

Page: I of I  
Encl. No: I  
Doc. No: 2905  
From: CAIRO

SECRET SEC INFO

AMERICAN EMBASSY,  
Cairo, Egypt, June 24, 1953.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH DOCTOR WILHELM VOSS

Voss is about 50 years old, tall, spare, with a lined face, greying hair, partially bald. He conveys the impression of having suffered greatly and of being deeply disillusioned as a result of his war experiences. He is rather stolid and thoughtful in his manner. He appears to have been profoundly affected by the five years of captivity, mostly by the American authorities, following the war. An underlying personal resentment against the United States is clearly discernible, although he clearly recognizes the preeminent power position of the U.S.

BIOGRAPHIC:

In the 1920's Voss had his own chartered accountant business in Berlin. He visited the United States once in 1929 where he attended a conference at Columbia University on Title Law. In 1938 he was connected with Danube shipping. From 1939 to 1945 he was President of the Skoda Works in Prague. In February 1945 he had a row with Goering, left the Skoda Works and joined the Army. At this time he visited Berlin. After negotiating the surrender of his unit to U.S. forces, he became an American prisoner, after which he was turned over to the Russians. After a period as a Russian prisoner he was turned over to the Czechs, who released him unconditionally without trial. He went to Berlin and became once more an American prisoner. After some time in prison camps he was released and merely kept under house arrest. He testified as a witness at Nuremberg. During this period the Czechs gave him a clean bill of health because he had never exploited his position at Skoda and did not take the advantage he might have of his position as the leading German in Czechoslovakia. He was finally released by the Americans in 1950 and almost immediately thereafter came to Egypt.

Here he is head of the group of German technicians numbering 70 (he said there were approximately 2,000 Germans altogether in Egypt). He maintains liaison for the group with the Egyptian Government and claims to be very close to Naguib and Nasir and the rest of the RCC. (He and one or two of the German experts were invited to attend the rally last night at which Naguib spoke. Nehru and Mohamed Aly were present but no Chiefs of Mission except the Saudi Arabian. In this connection Voss made an interesting comparison between the techniques of Naguib and Nasir in handling the crowd. When Naguib spoke, there were continuous cheers which frequently drowned out what he had to say. Nasir,

SECRET SEC INFO

on the other hand, gained instant control, speaking in short sentences, pausing for cheers and gaining silence before continuing. Naguib thus appeared to be more popular but Nasir was the most effective orator.)

Voss appears to be on quite intimate terms with Naguib and the RCC, and in a position to give them advice.

COMMENTS ON NAGUIB AND RCC:

Voss thinks Naguib and Nasir work as one. He said Naguib would never vote against anything Nasir wanted, but by the same token, Nasir would never vote against Naguib.

He said there were three groups within the RCC. The first is made up of Naguib, Nasir, Amer, and Salah Salem who would like to cooperate with the West. Another group is neutralist, and the third group, while not Communist, are pretty far over to the left in their ideas for the organization of the country.

NAGUIB:

He thinks Naguib is utterly sincere and honest.

NASIR:

Voss thinks Nasir is highly intelligent but violently anti-British.

AMER:

Voss said Amer was insignificant six months ago, but since then has developed into a real personality. Regarding his appointment as Commander-in-Chief he said he was already that in fact, was the logical man for the job, and was very popular with the Army.

SALAH SALEM:

He characterized Salem as a very clever man.

GRAND MUFTI:

He said we should not exaggerate the importance of the Grand Mufti since the RCC has him pretty well under control.

MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD:

This is the real danger and threat to the RCC which they must meet and fight since the Iqwan's triumph in the power

Page 3 of 4  
Ref No. 1  
Doc No. 2905  
From CAIRO

SECRET SEC INFO

struggle would be a calamity for the West. He made this point over and over again and is apparently convinced that the one serious threat to the Regime is the Brotherhood. They are aided and abetted by the students who either belong to the Brotherhood or are Communists. The Palestinian refugees constitute another such subsidiary element. He said that there are a number of cells of real Communists among the refugees. 4?

#### ANGLO-EGYPTIAN PROBLEM:

Voss stated very forcibly that the RCC will never attack the British in the Canal Zone, not even in the form of guerrilla raids. He implied that he was responsible, in part at least, for this attitude since he said he had warned Naguib and Masir that any such activity would result in an immediate British ultimatum alleging that these activities proved that the Government was incapable of maintaining internal control. He said they both had come to agree with him that this would be the case.

Voss said repeatedly that the RCC must be satisfied on the issue of sovereignty. In this respect they are thinking with their hearts and not their minds. On the subject of technicians, he said Fawzi had told him just a few days ago that the British were thinking in terms of 10 to 20 thousand "soldiers". In this respect Voss seemed to share the Egyptian misconception as to just what constitutes a technician.

He said he had been trying to think of some formula which might enable achievement of a solution, and had suggested one such scheme without success. He was thinking in terms of some sort of international body or corporation with an Egyptian as chairman of the board, but with the UK, the US, the Arab States, Pakistan and India as members of the board.

The Embassy officers then described what they understood to be the British concept of "technician" in terms of technical management. Voss appeared to be interested in these comments and said he would think them over since it was essential to think of some scheme whereby the Egyptians could win a 100 percent public relations victory. This would mean settling for the 90 percent and finding a gimmick to make it appear 100 percent.

#### ARAB LEAGUE SECURITY PACT:

Voss said the RCC thought something could be done through the Security Pact. He said this was a comparatively recent

SECRET SEC INFO

Page 4  
- File No. I  
Disp. No. 2905  
From CAIRO

SECRET SEC INFO

Page No. of  
Disp. No. of  
From

change in their thinking. When he was pinned down, however, he admitted that perhaps there was more emotion than thought behind this belief.

#### THE REPUBLIC:

Voss says the establishment of the Republic is a move in the struggle between the RCC and the Brotherhood and an effective one. THE CABINET CHANGES form a part of the same struggle and we have seen only the beginning. When one of the Embassy officers commented that he hoped they would concentrate on this fight rather than the fight against the British, Voss said there was not a chance since they had to get the British question settled first.

#### EAST BERLIN RIOTS:

Voss was very disturbed at the riots in East Berlin, which he said were repeated elsewhere in the industrial centers of Eastern Germany. The prospect of World War III filled him with horror. He feels that this spontaneous uprising was premature and that thousands of people would be killed by the Russians as a result. He said the Czechs were a cautious people who would not run the risks of such premature demonstrations of opposition until they were sure of success. Their tactics are in the direction of passive resistance, which he could confirm from his experience there during the war. In this connection he estimated that the Czechs now are 12 percent to 15 percent Communists whereas in Eastern Germany the percentage is 2 percent to 4 percent.

Voss mentioned the very bad conditions prevailing in Eastern Germany as compared to the favorable situation in Western Germany. In this respect he seemed to be under no illusions about the Russian regime in the Eastern Zone.

At the end of the discussion, Voss was asked whether he had a Chief of Staff. Voss said he did, whereupon he was told that the Embassy's Army Attache follows closely all military matters and would be happy to cooperate if Voss thought such contact desirable. Voss appeared to take note of this suggestion but gave the impression that for the present at least he preferred to keep contact with the Embassy in his own hands.

SECRET SEC INFO