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*Research  
 Memorandum*

RMA-20, May 15, 1968

To : The Secretary  
 Through: S/S  
 From : INR - Thomas L. Hughes *Thomas L. Hughes*  
 Subject: The Muslim Brethren in 1968

President Nasser's grip on affairs in the UAR shows signs of loosening. This study, prepared at the request of Assistant Secretary Battle, examines the status and prospects of the Muslim Brethren (Ikhwan al-Muslimin), virtually the only popular-base movement outside the structure of the regime itself and a tenacious enemy of Nasser.

ABSTRACT

It is all but inconceivable that the Muslim Brethren could seize or hold power in the UAR in the foreseeable future. Were it to do so against all odds, the US would find only marginal benefits from the change--largely through the discomfiture of the communists and the USSR--and peace with Israel would be no nearer.

The organization in the UAR has been nearly shattered by tough governmental suppression in 1948-49, 1954 and 1965. The 1954 and 1965 roundups were accompanied by persistent and effective propaganda campaigns designed to discredit the movement and its leaders, and tear down any lingering public sympathy for its goals. Even more, the social and psychological climate in the UAR in the last twenty years has turned away from the methods of the Ikhwan. (Paradoxically, its goals are very little different from those of the Nasser regime, though less precisely defined, but this fact has been lost sight of in the course of its political struggles and reverses.)

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