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1968-12-24, Nasser, Muhi-Aldeen,
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December 24, 1968

To : The Secretary
Through: S/S

From : I.R. - Thomas L. Hughes *TLH*

Subject: UAR: Leftist Assessment of Domestic Scene May Reveal Soviet Concern about Stability of Nasser's Regime

There have been indications that the closest friends of the Soviet Union in Egypt regard the UAR internal scene with considerable concern. According to several recent intelligence reports, Khalid Muhi al-Din, the UAR's most prominent Communist, has reached a very gloomy assessment of the situation in the UAR. Nasser Faces a Fundamental Dilemma. According to Muhi al-Din, President Nasser currently finds himself in a corner. He cannot bring to fruition the reforms which he promised the Egyptians last Spring without making sweeping changes in the governmental and administrative systems. But if he makes such changes, he will undermine his control to such a degree that he might be forced to surrender power. On the other hand, if Nasser takes no action, he will face further trouble in view of the widespread dissatisfaction among the Egyptian people.

Popular Discontent Focussing on Nasser.

Muhi al-Din interpreted the student riots of late November as the third "body-blow" (the June 1967 defeat and the secondary 1968 disturbances were the first and second) directed against Nasser and his regime. The latest riots reflected a popular disillusionment with both the personalities and the political system represented by the Nasser regime. There is widespread recognition that the March 30 program to reform the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) has been a failure. Muhi al-Din predicted bitter and better

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