

Foreign Relations, 1961-1963, Volume XVIII, Near East, 1962-1963

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Near East, 1962-1963

7. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Arab Republic^{/1/}

Washington, July 19, 1962, 1:22 p.m.

^{/1/}Source: Department of State, Central Files, 611.86B/7-1962. Secret; Limit Distribution. Drafted by Barrow on July 14; cleared by Little, Strong, and McGeorge Bundy; and approved by Talbot.

71. At early opportunity you should inform senior official at Presidency of President Kennedy's pleasure at Nasser's letter of June 21^{/2/} which he feels reflects perceptive understanding of US intentions and affords basis for constructive US-UAR relationship. You should state President plans reply a bit later on.

^{/2/}For an analysis of Nasser's letter, see *Foreign Relations*, 1961-1963, vol. XVII, Document 309. On July 12, Komer sent Bundy a note that reads in part: "I regard 21 June Nasser letter as a quite meaningful overture, saying in effect that Nasser recognizes our evidences of good faith (aid) for what they are and is also prepared to move toward cordial relations and new forms of cooperation. We've made a score on relations with the key guy in Arab world; let's keep nurturing it." (Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Countries Series, United Arab Republic, Nasser Correspondence)

You should add we have noted pattern of UAR attitudes and actions recently, particularly understanding of our need to anticipate problems before they arose and to endeavor eliminate or minimize possible sources friction. UAR statesmanship and moderate posture at Geneva Disarmament Conference,^{/3/} in Ben Bella-Ben Khedda affair^{/4/} and in handling of Cairo Economic Conference^{/5/} are examples of actions which have done much to improve UAR public relations image in US which here, perhaps more than elsewhere, must always be important factor in deliberations and policy decisions. There are formidable problems yet to be solved but we greatly encouraged by progress to date and hope better things in store for future.

^{/3/}The first session of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee met in Geneva March 14-June 15.

^{/4/}Reference is to the rivalry between Ben Bella and Ben Khedda for the leadership of Algeria, which achieved independence from France on July 6.

^{/5/}The Conference on the Problems of Economic Development, held in Cairo July 9-18, was sponsored by 10 African and Asian nations and Yugoslavia, and attended by 25 additional neutralist and/or developing countries, including Cuba. Documentation on the conference is in Department of State, Central File 398.00-CA. The conference was discussed at the Acting Secretary of State's staff meeting on July 20. (*Ibid.*, Secretary's Staff Meetings: Lot 66 D 147)

You should repeat these remarks on occasion next meeting with Nasser.

Rusk