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DIST 31 JULY 1967

COUNTRY: UAR

DOI: [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: COMMENTS BY UAR PRESIDENT NASIR ON TOPICS RELATED TO THE RECENT HOSTILITIES AND THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE AHEAD, THE UAR INTERNAL SITUATION AND ARAB UNITY

ACQ:

SOURCE:

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1. UAR PRESIDENT NASIR SAID HE WAS PROUD OF THE POPULAR SUPPORT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM OUTSIDE EGYPT AFTER HE HAD PRESENTED HIS RESIGNATION. THE SHOCK OF DEFEAT WAS ALL THE GREATER ON THE EGYPTIAN AND OTHER ARAB POPULATIONS BECAUSE SINCE 1952 HE HAD ACCUSTOMED ALL HIS FOLLOWERS TO A CONSTANT STRING OF VICTORIES, WITH NEVER A DEFEAT. EVEN 1956 AND SUEZ HAD BEEN A VICTORY IN

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THE END, ALTHOUGH IT STARTED WITH A MILITARY DEFEAT. "IN THIS MODERN AGE WE DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE WITH BLOOD. EGYPT NEVER HAD TO FIGHT FOR ITS FREEDOM." NASIR ADMITTED THAT POLITICS HAD KEPT HIM AWAY FROM THE ARMY FOR THE PAST FIVE OR SIX YEARS. ABD AL HAKIM AMIR WAS, NASIR SAID, A SINCERE MAN, BUT A WEAK ONE AND NOT NEARLY SEVERE ENOUGH WITH HIS COLLABORATORS. HIS ONE BIG ERROR HAD BEEN TO THRUST ABD AL AZIZ ASIDE AS COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE AND TO RELY ON MUHAMMAD SIDQI, WHO LIKE AMIR IS A SENSUALIST AND A DRUNK. [REDACTED] COMMENT: NASIR PRESUMABLY IS TALKING ABOUT THE FORMER HEAD OF THE UAR ARMED FORCES, FIELD MARSHALL ABD AL HAKIM AMIR. MUHAMMAD SIDQI IS CURRENTLY THE COMMANDER OF THE UAR AIR FORCE. [REDACTED]

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2. NASIR BELIEVES "BLACK YEARS OF FIGHTING ARE AHEAD," BUT HE CONSTRUED FIGHTING MORE ALONG POLITICAL THAN MILITARY LINES. THE EVACUATION OF THE SINAI PENINSULA BY THE ISRAELIS WOULD BE ACHIEVED IN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER, HE BELIEVED, AS A RESULT OF A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WHICH WOULD BE BEGUN AFTER THE 10 AUGUST ARAB SUMMIT IN KHARTOUM. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THIS PRESUMABLY MEANS THE BIG ARAB SUMMIT TENTATIVELY EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN KHARTOUM SOMETIME IN AUGUST, 1967.)

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"WE CANNOT FIGHT ISRAEL AGAIN UNTIL ONE SOLE ARAB ARMY HAS BEEN FORMED, UNIFIED AND ARMED."

3. "OUR PEOPLE ARE NOT USED TO BEING DEPRIVED OF ANYTHING. MY REGIME GAVE TO MILLIONS THE POSSIBILITY OF BUYING SOME KILOS OF MEAT EVERY WEEK. BUT WHEN I SUPPRESSED MEAT SALES THREE DAYS A WEEK, THEY ALL COMPLAIN, NOT REMEMBERING THAT BEFORE 1952, DURING THE MONARCHY, THEY HAD NO MEANS TO BUY ANY MEAT ANY DAY OF THE WEEK. ALL OUR MEDIA OF INFORMATION MUST REMIND PEOPLE OF FACTS LIKE THESE."

4. "THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR DEFEAT WILL SOON APPEAR BEFORE A COURT MARTIAL. I WANT A PROFESSIONAL ARMY, WITH NO MORE LUXURIES FOR THE OFFICERS. MUHAMMAD FAWZI AND ABD AL AZIZ WILL ASSURE THE FORMATION OF A SERIOUS ARMY. AS FOR INTERNAL POLICY, I HAVE GIVEN ZAKARIYAH MUHIY-AL-DIN CARTE BLANCHE TO MAKE A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE." [REDACTED] COMMENT: IN HIS USE OF THE TERM CARTE BLANCHE, NASIR WAS REFERRING TO 'MUHIY-AL-DIN'S CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR REFORM, WHICH BESIDES HAVING LARGE SCALE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING, IS AUTHORIZED TO STUDY THE FILES OF ALL HIGH RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS TO SEE WHICH OF THEM SHOULD BE PUNISHED FOR DERELICTION OF DUTY OR COWARDICE. THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FUNCTIONING

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SINCE SHORTLY AFTER 9 JUNE 1967).

5. NASIR MENTIONED HIS ADMIRATION FOR KING HUSAYN: "WHAT HAS HE GOT LEFT, THE POOR MAN, BUT AMMAN, SALT AND SOME PARCELS OF SAND? IF US AND UK AID TO JORDAN DOES NOT CONTINUE, THE 'CONGRESS' (SIC) OF KHARTOUM SHOULD ASSURE HIM THE SAME INCOME."

6. "I AVOW THAT SUDANESE PRIME MINISTER MAHJUB WAS THE MAN OF ORIENTATION AND DECISION IN THE CAIRO TALKS LAST WEEK, AND THE SUDAN DRAFT CAN BE THE SOUND BASIS FOR A MORE SERIOUS AND SINCERE ARAB COLLABORATION. WE COMPLETE EACH OTHER, SUDAN AND EGYPT. WE HAVE NEVER FELT SO CLOSE AS IN THESE DAYS. IF DEFEAT GAVE US THIS, IT (THE DEFEAT) BECOMES MINIMAL FOR THE FUTURE."

7. WITH REGARD TO LEBANON, NASIR ASID THAT IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED TO HAVE DONE MORE THAN IT DID DURING THE WAR, GIVEN ITS MOSAIC. THE MORAL APPROVAL OF LEBANON FOR THE ARAB STAND WAS IMPORTANT IN FORMING WORLD PUBLIC OPINION "AND I AM GRATEFUL." "FAWZI IN NEW YORK TOLD ME THAT HAKIM HAD WORKED DAY AND NIGHT FOR APPROVAL OF THE NON-ALIGNED DRAFT PROPOSAL AGAINST ISRAEL. NO MORE CAN BE ASKED OF LEBANON." [REDACTED] COMMENT: THIS PRESUMABLY REFERS TO THE PRESIDENT'S ASSISTANT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAHMUD FAWZI AND LEBANESE FOREIGN MINISTER GEORGE HAKIM, BOTH OF WHOM WERE IN NEW

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YORK FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY.)

8. "WE COMMITTED BIG ERRORS IN POLITICAL TERMS. AN ANNOUNCER ON OUR RADIO ANNOUNCES JOYOUSLY THAT IRAQI TROOPS ARE GOING TO THE RESCUE OF JORDAN, AND AN HOUR LATER ISRAELI AIRPLANES SWEEP IN AND HIT THE IRAQIS. FROM NOW ON, WE MUST HAVE NO MORE FESTIVALS, AND MANY FEWER WORDS.

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9. [REDACTED] DISSEM: STATE ARMY DEFENSE ATTACHE CINCMEAFSA

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