

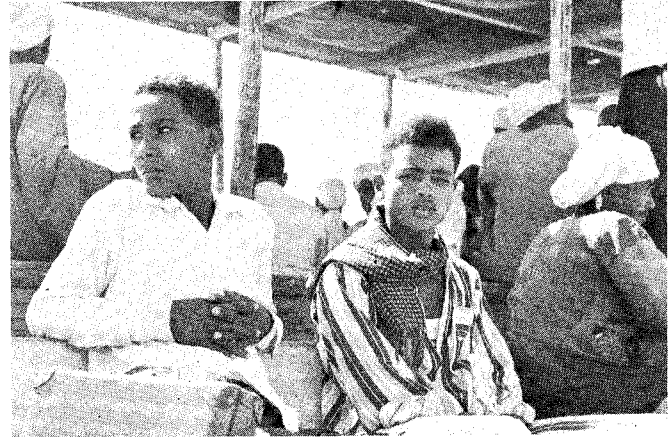
## INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

WWU - 36  
UAR IV: FOURTH ESTATE

Shenheard's Hotel.  
Cairo, United Arab Republic.  
November 6, 1959.

Mr. Richard H. Nolte.  
Institute of Current World Affairs.  
366 Madison Ave., New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Dick:



RURAL EGYPT: SUN-WEARY PASSENGERS ON A NILE FERRY BETWEEN LUXOR AND THEBES

The first publisher I met here in the UAR was Mustafa Amin of Akhbar Publications and its chief outlet, the daily newspaper Akhbar 'el-Yom. Amin, a huge balding, gorilla of a man, received his M.A. from Georgetown University in Washington in 1938. He and his twin brother, Ali Amin, who attends to Akhbar's business side, are considered to be more favorably inclined toward the West than any other publishers in the UAR. They own their own publications and, I am told, have some sort of an arrangement with the U.S. Information Service for printing part of their translation work. I had no trouble obtaining an appointment with Amin, nor in getting him to talk. Here are some of his thoughts:

On neutrality: "We didn't create non-alignment. It was George Washington who did. We followed in your path. But we see it; you don't. Any interference, we resist. We don't accept it from our friends. We don't accept it from our enemies. People think as long as we fight Western imperialism we will be communist. Now other people think that as a result of our fighting communism, we will be in the Western camp. In fact, we won't be in either. We will try to keep an independent policy."

On the Arab bloc: "It is just like the States of the U.S. We feel all of us are one country divided by artificial boundaries, and we believe that one day there will be something like the U.S. of Arab countries -- from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic. That is our course. If it is left alone, it will be arrived at in 20 years. But if you fight it, it will arise in much shorter time. So we hope that you will fight it."

On the so-called interference with other Arab states: "There are American bases in Libya, but we don't fight Libya. There is not union between us and Sudan, but we don't fight Sudan. But we feel they are creating a communist spearhead in Iraq to destroy the independence of all the Arab countries. But we are not in a hurry to have a merger with Iraq because we think it will come, and the more we leave it alone the sooner it will come."



On Afro-Asian relations: "We call it the Afro-Asian solidarity. The majority believe in non-alignment and positive neutrality. There is a difference: Neutrals won't raise their fingers to defend the independence of other countries. But we are independent of every bloc, but we fight for the freedom of everywhere in the world. When we fight for Tibet, Algeria, we are fighting for the Arab countries. When we fight against the interference of the Russians in Yugoslavia, we are defending ourselves against any Russian interference in the Middle East. Mr. Nehru didn't raise Hell on Tibet in the beginning, but we did, from the beginning. There is positive neutrality and there is negative neutrality. I think the attitude of the Arab nations is positive neutrality."

"Wishful Policy"

On East-West relations: "Everybody believes that if you deal with the Soviet Union you lose your independence. We do not believe this. We argue with the people of the West that we just had a brief independence and that we aren't at any cost going to lose it. Opportunistic? We never said, 'If we don't get from you, we will get from the other.' We were negotiating arms from you from 1952 to 1955, three years. We never told you we would get arms from the Soviet Union. And, in fact, you didn't know until we signed the agreement with Czechoslovakia. We wanted to buy arms from the West. They refused us. So we bought from the East. No strings. If there were any strings, we couldn't fight communism. (Perhaps the Egyptians didn't choose to see them. They refused military aid from the U.S. because it involved U.S. advisers. Yet they accepted Russian technicians. Nasser told American officials it was their fault for "insisting" on the advisers. He said he would have permitted them voluntarily.) Threat by the Soviets to cut off our arms now? Not yet. They don't repeat the mistake of Mr. Dulles. And on Aswan, we told you that the Soviet Union was negotiating with the High Dam and you said, 'blackmailer.' Mr. Dulles made his assumption that the Soviet Union can't afford it. You had what is called the 'Wishful Policy, Wishful Thinking Policy.' In Suez, you made a very good impression here. It didn't fade away. But Mr. Dulles defeated his victory. The same week you took that stand in the UN we had about 8000 killed or wounded. We were short of penicillin. President Nasser asked that the U.S. release \$1 million of our blocked dollars to buy penicillin. At the same time, we had a shortage of wheat. Mr. Dulles refused to give us the medicine and refused to give us the wheat. (One official here concedes it was a departure from previous practice and so could have been construed as a political decision.) Russia heard about that and they sent to Egypt a hospital ship and wheat. China? We are fighting China because we think China wants to push us from non-alignment to alignment. But when the vote for admitting China into the UN came we voted for China. (Nasser recently became infuriated with China when the leading Syrian Communist, Khaled Bakdash, gave a speech in Peking October 5 denouncing both Nasser and Egypt's merger with Syria. The UAR Ambassador was called home for "consultation." But just the other day, the Cairo papers carried accounts that all was now patched up.)"

On future relations with the U.S.: "We hope just that the U.S. will not interfere in our internal affairs and will stand by the principles of the American Constitution. Backing the French against Algeria -- it is against all that you stand for. If you do, you are thinking of yesterday. You thought for the defense of the Arab countries you should have bases, Arab bases, around the Soviet Union. We said any bases without the peoples' support means nothing. We said the idea is to have the people of the area fight for themselves, not for the U.S. Because I will carry a gun for myself, for Egypt; I will not carry a gun for the U.S. You spent millions and millions of dollars for bases in Iraq. In five minutes it wasn't worth a penny. But if you financed help for other countries to build bases, then they will be also fighting for you. But what is bad about the mentality of America is that they want to do things for others. They want to think for them, and act for them. Three years ago, the U.S. distributed a book about Hungary in Arabic. It cost 25¢ American and was put out by LIFE Magazine. They threw it away. Three months ago, we published the same book and we called it, 'When Communism Enters a Country.' And we wrote in the beginning, 'We give you an example of what happens to you if Communism enters a country in the Arab World.' Four hundred thousand copies were sold out in two weeks. People read it as something that will happen to them. When this propaganda was done by the Arabs for the Arabs, it convinced the Arabs. When the propaganda was done by the Americans for the Arabs, it convinced no one."

Fathi Ganem is the 35-year-old editor of Sabah el Kheir (Good Morning), a leftist weekly. He also writes a column for Rose el Youssef, the parent publication which was founded by Egypt's leading actress of the day who gave up the stage in order to get even with drama critics. Ganem, himself, started out as a novelist and short story writer. I found him likeable and most friendly.



GANEM

"We must not permit our differences with the Soviet Union to be exploited by the West," he told me, "or any differences with the USA and UK to be exploited by the Communists." What about the UAR itself exploiting the differences between East and West for its own advantage? "We have already quarreled with both of them. How could we continue to exploit both of them? Sure, we need help. We are hungry. We are poor. We are underdeveloped. No one can deny it. And if we can't get it from one, we must get it from the other. Help is before anything else. Whether we are Western or Eastern, or Communist or Capitalist -- if you don't offer it to me I can get it from someplace else. The communists are sure we are not with them. But the communists still are helping us with the High Dam. It is not our intentions, but our capability of remaining neutral."

What about the doubts regarding Egyptian hegemony over the Arab world? "Nasser is preaching socialism. Anybody who says Nasser is for his own empire, we say we want socialism for all this area. The world should not stay in the hands of the rich. If we are all Arabs, why not get together if it is the same objective? Why do it separately? But we can't get together by war, as you did between North and South."

Edgard Gallard, the editor of Journal d'Egypte, is an Arab despite all the French. I had been told that he and his paper no longer enjoyed the influence they once had because of too close an affection for King Farouk. When I saw Gallard at his office he asked me to take his picture under the portrait of "my good friend, Gamal Abdel Nasser." Later, he seemed to have second

thoughts over the whole idea of talking to a fellow news-  
man and asked for a copy of my notes. Luckily, I have a  
scribble which would discourage all copies.

Gallard immediately made his position clear regarding France and England: They had "interfered" with the Arab uprising against the Turks in the 'twenties and done their best to thwart true Arab unity by setting up such small "artificial" states as Jordan and Palestine under their influence. With this in mind, he said, "If they say we have interfered with other Arab countries' internal affairs, we did not interfere to annex them; we interfered to help them to be free from the West, the imperialists -- leaving it to them the chance when they are free to decide what they decide. We are not pledging for a bloc, but for a complete Arab solidarity. If we remain divided without at least collaboration, the weak countries may lose their independence again."



"useful to whom?"

How does this fit in with Egypt's merger with Syria? "Gamal Abdel Nasser for three days refused the Syrian delegation and told them it is too early. They posed the problem to him so: 'If you don't realize union we shall become communist. We, the civil power, are too weak alone to stop this in the Army.' Nasser proposed a Federation. But they insisted on unity. Then he said, 'OK, but no responsibility without authority.' Kassim and others say, 'You have absorbed Syria.' We have not. We were under a clear obligation to control a Syria threatened by communists."

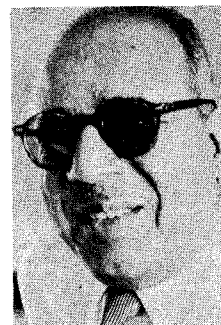
And Yemen, with whom you have formed the United Arab States? "The Kingdom of Yemen came to us and told us that Great Britain is trying to cut from Yemen many rich lands and oil. We accepted Federation to keep their kingdom all right. It is a real responsibility because if there is a real war with Great Britain we must interfere. Now we are helping build them an army."

And Iraq? "Kassim was an officer, not a political man. He has not in hand the machine. He asked for the Communist Party and the other party to fight for him in the streets. He can't understand that it is so dangerous. He has gradually become the prisoner of the Communists without becoming himself Communist. Before the Iraq Revolution, Russia and China were thinking that an Arab country never could become communist, and that the maximum they could hope from the Middle East is good economic relations, neutrality. So they were very nice with the UAR and Gamal Abdel Nasser. Suddenly, with the stories in Iraq, Moscow and Peking discovered that an Arab country may become communist and that all the leaders are not like Gamal Abdel Nasser -- neutral and anti-communist. And they discovered that the obstacle to the remaining countries was Gamal Abdel Nasser. Then they put in the balance friendship with Gamal Abdel Nasser and the other side's Iraq and Kassim. And Iraq dominates Saudi Arabia, the land of oil, and Iraq itself is producing oil. And then it would be more useful to them to back Kassim. But Khrushchev discovered that if he continued to clash with Gamal Abdel Nasser he would antagonize the rest of the Arab World. It was too early. Then he stopped and continued his help for the building of the High Barrage (Aswan) so as not to be accused of making economic help to the Arab countries the price of a pro-Communist government. Dulles has not been so clever. And Khrushchev left practical action to the Chinese. Don't forget the Chinese are still Stalinists. They are working in Iraq. They are

working in Morocco. By agreement between the two countries, Khrushchev is keeping his position of the man of good will. China is doing the work and they find that the winning of Communist Iraq is such a tremendous game that they are ready to sacrifice their friendship with the UAR."

What about your neutrality; how neutral are you? "Think a moment. When we proclaimed our neutrality, it was useful to whom? Logically, our course would have led to an alignment with the Soviet policy and not with yours." Any opportunism involved? "The question of blackmailing began not with us. We did not at a single time say, 'If you don't give we shall ask from Russia.' No, they began to make offers of economic help with political conditions of alliance with them. Like Eisenhower's Doctrine. Ambassador Richards came with dollars in one hand and an anti-communist alliance in the other hand. It was one of Dulles' mistakes. A really great people would not accept such a transaction with all the searchlights playing. They understood so clearly that Richards didn't dare to come to Cairo. The drama of the American policy in the Middle East is that from their hearts they are with the Arab people because they are anti-colonialist. On the other side, you have ties with the colonialist parties. You make a gesture for Arabs with the left hand and immediately you are afraid to have a misunderstanding with the colonial powers, your allies. Conclusion: You have lost both sides because you have not had the courage of the choice. Then no one is grateful to you."

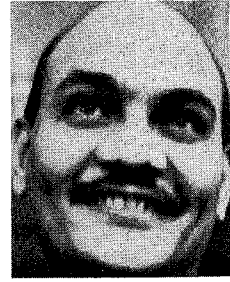
Mohamed Mohamed Abdul Kadar is the controller of Radio Cairo's political section. He wears dark glasses, smokes a cigar and has the pudginess of a backroom party boss. He sort of wavered back and forth on the East-West question: "We live in Africa and what happens to Africa affects us. For example, any aid from the West is suspect. We back any liberation of the colonial world. We don't import principles. We take from the West what we think is good. But I think we shall take from the East everything. But we have a greater complex against the East because Islam is against communism. We are accused of being communists because we bought Russian arms. We look only for our own interests. We accept nothing with strings. We speak out against Khrushchev and Mao. It doesn't affect our commercial relations." How did you vote on the Tibet issue at the UN? "We didn't vote. We didn't want to be with the West or the East." How are your relations with the U.S. today? "The influence of the Zionists in America blackens the glasses in the eyes of the Americans. We are never aggressive. As long as Israel stays here it is the basis for the West to attack the UAR." So you want to push Israel into the sea? "No! No! No! It is a fallacy. We don't say so. Our President Nasser declared it is for the resolutions of the UN to be carried out, that is all. The refugees should return to their homes and properties. The last word is spoken by Gamal Abdel Nasser."



M.M.A. KADAR

Major Salah Salem, a member of Nasser's original Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), former Minister of National Guidance and now publisher of the Government organ, Al Gomhouria, the biggest daily paper in the Arab world, supposedly is one of the most colorful men in Cairo. He is known as the "Dancing Major" because he stripped down to his underwear (he says they were whites, not red shorts) one time to join in a dance with his South Sudanese hosts. He wowed the Sudanese and danced all night. Soon after the interview I had with him, he took off for Moscow. The local papers have been making a big to-do about

Khrushchev receiving him with full honors. Some suspect the publicity on the Russian hospitality, if not for Salem himself, may mark a new turn in Nasser's relations with Russia. May be. But if Nasser is now seeking to ease his sallies against Russia in order to concentrate on his troubles in Iraq and Syria, I find it curious that he chose Major Salem as his helpmate. I'll admit right now that I was a half-hour late for my appointment. It took three different taxi cabs and no end of curbside advisers to get me to Al Gom-houria. When I was ushered in, I found a balding, smiling gent in an enormous paneled office, complete with stuffed chairs and a mezzanine gallery. For the next 45 minutes I desperately tried to get Salem away from reciting early history and bring forth his comments on the present. I failed. Anyway, here is what he did say:



Dancing Major

"Any mutual defense meant a continuance of the occupation of our country. Then in 1954 came the first contacts to form a group of Arab countries away from any bloc of foreign powers. I made the first contacts. The main problem with communism is that to fight communism you have to be allied with a Big Power. So we agreed to form an Arabic Military Organization and ask the West to give it help and aid without any sort of pacts. Then came pressure by the West on Nouri Said (the late Iraqi Premier) that he must not sign this pact. Nouri Said would rather depend upon the West for power. Nouri Said instead joined the West and then came a split in the Arab World. Afterwards, Nouri Said and the Great Powers tried to get Syria into the Baghdad Pact. There was an agreement with Syria in March, 1955. Then we began to look to the Asian and African countries who have similar experiences. It was crystalized in April, 1955 at the Bandung Conference and we used the conference as an arm in the area."

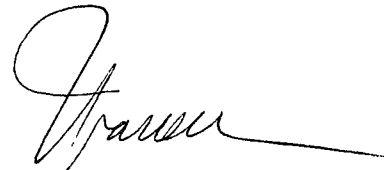
Permit a slight digression. I had a talk with the Indian Ambassador to the UAR, R.K. Nehru, in the hope that I could get one neutral's thoughts about another. Well, since Nehru was Ambassador to Peking until last year, I couldn't get him off China. He did say that he thought the reason China was busying herself so much in Yugoslavia and the UAR was because "the Chinese intellectuals want progressive socialism, such as is practiced by 'backsliding' Yugoslavia and 'bourgeois' India and the UAR. The Chinese Government is implementing the other system. And to discourage this competition, the Peking Government is going to great lengths to criticize it to its own people." Ambassador R.K. Nehru has been likened to Krishna Menon in his thinking and with one remark he certainly became eligible. He said the Chinese claim to the high mountain line along the border was much more logical than allowing the frontiers to rest on foothills. He cited not only China's border claim in the current dispute over the Ladakh region of Kashmir, but also China's claim to a section of supposedly independent Mongolia. And, interestingly enough, Nehru pointed out that Chinese mans today also lay claim to a sizeable hunk of the Soviet Union's huge Kazakhstan Republic. Regarding China's action in India, Nehru (I should keep stressing Ambassador Nehru) said, "It's not communism, just historical Chinese expansionism." Incidentally, when I asked Ambassador Nehru about anti-semitism in the UAR he told me he had persuaded Nasser to invite over a Jewish New York ear surgeon named Dr. Rosen and now the UAR was even sending students to train under him in America. Nehru said he similarly persuaded Premier Chou En-lai to invite Dr. Rosen to China but the State Department wouldn't allow him to go. This vexed Nehru considerably as he needed ear surgery. He ended up by meeting Dr. Rosen in Hong Kong.

An Indian reporter here gave me much more of what I was seeking in the way of one neutral's comments on another: "Non-committedness in India is a matter of principle, synonymous with independence. In the UAR, non-alignment and independence are regarded more as tactics than as inflexible principle. In 1954, when the Egyptians felt they had not gotten a fair deal regarding arms from the West, the Egyptian Gazette ran a headline: 'Egypt will turn neutral if the U.S. will not tell Allies to mind.' So non-alignment was adopted as a threat, a by-product of Egypt's struggle for a place in the sun. Now their policy approaches our own. But there are nuances -- the idea of a bloc, if not looked down upon, at least is not frowned upon. Their neutralism would be considered a loud kind that is continually proclaiming it and beating the drum. There is a suspicion that their neutralism is a matter of opportunity, rather than of principle. There is a tendency to create tensions, rather than to dissipate them. As for their Pan-Arabism, if you add zero to zero, the sum total is zero. Nasser only talks about Arab 'solidarity,' never Arab 'unity.' The Western press, however, called Nasser 'another vicious imperialist.' The pressure got so bad in December that Nasser had to publicly claim his only ambition was Arab solidarity; he has no territorial ambitions for Arab unity. And I don't think it's a matter of personal ambition. Negatively or positively, Egypt is the central nation of the Arab East, for good or for ill. It has half the population of the Arab world; it straddles the Red Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean; it is the only Arab country with a sizeable corps of Western-trained manpower; it is the only country in the Arab East with anywhere near adequate educational facilities."

The Indian journalist, who prefers anonymity, might have added that Egypt also has that vital international waterway, the Suez Canal, and lies astride the land routes to Middle East oil and tomorrow's Africa.

Before leaving on my journey a year ago I sought out some guidance from UAR specialists in the State Department. One of them told me: "The preeminence of Nasser as a recognized leader of the Arab world is a fact of life you have to face. Nobody's going to have any illusions that he can be part of the Western world." And a year later, here on the spot, there are U.S. officials who say that the only real falling out with Nasser, to begin with, was a disagreement with his concern and cooperation regarding Western defense objectives. As for Arab nationalism, the need for internal reform and economic development and Nasser's more recent disenchantment with the Soviet Union, the U.S. today is apparently more than sympathetic. Israel, of course, presents more complications. I'm on my way there now and soon will be writing you about the UAR's unwelcome neighbor.

Cordially,



Received New York December 7, 1959

Warren W. Unna