

Abdel Nasser, Gamal. *Speech Addressed to Egyptian Cadets at the Military Academy Graduation Ceremony. 3 March 1955. Translated by The Palestinian Revolution, 2016.*¹

Soldiers,

In the name of God we move forward to fulfill the motto carried by the flag of the Military Academy: Duty, Honor, the Homeland. These are the words with which hearts beat and spirits are filled.

I remember the day on which I stood, just like you today, to graduate from the Academy on 1 July 1937. I felt then that the motto was inscribed upon my heart, my self, my spirit. I sense today that you share the same feeling...

This motto, my brothers, this motto, soldiers, is that of our army. We all worked towards it and as I stand with you today, after several of us were martyred in Palestine last evening, I tell you: we will all work with determination, we will all work faithfully, to uphold our duty, protect our honor, and work for the homeland. In this military academy, and after graduation from it, we aspire to fall for the sake of duty, for the sake of honor, for the sake of the homeland. Your brother Major Mahmoud Sadiq who was martyred yesterday, and your brothers the Egyptian and Palestinian soldiers who were martyred yesterday, were nothing less than a vanguard along this path...

Yesterday, I heard a threat from Israel, and you heard it as well. And I would like to say, on behalf of you all: we are a people that do not forget insults; we do not forget insults at all! But insults increase our perseverance and determination. We were not defeated in 1948, for the Egyptian army did not really fight in 1948. I know this, as I was a member of that army from the first to the last day of the war...

You are not responsible for the farce of 1948. The Egyptian army did not fight then, for it was a victim of backstabbing and treason, a victim of the armistice, a victim of the allies of Israel.

Today my brothers, we are in 1955, and we are in a different position than in 1948. We will never fall prey again to backstabbing and treason. And when

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we defend the homeland we shall do so by depending on our own strength, and not on the Security Council or its decisions.

I remember, brothers, how the Security Council and its decisions helped, how they helped the Jewish forces to achieve their objectives in 1948. I remember 16 October 1948, when the armistice was ongoing, and the Jewish forces launched a perfidious attack on the sixth division site in Iraq al-Manshiya. That day, they suffered a heavy defeat. And after they were able to station their troops elsewhere, the Security Council issued a resolution to stop the fighting and for the Jewish forces to go back to their locations. So what was the outcome? The Jewish forces were able to fortify their positions, and to overcome Egyptian army lines.

Israel was not victorious in 1948, it was the Security Council that helped Israel which was victorious; it was the allies of Israel who entrenched it on this land that were victorious; it was they who had helped erase the Arab national presence in this land.

Today, my brothers, we are in 1955. Today is different than yesterday... The methods that contributed to our defeat in 1948 shall no longer work. I tell them that we shall defend the homeland, and shall aggressively respond to aggression, and the General Commander of the Armed Forces has been entrusted with responding to aggression with aggression.

The Commander of the Armed Forces has also been entrusted with protecting the boundaries of this homeland, and all of Egypt's capacities will be mobilized in this direction...