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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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1768-3-6, Nasser, Demonstrations

Intelligence Note - 180

March 6, 1968

To : The Secretary
 Through: S/S
 From : IPR - Thomas L. Hughes *TLH*

Subject: UAR Demonstrations Reflect Nasser's Loss of Public Confidence

Recent disorderly demonstrations by Egyptian workers and students do not appear to constitute any immediate threat to Nasser's leadership position. Nevertheless, they were the largest and most serious hostile demonstrations since the regime came to power in 1952 and reflect growing public impatience with Nasser's current domestic and foreign policies. They also reveal essential weaknesses in his regime's capability to mobilize and control public opinion through its political mass movement, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU). Nasser is clearly disturbed by this evidence of unrest but in his March 3 speech minimized the importance of the demonstrations and blamed their anti-regime character primarily on "counter-revolutionaries." Should he try to take any significant measures to allay student and worker discontent, however, he would risk alienating the public security apparatus and the armed forces, on which the ultimate stability of his regime still clearly depends.

Disorders Symptom of Political Malaise. Although publicly blaming subversives and "misunderstandings" for the disturbances, Nasser evidently recognizes them as symptoms of the current malaise in the Egyptian body politic. The demonstrations undoubtedly reflect popular suspicion that the regime is trying to cover up mistakes in the political and military

Pol 23-8 UAR

Pol 15-1 UAR
Pol 12 UAR

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