

## No. 1307

774.00/3-2654: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

CAIRO, March 26, 1954—4 p. m.

1178. Re Embtel 1168. Source close to Nasir says RCC concluded that continuation of ambiguous situation could only redound to their disadvantage and consequently faced Naguib yesterday with choice of sincere collaboration in firm course of action or grant of full freedom for expression of public will. Naguib reportedly offered counterplan for immediate plebiscite on his position as president, RCC to remain as advisors to president under title of "Republican Council".

When Nasir rejected this and insisted on program as subsequently announced Naguib asked: "What are you trying to do, throw me to the lions?" In face of Nasir's threat to make facts public, Naguib finally agreed. Proposal was then carried by vote of 8 to 4 with Gamal Salim, Baghdadi, Hasan Ibrahim and Kamaled Din Husain reportedly voting against. (These favor strong action against Naguib.)

*Comment:* RCC officers apparently committed for present to "wait and see" policy but hopeful forthcoming political melee, from which they will stand aloof, may sully Naguib and party groups and lead to resurgence public sympathy for "clean" revolution leaders. It is not unlikely that RCC prepared seize any favorable opportunity which may present itself for reversal of present trend if it appears important segment of public would approve of such a move.

CAFFERY

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to London as telegram 789 and unnumbered to Paris for Reinhardt, Rome for Maffitt, Bonn for Satterthwaite, the Arab capitals, Tel Aviv, Tripoli, Khartoum, Alexandria, and Valletta for Paddock.