

176. Editorial Note

On March 4, 1963, during a 70-minute meeting with President Nasser in Cairo, Ambassador Badeau delivered the oral message from President Kennedy contained in Document 175. Badeau also executed instructions contained in telegram 1653 to Cairo, March 3, that he emphasize to Nasser U.S. concern over UAR air attacks on Saudi Arabia and the detrimental implications that continued UAR military involvement in Yemen had on the disengagement process and U.S. Congressional support for economic assistance to the UAR. (Department of State, Central Files, POL 26 YEMEN) Badeau reported on the conversation in telegram 1379 from Cairo, March 5. (Ibid., POL 27 YEMEN) For text, see the Supplement, the compilation on Yemen.

A summary of the highlights of the conversation, prepared in the Department of State for the information of the White House, but not sent, reads as follows:

"1. Yemen

"a. Ambassador Badeau emphasized:

"(1) the tolerance we had displayed toward UAR activities in Yemen;

"(2) our determination to protect our vital interests and uphold the integrity of Saudi Arabia;

"(3) that UAR violations of the Saudi border were prejudicial to the Bunker-Bunche mission and pushing us perilously close to activating our commitments to Saudi Arabia.

"Ambassador Badeau apparently did not put forward our proposal that *the UAR make an initial cut in its forces simultaneously with a temporary Saudi suspension of support to the royalists* as a means of getting a disengagement process started. However President Nasser himself held open the possibility that if the currently stepped-up UAR military offensive to end the situation succeeds *some UAR withdrawal from Yemen might be effected.*

"b. In his reply President Nasser emphasized:

"(1) The bombardments were not intended as deliberate provocation but were an integral and successful element of UAR military strategy;

"(2) Every day of continued Yemen fighting meant loss of UAR lives and as leader of the country he could not escape responsibility;

"(3) That the UAR could not wait another five months for disengagement;

"(4) When Ambassador Badeau underscored the souring political effect of these attacks, Nasser promised, however, to order Marshal Amer to suspend trans-border activities pending the outcome of the Bunche-Bunker efforts which Ambassador Badeau stated would consume about two weeks.