

May 26, 1966

**Report from the Hungarian Embassy in Cario on
Kosygin's visit in the UAR**

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Summary:

This report describes the visit of Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin to the United Arab Republic (UAR) during which he reinforced positive relations with President Nasser and the UAR and discussed the Vietnam War, Sino-Soviet tensions, the Arab World, Israel, and economic concerns.

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STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL!!!!!!!!!!!!!! □□□

Cairo, 26 May 1966 □□□ □□

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EMBASSY OF THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLES'S REPUBLIC □□□TO COMRADE FOREIGN
MINISTER □□□BUDAPEST □□□ □□□ □□□

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Subject : Comrade Kosygin's visit to the United Arab Republic □□□

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Invited by President Nasser, Comrade Kosygin made an official visit to the UAR between 10 and 18 May. Comrade Kosygin was accompanied by foreign minister Gromyko, energy minister Neporozhny, chairman of foreign economic relations council Skarchev, deputy defense minister Groshev and several experts.

It was two years ago that a similarly high-level Soviet delegation visited the UAR, lead by the then prime minister. Since then friendship between the Soviet Union and the UAR has strengthened, economic relations have expanded and development has been steady.

The importance of this visit is underscored by several factors.

- The UAR is making good progress on the way to becoming a non capitalist country. Its domestic policy is showing more and more democratic features and the country is determined to activate its social life. The role and importance of the Arab Socialist Union have become considerably stronger. They took steps against imperialist attempts that aimed at intervening into the internal affairs of the Arab world and the African and Asian countries. All in all, these steps have created favorable conditions for the visit of the Soviet prime minister.

- Since it was his first visit outside the socialist camp, Comrade Kosygin's visit has increased the UAR's reputation and importance in the Arab world and, equally importantly, among the third world countries.

The official bodies did their best to make the Soviet prime minister's visit a success and it can be established that the organization of the event went far beyond what is common over there. All the important representatives of the government participated in the various receptions, led by the vice presidents and Nasser. Comrade Kosygin was greeted by huge crowds upon his arrival and departure in Cairo as well as during his official visits the other parts of the country. These crowds included many workers and young people who belonged to the youth organizations of the Arab Socialist Union. In Asswan four special trains and several trucks were provided to bring the people of the neighboring villages to the assembly to meet the Soviet delegation.

What went far beyond common practice was that the crowds in the street were truly enthusiastic in meeting the delegation and cheering the Soviet-UAR friendship. This shows that even less educated and knowledgeable people know the Soviet Union, its policy and activities.

The press, the radio and the television had presented several reports before the visit as well as during and after the visit, addressing in detail issues related to the Soviet

Union, its role, the relations between the two countries and the economic support the Soviet Union provided for the UAR. The papers published a detailed biography of Comrade Kosygin and his previous positions. Various factories and foreign trade companies published Kosygin's and Nasser's pictures in their own papers to greet the Soviet prime minister. Several political articles were also published which compared the Soviet Union especially with America, evaluating the Soviet Union positively and condemning the other party's activities, especially in that the Soviet Union does not use its economic assistance to intervene into the internal affairs of the country. The articles highlighted several parts of Comrade Kosygin's speeches delivered at various places which were related to the achievements of the past period and the relations between the two countries. In addition, they published several other parts of these speeches in full which addressed the activities of the imperialist countries, enabling a wide range of people to make a parallel between the Soviet Union and the imperialist countries. It must be noted that the press sharply criticized America and its policy on several occasions during the time of the visit.

The two delegations conducted official talks on three occasions during the visit. In addition, Comrade Kosygin had private talks with President Nasser on several occasions in the presence of his interpreter. These talks were also attended by Marshal Amer too. We do not know what topics were discussed during these private negotiations.

The following two key topics were discussed during the negotiations:

a./ International issues, including the Arab world, Africa, Asia, European security, etc.

b./ The relations between the two countries (political and economic cooperation)

The speeches delivered and the joint communiqué details the position of the two parties on the most important issues. As far as the speeches are concerned, it must be noted that Comrade Kosygin made several references in them to the development that the UAR had achieved and stressed the role the Soviet Union had played in the development and the achievements of the country. He made a comparison between the economic assistance provided by the Soviet Union and the economic aid provided by the capitalist countries. In his speech he attached political importance to the conditions under which the western countries would have built the big dam, comparing them to the conditions that the Soviet Union had undertaken. When greeting the Soviet experts working in the country he made it clear that their presence and work in the country were extremely important in the life of the UAR. He stated that the big dam was not only the best school for training specialized workers but, more importantly, the best school for training and educating a "new type" of man. He pointed out that it was a difficult task to train Egyptian experts during the building process who can work efficiently but it was an even more important achievement to create a new type of man who can help the development of the country and preserve its independence by keeping their national identity and by their special qualification.

In his speeches delivered at various places President Nasser expressed his appreciation and gave prominence to the fact that both the relations of the two countries and the current talks were characterized by mutual understanding, equality and mutual benefits. He highly appreciated the support given by the Soviet Union during the revolution and afterwards too. In addition, in one of his public speeches he asked the Soviet Union to continue to support the UAR in the future as well. Comrade Kosygin answered this request in his speech delivered in Alexandria, saying that "the Soviet Union will stand by the UAR in the future too and will take part in the development of the country and in solving its problems, just like in the past." During the negotiations and in their speeches both parties expressed that they were pleased with the results achieved so far and the relations that they had built.

The issues discussed during the negotiations which were not made public included the following:

a./ The Vietnamese issue

Comrade Kosygin made it clear that everybody should take a straightforward and clear position on the Vietnamese issue. The Soviet Union is acting on the basis of the resolution adopted by the 23rd Congress in regard to this issue. He stated that the

relations between the Soviet Union and America had deteriorated because of Vietnam but it would not prevent the Soviet Union from continuing to provide all the support it can for Vietnam. Their position has not changed in this respect and they continue to demand that the Americans should leave Vietnam. He asked the UAR to take a firmer stand on this issue.

b./ The conflict between the Soviet Union and China

Comrade Kosygin explained that the Soviet Union would do its best to improve its relations with China but so far all of their proposals had been rejected. The Soviet Union does not want to conduct an open debate and deepen the conflict. In his view the Chinese will not change their position regarding the Soviet Union because that is the only way in which they can mislead their people and conceal the failure of the Chinese policy. He said that China's influence had increased in Indonesia in the past three years and what had happened there recently was a clear sign of the failure of Chinese policy. He characterized China's policy as adventurist policy.

According to President Nasser recent events suggested that the imperialist aggression had intensified and in his view it was due to the Soviet-Chinese conflict. He stated that progressive forces were in a crisis. He supported this claim by saying that Vietnam, a socialist country had been fighting a war for years and essentially nothing was happening to prevent it. He attributed the crisis of progressive forces to the events in Indonesia, the present situation of the Organization of African Unity and the attack on the African progressive forces. He compared the current situation with the 1956 period when the unity of progressive forces was able to stop the imperialist aggression.

Comrade Kosygin stated that these facts were true but the starting point was not right. We should not be saying that the progressive forces are in crisis because it is not true. In addition, such a statement would weaken the movement of the progressive forces. True, the Vietnamese people have been suffering from a war but it cannot be said that the Vietnamese freedom fight is in crisis since a nation with a much smaller population and much less developed economy has been fighting American imperialism for years. What should be talked about is the real situation of the freedom fight, its current stage. Such a fight is generally characterized by an offensive stage, a stage of gathering strength and sometimes a stage of retreat too. This is the stage that the African progressive forces are in at present but by no means does it suggest that the progressive forces are in crisis. He asked Nasser that if he is talking about a crisis he should also identify who are responsible for it, especially if he believes this crisis is the result of the Soviet-Chinese conflict. President Nasser did not take a stand on this issue publicly and did not condemn the Chinese position but in private talks he said he shared the Soviet position.

c./ The Arab world

1./ The Islam alliance. President Nasser said that the conflicts between the Arab countries had intensified and internal reactionary forces were beginning to cooperate with international reactionary forces against progressive forces. The Islam Pact is a clear sign of this development. The hostile forces are launching their attack in a very delicate area, in the field of religion. He asked the Soviet Union not to criticize the Islam Pact openly because it would only help the reactionary forces if an atheist state took steps against a religious alliance, which they would immediately use for their own purposes. He asked the Soviet Union to use its influence on Turkey and Pakistan to persuade them not to join the Islam Alliance. The Soviet Comrades made a promise to do so.

2./ The Kurdish issue. Both parties agreed that the Kurdish issue should be resolved peacefully. Comrade Kosygin asked President Nasser to use his influence to end the fighting and resolve the differences of opinion by peaceful means. /Since then President Nasser has summoned the Iraqi ambassador./

3./ Syria. Comrade Kosygin outlined why they support and provided an economic loan for Syria. He said it was in the interest of the Soviet Union to maintain good relations with Syria and in his view the current Syrian government was conducting a progressive policy. He also believed it was necessary to create a progressive front in the Arab countries including the UAR, Syrian, Iraq and Algeria so that these countries

could take steps against the reactionary countries in unity. In his view the most important task was to find a form of cooperation in which the UAR and Syrian could work together. President Nasser largely agreed with this but he had reservations regarding a few points. He raised some problems regarding the old confederation as well as the activity of the Baath Party, the difficulties in working together with it, the weaknesses of the current Syrian system as factors that hamper the development of relations between the two countries. /One sign of some progress in the relations between the two countries is the fact that President Nasser had received the permanent Representative of Syria in the Arab League. Currently a Syrian economic delegation is visiting the UAR./

4./ Yemen. The UAR again requested military assistance to help Yemen. The Soviet Union made a plea to continue to provide assistance for Yemen. At the same time, the Soviet comrades asked President Nasser not to launch any attack on Saudi Arabia before having consultations on this issue since any such step could have an impact on the entire region. The UAR agreed with this proposal.

d./ Israel

The Soviet comrades told President Nasser that Israel is not in a position to be able to make a nuclear bomb and launch a nuclear attack against the Arab countries. Therefore, it is not necessary for the UAR to begin nuclear tests or launch a preventive war on Israel. The real danger in the case of a possible war is not Israel. Economic issues

1. The UAR did not request any new loan during the negotiations. They requested postponing the payment of the outstanding installment. The Soviet Union accepted it and agreed to extend the repayment of the military loans and reduce the amount too. /This reduction will be about 50%./

2./ An agreement was made on the exchange rate between the ruble and the Egyptian pound, which was necessary because of the depreciation of the Egyptian pound.

3./ The UAR requested the Soviet Union to supply wheat for the country. The Soviet comrades apologized and said that it was not possible since the Soviet Union was having difficulties in this area. The UAR acknowledged this statement.

The issued communiqué took a stand on all the important international issues. With its principled statements and concrete formulation it surpasses all the communiqués issued before. The following points should be mentioned.

1./ As far as the imperialist policy in the Middle Eastern region is concerned, the Soviet party expressed its intention to support the fight of the Arab nations against the imperialist policy in every possible respect.

2./ The Soviet Union fully supports the legitimate demands and fight of the Palestinian Arab people. /This fact was highlighted in the press./

3./ It was emphasized that the Soviet Union highly appreciates the non-aligned policy of the UAR and the fight it is conducting for the liberation of the African countries.

4./ A separate part of the communiqué is devoted to the aggression on Vietnam and both parties state that they profoundly condemn it.

5./ The UAR expressed its appreciation regarding the Soviet peace policy and especially its fight against imperialist, colonialist countries.

6./ They both attached great importance to general and full disarmament, which can only be ensured by international supervision. To my knowledge, the joint communiqué was submitted by the UAR which the Soviet delegation accepted with some modifications.

Comrade Kosygin's visit to the UAR was a highly significant political event which further strengthened the friendship between the Soviet Union and the UAR. The Soviet Union made another victory and found friends not only among the top leaders but also among the men in the street. In addition, it encouraged the leadership to continue with the course of action they had begun and act more firmly against any forces that hinder progress both inside and outside the country. Both parties are satisfied with the results of the negotiations and discussions, and the favorable atmosphere is also supported by the fact that it was the first occasion that the president and the vice presidents participated in nearly all the events. As time went by, participation in the various events was raised to a higher political level. Originally President Nasser was scheduled to go to Asswan only but plans were changed in the meantime and personally President Nasser accompanies Comrade Kosygin to all the places he visited. This is an important fact. /It was not the case when Comrade Khrushchev visited the country./

The issues presented in this report which were not made public are based on the information received from the Soviet ambassador.

Lajos Benczekovits
chargé d'affaires ad interim