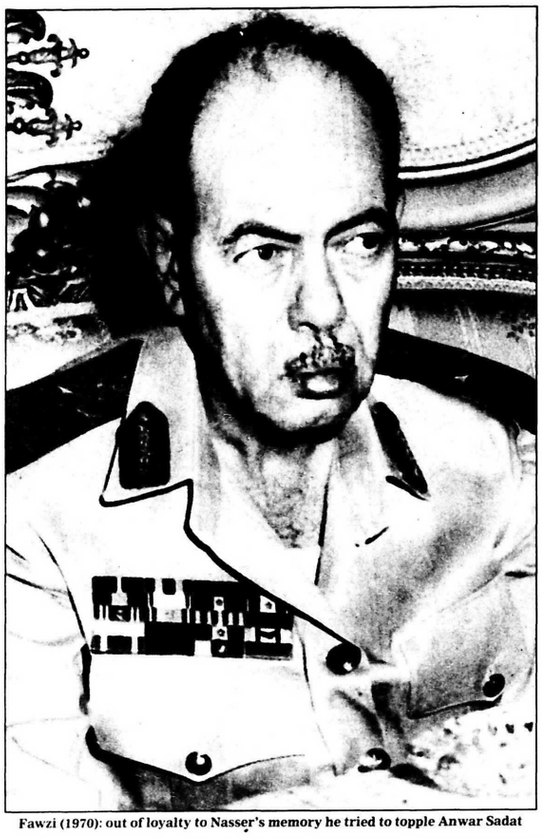
OBITUARIES

General Mohammed Fawzi

Egyptian Defence Minister appointed by Nasser to rebuild the army after its defeat in the Six Day War



Fawzi (1970): out of loyalty to Nasser's memory he tried to topple Anwar Sadat

GENERAL MOHAMMED FAWZI, who has died in Egypt aged 85, was a loyal member of President Nasser's inner circle and the man entrusted with the task of rebuilding the shattered and demoralised Egyptian army in the aftermath of the Six Day War of 1967.

Such was his loyalty to Nasser that when Anwar Sadat became President on Nasser's death in 1970, Fawzi played a pivotal and secret role in planning a military coup that would oust Sadat and return Egypt to what was seen to be a stricter application of Nasser's principles of Arab socialism.

When Sadat uncovered the plot in May 1971, Fawzi and scores of complicit army officers were given lengthy prison sentences, which Sadat in most cases later commuted, in recognition of their earlier military service. Fawzi's career in effective politics was at an end, and he spent the last three decades of his life writing books and lecturing on the military history of the Nasser period.

Mohammed Fawzi was born in 1915 and graduated from the Egyptian Royal Military Academy in 1936. In the 1948 Arab-Israeli war (where he first met Nasser), he commanded an artillery unit and was wounded when a land mine exploded under his vehicle.

Nasser appointed Fawzi Commandant of the Military Academy in 1957. At the same time he served as head of the Joint African Forces, aiding liberation movements on the continent. In March 1964, he was appointed Military Secretary-General of the Arab League.

In 1962 he commanded Egyptian forces in the Yemen civil war, the struggle between Saudi-backed royalist tribes and Egyptian-supported republican revolutionaries in what became North Yemen.

As war with Israel approached, in 1966 Fawzi co-ordinated with Syria, represented by Major-General Hafez al-Assad, the plans for a joint Egyptian-Syrian military deployment. This alliance expanded into a military coalition including the armies of all the Arab countries surrounding Israel.

As chief of staff of the army during the Six Day War of June 1967, Fawzi was third in command of the combined Arab forces that Israel routed. The political consequences of that outcome are still the dominant fact of Israel's relations with her neighbours.

In one of the books he later wrote, Fawzi recalled the dismay with which he received the orders of his military superior, the Defence Minister Field Marshal Abd al-Hakim Amer, which were based on a wildly unrealistic estimate of Egyptian capabilities.

Within days of the defeat, after submitting and then withdrawing his resignation as President, Nasser sacked Amer. Indignant at being blamed for the defeat, Amer refused to resign and held out in his Cairo villa with a force of hundreds of loyal soldiers to protect him. To Nasser, who at this time slept with a pistol beside him, this looked like the makings of a coup.

Nasser charged Fawzi with quelling the revolt, and Fawzi led the military force that surrounded the villa, with the object of arresting Amer. Before he could be seized, Amer swallowed a dose of cyanide, but was given medical treatment before the poison could kill him. Fawzi and his deputy were later ordered to hold Amer in custody, but a second attempt at suicide proved successful. Amer's death was a murky episode, provoking lingering suspicions of official murder.

On June 22 1967, less than two weeks after the end of hostilities, Fawzi was appointed General Commander of the Armed Forces and in January 1968 he became Defence Minister, a promotion that took place amid a general purge of the upper ranks of the Egyptian armed forces. A feared disciplinarian, he was put in charge of restoring morale and discipline in the army, and preparing it for a sequel to the Six Day War in which Egypt would reclaim the Sinai peninsula which it had lost to Israel.

In the meantime, in the two years following the June conflict, he led the "war of attrition" — the intermittent clashes with Israeli forces that took place along the banks of the Suez Canal.

Fawzi remained hawkish about Egypt's prospects in a further war with Israel. Judging the Israeli army to be unsuited to protracted fighting, he envisaged a savage and drawn out conflict, with the aim of killing the largest possible number of Israeli troops.

When Nasser died in 1970, Fawzi was among the group at his bedside. His veneration of Nasser made him suspicious of his successor, Anwar Sadat, and Fawzi and like-minded Nasserites became a fifth column inside Sadat's government.

In May 1971, the Nasserites' plan to seize power from Sadat was discovered. Fawzi and his associates had even engaged a medium to consult Nasser's spirit for advice on the timing of the coup.

Sadat's reaction was to remove the Nasserites from positions of power and to reorientate Egypt away from Moscow and towards Washington. Fawzi's life sentence was commuted to 15 years' hard labour, but he was pardoned in 1974. He then joined the opposition Arab Nasserite Democratic Party and became a member of its political bureau.

Fawzi was married and had two sons and four daughters.

Peter Ware

Engineer who led the team which designed the Hillman Imp

PETER WARE, who has died aged 81, oversaw the development of the Hillman Imp, the Hillman Hunter and the Avenger when he was chief executive engineer of the Rootes Group, from 1958 to 1966.

The Imp was Rootes' response to the Mini — something of a pet project for the Rootes family, who deemed it essential to be able to fight back at BMC. The car was in many ways very advanced. Its rear-mounted aluminium overhead camshaft engine was light and compact; its handling was refined, and some of its features — large doors, low drag coefficient, rear hatch, and light, ergonomically-located controls — looked forward to the successful hatchback cars of the 1970s.

Unfortunately, political expediency meant that the plant built for the car's manufacture was sited at Linwood, in Scotland, many miles from Rootes's main factories in the West Midlands. Poor industrial relations plagued the Imp's production schedules, and over-ambitious launch dates meant that the car was on the market before all the development problems had been ironed out. In consequence, the Imp proved unreliable.

Although it was widely recognised by motoring commentators as an excellent technical design, the Imp never reached its full potential as a forceful challenge to the Mini.

Ware's engineering team went on to give valiant support to Rootes' ambitious strategy of offering a wide range of models — from small cars to large Humber saloons, from Sunbeam sports cars to Commer commercial vehicles.

Ware oversaw the development of the popular mass-production Hillman Hunter and Avenger saloons, as well as the Sunbeam Alpine sports car and its celebrated big sister, the Sunbeam Tiger. It was a difficult time for Ware, who did not always approve the unprecedented rate at which new and upgraded models were being turned out. His judgment was vindicated, and the insistence on variety was abandoned.

Peter George Ware was born on May 14 1918. His father, Sydney Ware, patented one of the first successful carburettors; his grandfather and great-grandfather had been plantsmen, based firstly at Tottenham and later at Barrow Castle in Somerset. Peter was just four when his father died as the result of a motor accident while testing a Straker Squire racing car.

Aged 13 he joined the Royal Navy as a cadet at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Although the restrictive life there did not suit his creative temperament, he successfully passed out before going on to the Royal Naval Engineering College at Keyham.

Ware: talent for invention

After a brief spell as an engineering officer, he was invalided out of the Navy in 1938 with TB. But by the time the war broke out in 1939, he was well enough to volunteer to join up again.

Towards the end of the year, he was serving in a poorly-armed merchant cruiser which played a dangerous game of cat and mouse with the German pocket battleship *Graf Spey*. But then his TB recurred, and he was invalided out of the Navy a second time.

On recovery, he joined Sir Roy Fedden at the Bristol Aeroplane Company, where he demonstrated his engineering brilliance by designing changes to the Hercules radial engine which brought about a radical improvement in its performance, greatly to the benefit of Britain's bomber forces.

When Fedden was made special technical adviser to the Minister of Aircraft Production, Sir Stafford Cripps, in 1943, Ware went to Whitehall with him and was appointed technical secretary to the Motor Torpedo Boat committee. His principal task was to set about improving MTB performance.

With the return of peace, Ware joined Fedden's engineering development company, Roy Fedden Ltd, which specialised in new products for the British motor and aviation industry. When the company was wound up in the late 1940s, Ware farmed for a time in Somerset, and worked on developing garden machinery.

He returned to industry in the early 1950s, working successively for Leyland, Dowty and CAV, mostly on fuel injection systems and diesel engines.

When he joined Rootes in 1958, he found a marketing-led company with an under-developed engineering capability. Briefed by the Rootes family to strengthen the group's engineering side, he set about the task with great determination, recruiting talented engineers and installing the necessary test facilities.

He believed passionately in the need for Britain to have a strong motor industry. For four years he was chairman of the Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA), where he vigorously championed such safety measures as the fitting of seat-belts in cars as standard equipment. He also fought off attempts by Government and other motor companies to take over MIRA, insisting on its independence.

In the aftermath of Chrysler's acquisition of Rootes in the mid-1960s, the application of American management styles and techniques created an atmosphere which Ware found increasingly uncongenial. In 1966, he left to join Dunlop, where he turned the Wheel Division into a highly profitable part of the Dunlop Group.

He also led the development at Dunlop of the Thermimax gas burner — one of the first high-intensity natural gas burners — and enhanced a range of the company's industrial products. Among these were the Maxarret anti-skid braking device for articulated vehicles, the Speedway people conveyor system (widely used at airports), and the Kestrel air suspension seat.

After retiring from Dunlop in 1977, he continued to work as a consultant engineer. In his spare time, he enjoyed making wine and tending his fine garden in Dorset. He always retained a keen sense of humour and delighted in the ridiculous.

Peter Ware combined an unusual mix of instinctive engineering ability, artistic talent and skill in administration. He was also far-sighted, forecasting, for instance, in 1953, the huge increase in the use of light-weight turbo-charged diesel engines for lorries.

He married, in 1952, Margaret Lancelyn Green; they had two sons and a daughter.

Our cheeky Imps.

A 1960s advertisement for the Imp, intended to be Rootes' answer to the Mini

David Gledhill

Hong Kong taipan who steered Swires through choppy waters in the run-up to the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997

DAVID GLEDHILL, who has died aged 65, was taipan of John Swire & Sons, the Hong Kong trading group.

Gledhill was a shy man who maintained a very low profile by comparison with Hong Kong's more flamboyant business leaders. But he combined formidable intellect with quiet entrepreneurial flair, and enjoyed the complete trust of Swires' London-based family owners.

Though his own special expertise was on the shipping side of the business, he was a long-serving head of the group's property and offshore oil interests. As chairman from 1988 to 1992 of Swires' Hong Kong holding company and of its Cathay Pacific Airways subsidiary — and thereby custodian of a significant chunk of the Hong Kong economy — he steered the group through turbulent markets and political uncertainties, maintaining good relations with China.

Unusually for a taipan, Gledhill chose to remain in Hong Kong after his retirement from Swires. He was passionately interested in the future of the territory but, like many senior expatriate businessmen, was inclined to be critical of Governor Chris Patten's pro-democratic reforms.

He served on the consultative committee for the Basic Law — China's constitutional framework for Hong Kong as a special administrative region of the People's Republic after the 1997 handover — and brought his aviation experience to bear as a leading member of the Provisional Airport Authority, responsible for the construction of the new international airport at Chek Lap Kok.

David Anthony Gledhill was born in Karachi on October 16 1934 and educated at Ellesmere College and Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where he read Economics. After a National Service commission in the Royal Artillery he joined Swires in 1958.

In 1963 he became the company's shipping manager in Japan, where he was quick to see the potential for containerisation, then a revolutionary development in shipping. He returned to Hong Kong to become a director of Swires in 1973, and was chairman of Modern Terminals, the group's container port venture, from 1981 to 1994.

As chairman of Swire Properties, he oversaw the development of Pacific Place, one of Hong Kong's most prestigious office and hotel complexes; as chairman of Cathay Pacific, he concerned himself in key investment decisions, such as the airline's switch from Boeings to Airbuses.

But shipping remained his first interest, and throughout his later career he presided over an informal Friday curry lunch at which he kept up with the gossip from his shipping colleagues.

Gledhill was also a director of the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank, the Mass Transit Railway and numerous other Hong Kong businesses, a supervisory board member of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and an adviser to IBM. He was a member of Hong Kong's Securities & Futures Commission, chairman of its Sports Development Board and a local magistrate.

He was appointed CBE in 1992.

Gledhill married, in 1968, Kyoko Takeuchi, who survives him.

Auberon Waugh

WAY OF THE WORLD

Believing in God

EVERYTHING I hear about Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, the newly appointed Archbishop of Westminster, makes me think he is a thoroughly good egg, and how clever it was of the Catholic hierarchy to choose him rather than a younger man. The fifth son of a Reading GP, he is an admirer of Gilbert and Sullivan who was noted as a young priest in Rome for his enjoyment of the occasional bottle of Frascati and a smoke.

People identify the chief problem of his job as falling church attendances, but I think they are wrong. The chief problem is a declining belief in God. One may doubt whether a return to beautifully sung Latin with incense and all the rest of it would attract more people than it would dismay in present conditions, and it would require an enormous amount of effort. The important thing at a time of declining belief in God, is for the Catholic church to survive. Church attendance is not necessary for people to think of themselves as Catholic and support Catholic causes. In some cases, it may even be a hindrance.

Compulsory church attendance, like avoidance of meat on Fridays and, to a large extent, the ban on artificial contraception have been quietly downgraded in the scheme of things. Modern zealots do their best to turn ordinary, easygoing Catholics away, but feelings of loyalty and affection remain.

I think the new Archbishop understands this, and hope he does not allow himself to be dragged into the present obsession with sex, which need have little to do with religion, and for which religion will always be a poor substitute.

Sex seems to be Doctor Carey's problem. Perhaps because he is the son of a hospital porter he sometimes confuses his own doctorate of philosophy with the medical variety, warning students at the University of Essex that the "sins of deceit and betrayal" involved in adultery are often "infectious". Tabloid newspapers will have been delighted to learn they have a duty to expose the private lives of politicians, and there are duller things to read about than political sex scandals, but I still think that medicine and religion should be kept apart. It might help if clergymen refrained from calling themselves "doctor".

Meanwhile, we are given to understand that the Queen very much wants Doctor Carey to stay on after his 65th birthday in November. I don't know why she wants this or how people know it. We must all agree that anyone younger would almost certainly be worse.

Try the underclass

AN interesting article in the current *New Statesman* traces Labour's obsession with football to the influx of middle class Labour MPs who wished to ingratiate themselves with their working class supporters. Previous giants such as Keir Hardie and Nye Bevan had no time for the game at all, seeing it as a rival to politics; and it was only under Hugh Gaitskell that the Oxbridge football enthusiasts started to emerge: Foot, Crosland, Mallalieu and finally Wilson himself.

"A public passion for football gave Labourites a working class identity just as the real sources of radical politics were drying up," writes Mark Hayhurst, illustrating the point with extraordinary quotations from Jack Straw, David Blunkett, Tony Banks and others.

Football would appear to occupy about the same position in Mr Blair's appeal to the voters as saving the pound has come to represent for poor Mr Hague. But whereas the pound remains its old inanimate self, the image of English football has changed unrecognisably in recent months. Far from being the recreation of our wonderful, respectable working class, it has become the battleground for rival gangs of noisy, drunken louts, the dreaded British underclass, who give our country such a bad name.

Is it by their association with these people that Labour leaders hope to win our confidence and respect? Football is not nearly such a popular game as they suppose. A substantial minority loathes everything to do with it, and the majority is apathetic. If politicians seriously want to endear themselves to the rest of us, they might take an interest in tennis.

Errors of judgment

EVERYTHING about the new Archbishop of Westminster seems almost too good to be true — he has not even claimed to admire the English football team, so far as I know — but I was disappointed to learn that he kept a fat volume of T S Eliot's poems above his desk.

There need be nothing morally objectionable in this. Eliot was capable of some good jokes and sharp observation amid all the obscurantism and showing off. Some of my friends claim to enjoy him; they argue that no poet writing in the modern idiom has been any better.

All this is true, but by displaying Eliot in this way, a man makes a statement about himself; that he hopes to be thought clever, well-educated and reasonably modern. In fact, he is more likely to be proclaiming himself unadventurous, insecure and intellectually inert. I would respect a Catholic archbishop much more who displayed Betjeman.

Perhaps we should put it down to his age. Bishop Murphy-O'Connor is 67, and when he was a young man it was definitely considered smart to pretend to enjoy Eliot. We should not mock him for failing to follow the fashion. In exactly the same way, it was considered smart to admire the IRA in the 1960s, when John Lennon was apparently giving them money. We shall never know whether the money helped them murder a few extra Britons. It was a long time ago, and we all make errors of judgment when we are young.

CHESS

Easy for Adams

By Malcolm Pein

THE challenge match between Michael Adams and Yasser Seirawan ended in a 5-3 victory for the England No1. The contest, played at the Hamilton Princess Hotel, Bermuda, was originally planned to be of 10 games duration but the players' participation in the Kasparov Chess Online Grand Prix delayed proceedings and let to a curtailment.

Adams scored two early wins with white and led 3·5-1·5 as due to be the halfway stage when the Kasparov Chess Grand Prix intervened. After the exertions of internet chess, Adams coasted home with three draws.

With black, Adams twice defended with the Nimzo-Indian Defence and never looked in any difficulty.

G Kasparov — J Piket
KC GP 60' (4.1)
Ruy Lopez

1 e4	e5	2 Nf3	Nc6
3 Bb5	a6	4 Ba4	Nf6
5 0-0	Be7	6 Re1	b5
7 Bb3	d6	8 c3	0-0
9 h3	Na5	10 Bc2	c5
11 d4	Qc7	12 Nbd2	Bd7
13 Nf1	cxd4	14 cxd4	Rac8
15 Ne3	Nc6	16 d5	Nb4
17 Bb1	a5	18 a3	Na6
19 b4	Ra8	20 Bd2	Rfc8
21 Bd3	Qb7	22 g4	g6
23 Nf1	axb4	24 axb4	Bd8
25 Ng3	Nc7	26 Qe2	Rxa1
27 Rxa1	Ra8	28 Qe1	Nfe8
29 Qc1	Ng7	30 Rxa8	Qxa8
31 Bh6	Nce8	32 Qb2	Qa4
33 Kg2	Bb6	34 Bc2	Qa7
35 Bd3	Qa4	36 Ne2	Nc7
37 Nxe5	dxe5	38 Qxe5	Nce8
39 Bxg7	Qd1	40 Bh6	Qxd3
41 Qe7	Ng7	42 Ng3	Qc2
43 Qf6	Nf5	44 Qxb6	Nh4+
45 Kh2	Nf3+	46 Kg2	Nh4+
47 Kh2	Nf3+	48 Kg2	Nh4+
49 Kh2	draw		

The Deloitte and Touche Jersey International Chess Festival has begun at the Hotel de Normandie. The prize fund of £7,000 has attracted 92 players.

The top seed is the Swedish GM Tiger Hillarp-Persson who stormed away with the event last year scoring a perfect 7/7. He is up against three English GMs — James Plaskett, Chris Ward and Aaron Summerscale. After two rounds, Hillarp-Persson, Ward and Plaskett have 2/2 and Summerscale, who took a half point bye in the first round, has 1·5.

The remarkable first game from the Kasparov Grand Prix final. White's threats look formidable but the counter sacrifice 43...Nf5! forces a draw:

Piket

Kasparov

Position after white played 49.Kh2

"General Mohammed Fawzi." Daily Telegraph, 23 Feb. 2000, p. 31. The Telegraph Historical Archive, link.gale.com/apps/doc/IO0700428635/TGRH?u=tou&sid=bookmark-TGRH. Accessed 8 July 2024.