compensation. The Member of Parliament asked the British Government to take active steps to press their claims to compensation against other Governments.<sup>82</sup>

Because there was an increasingly popular form of protest in Africa and Asia, Alexander W. Lyon suggested that it would be better to house the British ambassadors in anonymous buildings in side streets. The Member of Parliament, Clark Hutchison described the riots against the British posts in North Africa and the Middle East by "hooliganism".<sup>83</sup>

### **Compensation to Losses due to June 1967 Crisis**

The Claims Department in the British Foreign Office was responsible for processing the official claims and the private claims before their presentation to the foreign governments.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> The Middle East: Damage to British Property, House of Lords, 25 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>81</sup> J. C. Cloake, Accommodation Department, a note to Lord Chalfont on 21 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>82</sup> A Parliamentary Question on 22 January 1968, Oral Answers, FCO 78/25, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume B), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>83</sup> House of Commons P. Q. 17 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>84</sup> A. M. Hennessy, Claims Department, A note on 5 September 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

Almost a year after the Middle East Crisis of 1967, many British posts in the Middle East and North Africa complained at the delay in presenting claims for losses arising out of the Israel-Arab war 1967 or the civil disturbances and riots resulted from the war thereafter. There was a concern that the delay in the claim could result a risk that the Arab Governments could interpret the British continued silence on the compensation matter as “a sign of lack of interest.” The British Claims Department counted several reasons for such a delay; it was necessary to get details of alleged loss, damage or injury to the British Government posts, Government officials, private individuals and firms from the Embassies and Consulates. This exercise took more time as it covered the area from Algiers to Kuwait. Every complaint should be examined and sent to the Legal Adviser to determine whether there was evidence that the damage resulted from events engaging the international responsibility of the foreign Government. It was decided “as a matter of policy” that the Governmental claims should not be presented until the Claims Department was in a position to present private claims as well or the Foreign Office would be opened to Parliamentary and press criticism; this policy was modified in June 1968<sup>85</sup> after the resumption of diplomatic relations with most of the Governments concerned when the political departments in the British Foreign Office decided that claims for official property should be presented even though some private claims were not ready for presentation.<sup>86</sup>

The British Government made protests to the countries concerned; the British sent notes reserving their right to compensation to the Libyan, Algerian, Kuwait, Tunisian and Syrian governments.<sup>87</sup> The Government of Tunisia and the Ruler of Qatar had accepted the responsibility for the damage caused in Tunis and Doha. There were minor damages in Doha amounted to £60 including damages in sixteen windows and extractor fans.<sup>88</sup> In Tunis, the ground floor Library, Consular entrance on the first floor and Consular archives room on the third floor were gutted by fire.<sup>89</sup> There were damages to offices, office furniture, official cars, two 16mm projectors, four typewriters, a duplicator, a number of library books and the telephone system; these damages costed £34.925.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> F. C. S. Bayliss, Claims Department, a letter to P. R. H. Wright, the British Embassy in Cairo on 1 July 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>86</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>87</sup> J. C. Cloake, Accommodation Department, a note to Lord Chalfont on 21 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>88</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>89</sup> List of damages in British posts, 8 August 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>90</sup> Damage to Property Middle East, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

Except for carpets and curtains, the Tunisian Government paid for all the Embassy damages.<sup>91</sup> The consular buildings in Benghazi were leased from the Libyan Government on which the responsibility for repairs lied; the damage at Benghazi was amounted to £25.000. The British Government took similar actions in the case of the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Syria and Kuwait.<sup>92</sup> The claims of the consular staff members were included along with the British Government claim in respect of Government property.<sup>93</sup>

On 28 June 1967, the British Government informed the Egyptian Government with their right to claim compensation on behalf of themselves and of United Kingdom nationals in respect of loss and damage caused by the Middle East crisis in 1967 and civil disturbances.<sup>94</sup>

The valuation of official damaged or lost cars during the Middle East crisis of 1967 was based on a method recommended by the British Embassy in Tunisia. This method was accepted by the Tunisian Government and recommended for the other countries in the Middle East and North Africa; the United Kingdom list price of a new car of the same model, less diplomatic discount, further reduced by depreciation of 10% for the first year, plus 15% annually thereafter. Two of the staff who lost cars in the United Arab Republic requested that compensation be based on the local insurance value which was assessed by the State-owned National Insurance Organisation and it was “very high.” They represent the true value of cars in Egypt which included an import duty of 280%. The British Foreign Office officials presumed that “whatever figure we adopt”, it would be risky, even if it was accepted; it would be adopted for a severe deduction on account of duty or tax. The British claimed that if they used the same valuation used in Tunisia, the Egyptians might equally deduct import duty, so, they preferred to use the full local value; the figure given for official cars would have to be adjusted accordingly. The other damaged or lost effects were assessed based on the United Kingdom cost price, less a reasonable percentage for depreciation and a percentage to be added for the effects of inflating.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, Claims for loss or damage to official and private property arising out of the Israel-Arab War 1967, on 21 May 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>92</sup> The Middle East: Damage to British Property, House of Lords, 25 July 1967, FO 78/24, Middle East: Damage to Property Arabian/Israeli War 1967 (Volume A), the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>93</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, a letter to F. G. Waters, Office Services and Supply Department on 19 August 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>94</sup> Canadian Embassy in Cairo, a note on 28 June 1967, to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

<sup>95</sup> R. G. Watts, Foreign Office, a letter to Berman, Legal Adviser on 13 August 1968, FCO 64/44, Middle East Hostilities: Property, Damage to, Compensation for, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Surrey, UK.

## **Conclusion**

During the June 1967 War, the Arab countries believed that Israel depended on her attacks on other powers; the United Kingdom and the United States of America. What Britain did in 1917, the Balfour Declaration, and in 1956, was present in the minds of many Arabs when the British fought against the Egyptians alongside with France and Israel. The Arabs concluded that Israel could not achieve such victory with its normal strength. The Arabic media played a significant role in stirring up the anger of the Arab masses against Britain.

The hostility feeling in the Middle East and North Africa against Britain during the 1967 crisis stemmed from the British identification with Israel which was described by the British as “the final anathema to the Arabs.” These hostility feelings resulted in anti-British demonstrations and riots which were erupted throughout the North Africa and the Middle East.

Many British official posts in the Arab countries were attacked by masses as a subsequent to the outbreak of the Middle East Crisis of 1967, these attacks resulted in different damages in those official posts.

The Claims Department in the British Foreign Office had the responsibility of registering the losses and dealing with the initial enquiries. The British official posts which suffered extensive damage were those in Aleppo, Port Said, Alexandria, Benghazi and Tunis, while the British posts in Jerusalem, Damascus, Basra, Sofia, Port Sudan, Port Tawfik, Algiers, Rabat, Kuwait, Doha, Dubai, Beirut and Tripoli suffered slight damages, and the posts in Jeddah, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Baghdad, Amman, Khartoum, Casablanca, Bahrain, Muscat and Abu Dhabi had no damages.

The anger of the Arab people who attacked the British posts in North Africa and the Middle East represented in attacking these buildings and cars of the British officials with fire, stones and other debris causing damages to the buildings, its furniture, and the officials’ cars.

British officials criticized the Police attitude towards the demonstrators in some Arab countries like what had happened in Algeria; the British claimed that the Police did not appear until the last demonstrators were leaving the parking of the Council, a British document described the police reaction to the demonstration “they behaved more like a farm wife shooing hens than police dealing with rioters.” The British officials disapproved the performance of the Algerian Fire Brigade; they claimed that the Fire Brigade arrived long after the protesters had dispersed and the fire which was gutted in the library had been extinguished by the Council staff and the Algerian Fire Brigade officials further damaged the private car of the Representative which was damaged and overturned by the protesters by rocking it to put it back on its wheels.

There was a noticeable interest in the British House of Commons in the damages which had been done to the British embassies and consulates in North Africa and the Middle East following the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. Many British Members of Parliament asked the British Government questions about the damage which had been sustained by the British diplomatic and consular properties in North Africa and the Middle East and they asked about the assessment of the repairing cost of this damage. One of the British members of Parliament denounced the riots against the British posts in North Africa and the Middle East and described them by “hooliganism” which reflected consensus among the British Members of Parliament and the British Government in their view of the attacks against British official posts in North Africa and the Middle East considering them a breach of the international norms.

There are a number of gaps in our knowledge around the damages that had been done to the private possessions of the British private nationals who lived in the North Africa and the Middle East following the crisis of 1967, so, further future studies should be conducted to investigate the damages that had been done to private British officials and how the British authorities dealt with such attacks and damages.

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## الأضرار التي لحقت بالمقار البريطانية في الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا نتيجة الحرب العربية – الإسرائيلية عام ١٩٦٧

أسعد عرفة ذكي<sup>١</sup>

<sup>١</sup> قسم الإرشاد السياحي، كلية السياحة والفنادق، جامعة مدينة السادات

### الملخص

قامت إسرائيل في الخامس من يونيو عام ١٩٦٧ بمهاجمة مصر وسوريا والأردن بهجمات جوية كثيفة على مطارات الدول الثلاث مما أثر بشدة على القوات الجوية المصرية والسورية والأردنية، وحققت إسرائيل انتصاراً عسكرياً لم يتقبله كثير من العرب في ذلك الوقت وعلى رأسهم الرئيس المصري في وقتها جمال عبدالناصر. صرح جمال عبدالناصر في خطاب تنحيه أن إسرائيل تعتمد على شيء آخر وقوى أخرى لحماية مجالها الجوي من أية ضربات متوقعة من جانب الدول العربية. استناداً إلى ما قامت به بريطانيا في السابق من دعمها لإسرائيل بداية من وعد بلفور عام ١٩١٧ وحتى حرب العدوان الثلاثي على مصر عام ١٩٥٦، آمن العرب بالرواية التي تشير إلى استمرار مساندة الإنجليز لإسرائيل في حربها عام ١٩٦٧. نتيجة لهذا الاعتقاد ونتيجة للهجوم الإعلامي العربي ضد بريطانيا، أصبحت المقار الرسمية وغير الرسمية الإنجليزية هدفاً للعديد من الهجمات من قبل بعض الجماهير العربية الغاضبة في الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا. كانت النتائج سيئة جداً في كثير من الحالات حيث خلفت العديد من الأضرار سواء في المباني أو المنقولات مثل الأثاث والسيارات الدبلوماسية وغيرها. تركز هذه الدراسة على الأضرار التي لحقت بالمقار البريطانية الرسمية فقط مثل السفارات والقنصليات والمراكز الثقافية والتجارية والتي نتجت عن أحداث أزمة ١٩٦٧، ورد الفعل البريطاني سواء الرسمي أو الشعبي ممثلاً في ردود أفعال أعضاء مجلس العموم البريطاني. اعتمدت هذه الدراسة على الوثائق الأصلية – وبعضها غير منشور – المحفوظة في دار الوثائق القومية البريطانية في لندن.

الكلمات الدالة: حرب ٦٧، الصراع العربي الإسرائيلي، المقار البريطانية.