

FIVE SENTENCED TO LIFE IN CAIRO

CAIRO, AUG 26 REUTER -- FIVE OF 54 PEOPLE ACCUSED OF PLOTTING TO OVERTHROW THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT BY FORCE WERE TODAY SENTENCED TO HARD LABOUR FOR LIFE BY A REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL HERE.

THE FIVE ARE SHAMS BADRAN, FORMER WAR MINISTER, ABBAS RADWAN, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ARAB SOCIALIST UNION- EGYPT'S ONLY POLITICAL ORGANISATION, SALAH NASR, FORMER CHIEF OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, RETIRED LIEUTENANT COLONEL GALAL EL HARIDI AND RETIRED MAJOR GENERAL OSMAN NASSAR.

TWO OTHER DEFENDANTS, LIEUTENANT COLONEL AHMED ABDULLA, A STORM TROOPS OFFICER, AND FLIGHT COLONEL TAHSEEN ZAKI, AN AIR BASE COMMANDER, WERE SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS HARD LABOUR.

THESE SEVEN DEFENDANTS WERE DESCRIBED IN THE INDICTMENT AS THE RINGLEADERS OF THE ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT NASSER LAST AUGUST IN THE WAKE OF THE MIDDLE EAST WAR WITH ISRAEL.

THEY WERE ALSO CHARGED WITH ATTEMPTING TO REINSTATE BY FORCE THE LATE FIELD MARSHAL ABDEL HAKIM AMER AS DEPUTY SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES.

THE INDICTMENT CHARGED THEM WITH TURNING AMER'S HOME INTO AN ARSENAL INTO WHICH THEY SMUGGLED LORRY LOADS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION.

FIELD MARSHAL AMER COMMITTED SUICIDE LAST SEPTEMBER SOON AFTER DISCOVERY OF THE ALLEGED PLOT.

MBW/HI 1230/68 N12