

1. Naguib essentially good, honest, patriotic, loyal, lovable, sincere man but weak. He revelled in acclaim and at times privately disavowed responsibility for unpopular decisions of RCC.

2. RCC was well aware of Naguib's popularity and importance as symbol of new regime and successfully concealed to large degree growing difficulties with President.

3. Decision dispense with Naguib taken with reluctance and full appreciation its potential consequences. Although showdown over locus of power probably inevitable, RCC hoped postpone crisis at least until after Anglo-Egyptian settlement.

4. Naguib forced showdown in belief he could win out. From his point of view situation had probably also become intolerable as his injured vanity was played on by people around him. (His wife reportedly told him on one occasion: "You are nothing but a Fawzi Selo".)

5. RCC now in extremely delicate position because of necessity justify action against Naguib whom they had formerly built up as leader of revolution. Neither Egyptian public nor world at large aware of extent to which Nasir has from beginning planned and guided movement. He lacks Naguib's popular appeal and it will be extremely difficult under the circumstances to convince public of what is obvious to anyone meeting him more intimate circumstances; i.e., that at 36 Nasir is already head and shoulders above Naguib in ability and strength of character (London's 3663, February 25).³

CAFFERY

³ Ambassador Aldrich had reported in telegram 3663, Feb. 25, not printed, that the Foreign Office considered Naguib to be a man of greater stature and depth than Nasir. (641.74/2-2554)

No. 1292

774.06/2-2754: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State*¹

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986. Following is best information so far available regarding events last night:

Around 10 last night, representative of group young cavalry officers went to Nasir to demand reinstatement Naguib. Nasir replied RCC would respect desire free officers from whom RCC derived its powers. Following meeting, Nasir passed word that there was dissatisfaction among cavalry, whereupon free officers took it upon themselves to surround cavalry, barracks and informed officers

¹ Repeated to London as telegram 320 and unnumbered to Paris, Rome, and the Arab capitals.