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309. Memorandum From the Department of State Executive Secretary (Brubeck) to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)/1/

Washington, June 25, 1962.

/1/Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.86B/6-2562. Secret. Drafted by Barrow (NEA/NE) and Talbot and cleared by Herz (AF).

SUBJECT

Analysis of President Nasser's Letter of June 22, 1962 to President Kennedy/2/

/2/The Embassy in Cairo transmitted the text of Nasser's letter, dated June 21, in telegram 1830, June 22, which is attached but not printed.

President Nasser's letter (enclosed) in our view represents a significant step forward in US-UAR relations. For one thing, Nasser's statement of sincere gratitude is practically unique in the history of US-UAR relations. More significant, though the letter is superficially simply an expression of appreciation for the understanding shown toward Dr. Kaissouni on the occasion of the latter's mission in Washington, we believe it may have substantive implications of far-reaching import.

In the beginning of the message, Nasser implies that the attitude of the United States had a bearing on the National Charter enunciated by Nasser on May 21. Enclosed is the Department's analysis of that Charter/3/ which (a) strikes hard at communism (albeit at capitalism as well); (b) embodies finite moves toward decentralization of authority; (c) leaves the door open to the development of a mixed economic and social system including private foreign investment in limited fields; (d) advocates forward-looking economic and social measures such as family planning and equality of women; and (e) extends an olive branch to former imperialist countries who participate in the UAR's development program. Nasser has called himself pragmatic and it may well be that he was influenced away from certain more extreme views by the ideas presented to him in recent months by Ambassador Badeau, Mr. Bowles and Dr. Edward Mason.

/3/Attached but not printed.

Nasser's message also implies that our attitude toward the Kaissouni mission had an influence on the recent Casablanca Chiefs of State Conference which was chiefly significant in respect of (a) support for the Evian agreements on Algeria, (b) support only for "peaceful" moves by Morocco against Mauritania, (c) call for effective control and supervision of disarmament.

However, the key paragraph of the letter is Nasser's reference to "mutual understanding" and an expression of confidence that US-UAR differences can be kept "within limits not to be exceeded". We take this to mean that he intends to honor his commitment to keep the Palestine question "in the refrigerator" (provided of course that we also do so), to concentrate on modernization of Egypt, to avoid overt provocative actions in the Middle East, and to pursue a statesmanlike course in world affairs. He appears to wish to indicate that he respects the role we are playing in the world and does not want to be far out of step with it.

Inasmuch as this letter tends to balance previous messages sent to Nasser by President Kennedy, we do not believe it calls for an immediate reply. However, we desire to authorize Ambassador Badeau to comment favorably on the letter in his next meeting with Nasser. Additionally, we plan, later in the summer, to consider recommending that the President send Nasser a letter reviewing the state of our relations and suggesting means

to keep momentum behind their continuing improvement along the lines set forth in our memorandum of May 18, 1962.

J.T. Rogers/4/

/4/Rogers signed for Brubeck above Brubeck's typed signature.