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Egypt: The Nasir regime appears uncertain how to handle the first hostile demonstrations it has faced.

The first demonstration occurred on 21 February. "Workers" from the southern suburbs of Cairo staged a march ostensibly protesting the "light" sentences given high-level military officers charged with negligence during the war last June. The former chief of the air force was given 15 years imprisonment, but two other top officers were acquitted. The protesters demanded death sentences, and police reportedly had to use gunfire to halt them.

Agitation has evidently continued and, despite a ban, students rioted in Cairo itself on Sunday. After a Sunday night cabinet session, the government closed the four major universities and all the high schools in the country. Demonstrations have been banned once again, and the regime has announced that the accused officers will be retried by another court.

The government moves may forestall further outbreaks, but the seriousness of the incidents indicates a popular mood the Nasir regime has never previously had to face. The demonstrations underscore the malaise and frustration arising from the humiliation of the Egyptian defeat last June. The spontaneity of the demonstrations is open to question, but the identity and motives of possible organizers are unknown.

Although stiffer sentences for the accused might appease disaffected civilians, such sentences would at the same time increase resentment among the military. The military is already bitter over receiving the blame for the defeat at the hands of the Israelis, and, in some cases, restive under "retraining" by Soviet military advisers.

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The regime's problem with hostile sentiment will be compounded by the absence of any visible progress in getting the Israelis to withdraw from occupied Egyptian territory.

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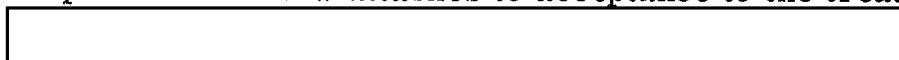
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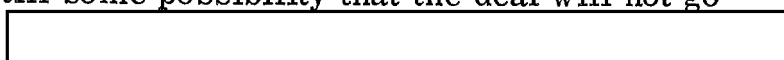
NOTES



USSR: Soviet diplomats recently have been lobbying for the US-Soviet draft nonproliferation treaty. The draft is still before the disarmament conference in Geneva. Representations have been made in New Delhi and Tokyo, and the Russian delegate at Geneva privately made an impassioned defense of the treaty against Rumanian criticism. In Moscow, the envoys of Austria, Italy, India, Japan, Burma, Brazil, and Chile have been approached for support. Brezhnev and Kosygin have emphasized in major speeches the importance Moscow attaches to acceptance to the treaty.

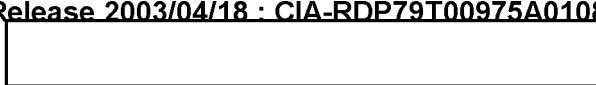


Uruguay-Czechoslovakia: The Uruguayan police have proposed buying [redacted] small arms from Czechoslovakia. Military leaders have expressed concern with proposed reductions in US military aid at a time when the government's planned austerity program threatens to stir Communist-inspired labor agitation and increased urban unrest. President Pacheco Areco has yet to approve the purchase, which is to include submachine guns and ammunition, and there is still some possibility that the deal will not go through.



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