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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Division of Biographic Information

RAGAB (RAJIB), Hasan Fahmi

EGYPT

There is little information available concerning Ragab's orientation toward the United States during the Faruq regime and very little more since the 1952 coup. During his early career, Ragab was essentially a technician (and undoubtedly a sincere nationalist). U.S. officials who came in contact with him described him as generally frank and personally friendly. Ragab was at one time dedicated to developing Egypt's arms production; in 1949 it was reported that by "stealing, utilization of captured equipment, and by improvisation" he was developing an excellent chemical laboratory. From 1953, however, there is some evidence that he became interested in assuming a political role. Extremely impressionable, he returned from Turkey in 1953 with pro-Turkish leanings, praising that country's democracy and much impressed by her military factories. Late in 1953 and early in 1954 he travelled in Russia and some of the satellite countries. Given the red carpet treatment, he returned with glowing comments on Russia's productivity and rapid industrial development. Although he vehemently denied that Egypt could ever become Communist, some observers felt that "some Red had rubbed off on him" during that visit. The U.S. military attaché in 1954, however, felt that there was no swing to Communist ideology, that it was as a technician that Ragab had been impressed. Following his return from Eastern Europe Ragab made one of his few recorded statements about United States policy in the Near East. He felt that the U.S. was "playing into the hands" of Russia's propaganda experts by supplying Israel with arms. That policy, he said "is just what Russia wants."

Since his assignment to Communist China, FBIS monitored speeches record his glowing comments on Chinese technological advances. In July 1957, however, an Egyptian source (B) reportedly indicated that Ragab had become disillusioned with Communism and had asked to be recalled. (Akhir Sa'la, edited by Nasir's confidant Haykal, reported on October 16, 1957, that Ragab is "expected" to return to Egypt to take up a "new, important post.")

(Supplement to report dated August 2, 1956)

IRC:BI:VHMacLean:mh

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