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On September 28, 1970, Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir died and the Arab world went into a state of shock. Nasir had expended what last strength he could muster to mediate a settlement of the civil war in Jordan between King Husayn and Palestinian guerrillas. Less than twenty-four hours after arranging a cease-fire, the Egyptian President collapsed. Outstanding among the displays of grief were those of two longtime Nasir associates, Ali Sabri and Anwar Sadat. According to al-Ahram, Sabri, the man most likely to emerge as Nasir's successor, and Sadat, the fifty-two year old interim president, both suffered mild heart attacks during Nasir's funeral. Yet, four days later, on October 5, the Higher Executive Committee of Egypt's only political party -- the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) -- unanimously recommended Sadat be appointed the second president of the Egyptian republic.

Sadat was sworn in on October 17, as head of a government which was virtually identical to that of his predecessor. His nomination was as surprising to outside observers as the smoothness of transition in a political system which seemed destined, with the passing of its founder, to erupt into a bitter power struggle.

Sadat was selected to fill the vacuum left by the death of Nasir ostensibly because he was a moderate in the midst of a divided political elite. Preferring themselves to remain in the background, the political aristocracy turned to Sadat, pegging him as a man who, grateful for his exalted position, would follow their orders. Internationally as well, until October 1973, Sadat was seen in most quarters as extremely arrogant, but weak-willed and inconsistent -- precariously walking a political tightrope, bending in every conceivable
direction, striving to maintain his balance.

By the close of 1973, Sadat had emerged as his own man from the shadows of Nasir and Nasirist Egypt. For three years Sadat struggled to win political power at home and simultaneously, to do what every prominent Arab leader needed to do to survive -- to carry out "the battle" against Israel. The power he secured both through brutality and benevolence. In the final analysis, however, lasting political livelihood was won only by waging war. War came to pass after three years of empty threats, which gained Sadat the reputation, at home and abroad, of an impotent firebrand. Thrust into a role for which he had not been groomed, Sadat displayed both a remarkable instinct for leadership and an equally significant naivete of world affairs and diplomacy. On a number of important occasions, judgemental errors put Sadat in positions where his career was threatened. But political intuition -- a sense of when to act with severity and when to acquiesce -- kept him in power for three years, during which he established himself as a legitimate successor to Nasir. Interim events were crucial in cementing his consolidation of power, but it was the October War which set the stage for international recognition and personal triumph.
Discussion of the first years of Sadat's presidency must begin by considering the legacy of Nasir. Sadat justifiably chronicles his career as a search for identity. From revolutionary conspirator to vice-president, he, like all others, had been totally dominated by Nasir. As Nasir's successor, Sadat, more than ever, found himself living in the shadow of a legend. Yet it was a legend which in the last years of Nasir's life had become tarnished. Distraught with defeat in 1967, Nasir had become obsessed with revenge. He initially considered resignation, but an outpouring of public support persuaded him to persevere. He subsequently shifted blame for the debacle onto members of the military. Many of his closest associates were arrested or discredited as scapegoats for his own political and military miscalculations. Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal, editor of Al-Ahram and confidant of both Nasir and Sadat, describes the resulting political climate:

Nasir's regime had two aspects: it had great achievements to its credit but also it had a repressive side. I do not myself believe the achievements...could have been carried out without some degree of enforcement. But after the 1967 defeat the positive achievements came to an end, because all resources were geared to the coming battle, while repression became more obvious.

Sadat defines Nasir's legacy as a "mountain of hatred -- the spirit of hate which was emanated in every direction and at every level, to the smallest family unit." Ironically, the man who had turned the losses of 1956 into a political landslide and the foundation of pan-Arab leadership was brought down by another military defeat, fourteen
years later. The additional humiliation of the Israeli offensive in his War of Attrition during 1969-1970 left Nasir sick and broken, aware that his plane had crumbled.  

Sadat not only inherited, but was the product of an irreconcilably divided political community. The left -- quasi-Marxist, aligned in spirit with the Soviet Union (the Egyptian Communist had voluntarily dissolved and joined the ASU in 1965) -- favored an increasingly nationalized economy, breaking the power of capitalists, and creating a party structure within the ASU similar to the Soviets, which would control ultimate power in the state. The right was more open to the West, supported freer enterprise and greater parliamentary power. The leftists were the true descendants of Nasirism, yet Nasir thwarted their every attempt to form an independent power base. Nasir owned both factions and juggled them to suit his political needs.  

The dominant politician of the left, and probably all Egypt, was Ali Sabri. Sabri's checkered career of gaining and losing favor illustrates the rigid control which Nasir exercised; his eternal maneuvering for power foreshadowed the threatened position in which Sadat would soon find himself. As Secretary-General of the ASU, under Nasir, Sabri worked toward developing local cadres as independent power bases and purging bourgeois elements from the party. Eventually he pushed Nasir to the limit. Although recognized as the President's right-hand man, Nasir dumped Sabri and only later, at the behest of the Soviet Union, was he re-admitted into the government. With a power struggle brewing, Sabri gathered around him many of Nasir's primary underlings -- men of high standing in the military, internal security apparatus, and politics. Within the ASU executive committee the coalition was strong
enough to determine the next president and Sabri seemed the obvious choice. Yet, not wishing to exacerbate the left-right rift (some claimed it was because Sabri was "hated by the masses," and sensing that their purposes were best served by a figurehead, Sabri and his allies chose not one of their own, but Sadat.⁵

Sadat’s appointment, in this framework, appears a shrewd choice. A longtime associate of Nasir’s, one of the Free Officers who seized power in 1952 and abolished the monarchy, he had never stood in the limelight. He was known as the author of the popular *Revolts on the Nile*, an account of the revolution; at the same time the story of how he, in fact, missed the takeover -- having taken his family to the movies -- was a well-known anecdote. Once a firebrand who called for terrorism against the British and who was arrested for collaborating with the Nazis, Sadat survived in Egyptian politics through unwavering loyalty to Nasir. It was this seemingly passive loyalty which earned him the reputation of one who was rewarded "not with power, but with longevity," and which was read by Sabri and his cohorts as weakness of character and political opportunism.⁶

The speed with which Sadat was appointed indicates that underlying the facade of order was a great deal of political stress. By subduing personal desires and swiftly throwing support to Sadat, members of the left were able to act as a united front and foreclosed any attempt by the right-wing to claim a role in governing. The rightists, behind the leadership of Zakariya Muhyi al-Din, Kamal al-Din Husayn, and 'Abd al-Latif Baghdadi -- all close to Nasir at one time, having been Free Officers -- did make a discreet play for power after Sadat’s appointment. The three approached the new president with a series of
radical proposals: 1) the creation of an open political system with at least one legal opposition party, 2) a new constitution whose drafting would be overseen not by the ASU but by an independent organization, 3) an independent judiciary, 4) a free press, 5) government by collective authority. The new government was reportedly unnerved and enacted stringent security measures. Proclaiming that "deviance from Nasserism" would not be tolerated, the government arrested more than 200 political opponents. 7

Although he was forced constantly to contend with factional rivalries and political squabbles, Sadat's immediate preoccupation as president was foreign affairs. On October 7, two months after its inception, the first cease-fire of the War of Attrition expired. The termination of fighting was the result of a diplomatic campaign by U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers in late July 1970. Nasir had accepted Rogers' plan on July 23 and Israel reluctantly agreed eight days later. To secure Israeli participation, the United States promised Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir substantial aid and imposed a sanction freezing the military status or territory within a zone fifty miles east or west of the cease-fire line. 8 Hopes were raised at the possibility of peace negotiations, but by August 11, one week after fighting ended, tensions began escalating. Israel charged Egypt with violating the stand-still agreement, by deploying new SAM (surface-to-air) missile sites, and the United States remained silent until, faced with overwhelming evidence, it supported the Israeli claim. The Israelis, desiring the cease-fire's continuation, were persuaded to tone down their complaints, but a stalemate ensued, Egypt refusing to concede any wrong-doing. Finally on November 4 Sadat agreed to a three month ex-
tension. One month into office, he was in no position to resume hos-
tilities. Nevertheless, in October Sadat explained, "if we accept
another cease-fire it will only be for one period and I will not ac-
cept another one." Declaring the winter to be a period of military re-
entrenchment Sadat, in what was the first of a long series of threats,
promised a resumption of hostilities.10

Sadat’s efforts to achieve a smooth transition were re-af-
fered in late December when relations with the Soviet Union were re-affirmed. 
The Soviets had been apprehensive upon Nasir’s death, Kremlin leader-
ship feared a new regime might renew the war in a reckless bid for
popularity. On December 20, Ali Sabri led a major diplomatic mission
to Moscow. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister Mahmud Piyad, Min-
ister of Industry ’Aziz Sidqi, and War Minister Muhammad Fawzi. The
visit’s outcome was a restatement of friendship and plans for increased
Soviet economic assistance. On January 13, 1971, Soviet President
Nikolai Podgorny arrived in Cairo for the official opening of the As-
tan Dam. Speaking at the site of the first Soviet-Egyptian cooperative
project, Podgorny announced his government’s intention to support two
new economic drives — land reclamation and electrification of rural
areas.11

The significance of the Russian commitment is that it coincided
with the first glimpses of Sadat’s tendency to act independently. The
one cabinet appointee who was not of the Sabri faction was Prime Min-
ister Mahmud Fawzi (not to be confused with General Muhammad Fawzi,
the war minister.) A right-winger and veteran diplomat, whose career
spanned both the Nasir regime and the Faruq monarchy, Fawzi was a
shrewd choice, for he was widely respected. As the first prime min-
ister without a military background, Fawzi emphasized socio-economic development. The new government moved to help the poor by lowering the prices of many staples. More importantly, Sadat and Fawzi set out to woo the bourgeoisie. In December Sadat ordered the dismissal of all pending cases concerning sequestration of private property and the return of all land seized illegally and/or arbitrarily. In addition, many political prisoners, including those recently jailed, were released.12

Sadat's independent streak soon carried over into his developing diplomatic scheme. His shift toward the United States was not unprecedented; Nasir had accepted the Rogers Plan in order to reach a cease-fire. But Nasir died soon afterwards and it is therefore difficult to assess the extent to which his attitudes had changed. In general, it is apparent he had abandoned hope for a successful war and accepted a policy in which the United States would be convinced to exert pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territory.13 Whether Nasir foresaw or sought a lasting peace is undeterminable; whether he could have freely pursued such ends is doubtful. Nasir's reputation as a pan-Arabist, his ties to the U.S.S.R., and his own militaristic propaganda prohibited such a dramatic turnabout. Sadat, on the other hand, was not bound by ideology or commitment. He had opposed the cease-fire in July. Now as president he embraced Nasir's recent shift and formed from it a radically new Egyptian foreign policy.

On February 4, 1971, Sadat announced a proposal for an interim agreement in Sinai, based on his re-opening the Suez Canal to international shipping, including Israeli. Despite the combined efforts of Rogers and United Nations special envoy Gunnar Jarring, no noteworthy
progress had been made since November. American efforts to ease the Israeli position had succeeded in persuading the Meir government to drop its insistence on face-to-face talks, but not to abandon its commitment to unconditional negotiations. The Egyptian stance appeared more flexible and was influenced by Rogers' claim that he had been instrumental in loosening the Israeli position. Specifically, Sadat proposed an Israeli retreat two-thirds of the way across Sinai, after which he would open the canal within six months and allow the occupation of Sharm al-Shaykh by international forces to safeguard freedom of navigation. 14

No breakthrough was achieved -- the Israelis rejected the concept of interim agreement -- but the initiative is a significant step in Sadat's developing policy. The U.S. saw it as an extremely positive gesture and Rogers struggled to convince Meir to accept. In April the United States promised Israel twelve Phantom F-4 jets as inducement, but the canal proposal was soon buried. Sadat, however, had made great strides towards friendly relations with the Nixon government, an administration which had always been seen by Arabs as solidly pro-Israel. A serious rift between Washington and Jerusalem developed in the aftermath of the canal initiative. Rogers, by asserting that security guarantees "do not necessarily require the acquisition of territory," and suggesting as an alternative a permanent international peace-keeping force, challenged the Israeli contention that "no guarantees of any kind can be regarded as a substitute for defensible boundaries that we can defend by ourselves." This falling out inspired the belief in Egypt that the United States could be influenced to pressure Israel and became the basis of Sadat's continued communication with Rogers,
whom he invited to visit Cairo in early May.\textsuperscript{15}

The Securing of Power

By late spring, 1971, Sadat and the Sabri faction were embroiled in a power struggle which made coexistence intolerable. The rift was inevitable; Sadat was fast emerging as his own man, a politician whose sense of leadership had been greatly underestimated. He and the "mafia" (as the Sabri contingent came to be called) clashed from the outset over the continued cooperation with the United States and especially over the canal initiative. The struggle reached a crisis stage over Sadat's proposal for union with Libya. Libya, as a major oil producer, had much to offer Egypt economically. Sabri, however, perceiving a major turn away from the Soviet Union and deservedly distrust ing the fanatically anti-Communist Libyan ruler, Colonel Mu' ammar Qaddafi, challenged the political wisdom of federation. When Sadat announced his definite commitment to the proposition, on April 17, Sabri began preparing for a final showdown.

Sabri's attempt to bludgeon Sadat resulted in utter defeat. In a stormy meeting of the ASU Higher Executive Committee on April 25, federation was overruled 5-3, as was Sadat's bid to bring the motion before the ASU Central Committee.\textsuperscript{16} Rather than force his concession, the challenge strengthened Sadat's resolve to act quickly and pre-empt any further moves his opponents might take. On May 1 Sadat spoke of his determination to liquidate the "centres of power."\textsuperscript{17} The following day Sabri was dismissed and placed under house arrest. Observers
speculated that Sadat's action was a gesture to the United States; others isolated the issue of federation. What was really in contention was the true leadership of the country.

A massive purge of Sadat's political enemies followed. After ousting Sabri, Sadat continued his campaign against the "centre," declaring:

No individual or group, no matter what this individual may be, is entitled to claim any authority separate from that of the people, or to claim a position from which to impose opinions on the people, or to adopt a disguise under slogans or to maneuver to create a position of influence from which to dictate to the people.

Sadat apparently was acting alone; on May 5 he met with his cabinet, undoubtedly to clarify his stance. On May 12 he re-emphasized his position in a speech to troops in the canal zone and later met with senior officers. On May 13 the tenuous calm was shattered. Responding to the arrests of Interior Minister Sha'rawi Gum'ah and Minister of State Sami Sharaf -- the two most powerful men in the internal security structure -- eight prominent cabinet members resigned. These included Sabri's primary cohorts: General Fawzi, Muhammad Fa'iq, Minister of Information; 'Abd al-Muhsin 'Abd al-Nur, ASU Secretary General; Labib Shuqayr, Speaker of the National Assembly; Ahmed Kamel, Chief of Intelligence. The next day Sadat announced that a coup had been foiled and had them all arrested.

The 'mafia' had reportedly conspired to block passage of the merger, and having failed to daunt Sadat, began planning a coup d'état, following the heated confrontations in April. At that stage the timing was left open, dependent on Sadat's taking the political offensive.
Upon Sabri's ouster the critical point had been reached and May 13 was selected. Before they could act, Sadat was alerted by a loyal police officer, who handed over to the president tape recordings implicating the conspirators. A search of homes and offices uncovered hundreds of tapes in the possession of Gum'ah and Sharaf -- wiretaps and recorded conversations -- along with documents and speeches prepared for use during and after the takeover.

In August 1971, ninety-one politicians and government officials were tried for treason by a special revolutionary tribunal. The government's case was a thorough indictment, politically and morally, of Nasir's closest political associates. In addition to treason, the defendants were charged with myriad acts of personal corruption -- embezzlement, graft, customs evasion misuse of government property, favoritism, perversion -- and had their characters ridiculed for seeking political advice from a medium. As accused ringleaders, Sabri and Sharaf were tried on additional counts of "abuse of power." Fawzi, being in the military, was tried separately, for plotting to overthrow the government and for resigning during a state of war. He was accused of attempting to administer a personal loyalty oath to his officers and of propagandizing against Sadat in the ranks.

The validity of the government case is impossible to determine. The trial was closed to the public, reputedly so as not to reveal state secrets to Israel. What testimony was released to the press -- the account of Ahmed Kamel testifying against his co-defendants was widely circulated -- is by nature suspect. Much of the case revolved around written government transcripts of the tapes found in the possession of the conspirators, and subsequently destroyed. One tape played in the
courtroom, revealing nothing more than Gum'ah and Sharaf's gimmicks to hold the ASU executive to its anti-union vote, was unintelligible and malfunctioned. It is certainly possible that Sadat trumped up the story of a military coup and staged such a dramatic trial to insure public support for his purge. What is clear is that, behind closed doors, the impetus for political revolt did exist and that, although it may not have led to military action, the momentum to depose Sadat was growing.

Sadat emerged from the conflict unscathed and, for the time, undisputed ruler of his country. In December 1971, seventy-seven of the ninety-one accused were found guilty. Harsh sentences were meted out, but they were immediately lightened by presidential decree; death sentences for Sabri, Fawzi, Gum'ah, and Sharaf were commuted to life at hard labor. With the opportunity to hand-pick a loyal government, Sadat deliberately changed the make-up of his cabinet from men of military-security background to technocrats and businessmen. Typical of the political non-entities with whom he surrounded himself was 'Aziz Sidqi, Minister of Industry and a former bank president, now appointed ASU Secretary General. Sidqi favored strong ties to the Soviet Union and in many respects agreed with the left, but compared to the fallen Sabri faction, he was considered representative of Sadat's "second class right-wing" government. This was a logical aftermath to the crisis just concluded. Sadat had established his authority and ultimate power was to remain in his hands.

Six months after the deceivingly orderly succession of Anwar Sadat to Egypt's presidency, the inevitable power struggle had occurred. The inevitability of turmoil was a result of the ultimate flaw in Nasir's scheme — he left no heir, only a web of overlapping cabals
within the military, security apparatus, and ASU. None of Nasir's men were individually prominent enough to dare succeed him. They were not statesmen but "the executants of repression (who) took it upon themselves to be the ideologues of the new regime, as well."²⁹ Only Ali Sabri was a true politician, but he too had been deftly manipulated and had bowed to Nasir's dictates. Their political mediocrity -- the inability of one man to lead the others by strength of character or general consensus -- led to the "mafia's" downfall. According to P.J. Vatikiotis, "They failed because the weakness of the conspiracy lay in the fact that there were too many chief conspirators with equally potent and therefore conflicting ambitions."³⁰ Sadat called their bluff twice, with the arrests, first of Sabri, then of Gum'ah and Sharaf. Caught off guard, the conspirators reacted with mass resignation, a futile demonstration of unity in defeat. This attempt at sparking popular support failed miserably, for across the board, especially in the army, Nasir's underlings were bitterly despised. The military threat of Pawzi proved a mirage. Before acting against his enemies, Sadat queried his Chief of Staff, Muhammad Sadiq (rewarded with Pawzi's ministry) and General Nasr, Commander of the Presidential Guard. Both assured him of their loyalty and gave their implicit blessings to the purge.³¹

With his enemies eliminated and a new government behind him, Sadat undertook an unprecedented campaign of social and economic reform which foreshadowed the end of the Nasir era. Only eight months after his death, Egypt underwent a remarkably rapid phase of de-Nasirization. Almost overnight the image of the republic's founder gave way to one
of tyranny and failure. Nasir even fell prey to the charges of moral corruption attributed to his purged comrades. The most widespread rumors were of a Swiss bank account, in which he had stashed embezzled state funds. Sadat, while not contributing personally to the maligning, sensed the public mood and cleverly utilized it as the basis of his own political program. In the period following the purge Sadat denounced many of the tactics used by Nasir to dominate Egypt. The essence of Sadat's program was liberalization, greater civil liberty, and public affinity with government. The mood in Egypt on September 29, 1971, the first anniversary of Nasir's death, was described as "one of putting aside critical judgements about shortcomings of his eighteen years in power, at least for the day." In purging the internal security chiefs, Sadat indicted police tactics and undertook a campaign to ease the extent of repression. The discovery of a tap on his personal phone deeply shocked him and revealed the degree to which offices were being abused. Sadat attacked such practices with a vengeance. On May 13, after arresting the dissident cabinet members, the president commenced an investigation into the rampant abuse of civil liberties and called for an end to unauthorized surveillance. On the occasion of the burning of 200 tapes, which Sadat ceremoniously attended for more than three hours, the new Ministry of Interior proclaimed: "The burning of the tape recordings put an end to an era of deviation which has involved individuals belonging to the centres of influence who exploited their power in order to dominate the masses." Sequestration cases were also placed under judicial juridiction, until October 1972 when Sadat officially ended the practice of arbitrary property seizure. In declaring that all
instances of sequestration since 1964 would be reviewed and compensa-
tion doubled, the government implied a tacit recognition that property
seizure, while once a revolutionary measure designed to cut waste and
enormous private profits, had become purely an instrument of political
terror. 35

Political reform was given equal attention. On May 25 the secret
vanguard organization of the ASU, strictly a party structure and non-
governmental, but a breeding ground for conspiracy and factionalism,
was abolished. In early June, planning began for the drafting of a
new constitution, which was promoted as heralding "political freedom,
national dignity, and social justice." It was to be the first perm-
manent charter of the republic and thus, to the left represented the
final "freezing of the revolution." One notable effect of the new con-
stitution, approved in September by 99.9 percent of the electorate
(federation was approved by a similar margin in July,) was the dis-
banding of the Peoples' Assembly with a provision for new elections.
By vacating the body's 350 seats and promising impartial elections,
Sadat succeeded in disrupting any last vestiges of organized politi-
cal opposition. 36

Sadat's economic reforms reflect continued merging with the right.
In conjunction with the new constitution, a ten-year economic plan
was launched. Apart from the usual aims -- streamlining bureaucracy,
lowering prices, raising wages -- two goals stand out as unique. The
first is increased autonomy for those sectors of the economy regulated
by the government; the second is greater foreign investment. The lat-
ter entailed adoption of a wide variety of measures designed to en-
courage importation of capital, such as guarantees against national-
isation, establishment of an international bank, and duty-free customs zones. As a demonstration of good faith, Egypt negotiated a $4.8 million settlement with England to compensate the Crown for property Nasir had nationalized. Capital investment was also encouraged among Egyptian entrepreneurs by the creation of specialized banks. In general, the country was observed to sport a more Western look, an image Sadat promoted, in contrast to the spartan aura of Nasir's socialism.

As a result of his liberal program Sadat succeeded in building a broad-based constituency. He sought reconciliation with major figures on the right. In mid-October he was photographed posing with Baghdadi and Husayn, whom he had shunned a year before, hinting at the likelihood that differences had been settled. Indeed, many of Sadat's reforms paralleled their suggested platform of the previous autumn. In late October 1971 Sadat made another overture to the bourgeoisie, increasing compensation to 5,000 landowners who had lost most of their holdings during the 1969 landreforms, which limited the amount of property an individual could own. All the while, Sadat was maneuvering to further consolidate his position. He shuffled his cabinet four times in 1971 and again in January 1972. Within his government he sprinkled noted leftists whom he saw as politically helpful and harmless. Fuad Harisi, Minister of Supply, and Isma'il Sabri Abdullah, Minister of Planning, were both former Communists. In January 1972, Loutfi al-Khali, a well-known Marxist intellectual and journalist, whom Sadat had permitted to rejoin the ASU, was allowed to represent the organization at the Communist Party congress. Although a great impetus for leniency toward the left was rooted in Soviet-Egyptian relations, Sadat was very much concerned with national unity. Much of
Egypt, while disliking the Sabris and Gum'ahs, was not ready for the giant turnabout in foreign and domestic policies, nor the great emphasis on internal affairs at the expense of the conflict with Israel. Thus, where possible, Sadat called upon willing leftists to counterbalance the right-wing image of his new regime. 39

Travails of Foreign Policy -- The Russian Custer

The second year of Sadat's reign began with an acute sense of disillusion both for the Egyptian people and their president. The political homefront was easily won, but Sadat's handling of foreign affairs proved to be a series of costly blunders. With a seeming ignorance of the nuances of diplomacy, he plunged headlong into the realm of the superpowers. Sadat's expectations of Washington's willingness to pressure Israel were unrealistic. He badly misconstrued Soviet intentions as well, demanding more support than the Kremlin was willing to provide. Miscalculation of both Soviet and American attitudes led Sadat to recklessly promise war in 1971, which he failed to deliver. Consequently, 1972 began with student unrest which soon spread to other sectors of society. One year after consolidating power, Sadat found his back to the wall, his policies fruitless and his people growing restless.

The Soviet foothold in Egypt was established in the aftermath of the Six Day War. The U.S.S.R. had been Egypt's only major foreign investor in the immediate past and continued to respond to the defeated nation's needs, which were predominantly munitions. The massive rearming of the Egyptian armed forces allowed Nasir to launch his War of
Attrition in the spring of 1969, during which the first wave of Russian advisors arrived. Soviet-Egyptian relations were informal, on an ad-hoc basis.\textsuperscript{40} As a reward, the Soviets were granted naval facilities at four ports and were allowed to operate three air bases.\textsuperscript{41} By 1972 the Soviet military mission comprised nearly 20,000 experts -- trainers, gun crews, and active pilots -- spread throughout every air force squadron and army battalion.\textsuperscript{42}

On May 27, 1974, one week after Sadat's "corrective measures," Egypt and the Soviet Union signed a fifteen year "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation." Despite the fact that Sadat had warned them of Sabri's impending dismissal, assuring them that in no way did the crackdown portend any change in policy, the Russians were distressed at the elimination of their strongest supporters in Egypt. Coming two days before the arrival in Cairo of William Rogers, the Soviets sensed a double-edged challenge to their position. Indications are that Soviet President Podgorny arrived in Egypt, on May 13, with a final draft in hand, ready to be signed.\textsuperscript{43} The treaty, by intent, changed nothing, but formalized existing relations for the near future. The Soviet Union pledged to protect and rearm Egypt. Egypt, in turn, stressed compatibility with Soviet policy, maintenance of a socialist system and the struggle against colonialism-imperialism.\textsuperscript{44}

Sadat's hasty acceptance reveals a marked lack of diplomatic foresight. There was no question of refusal; he grasped for immediate gain -- the treaty signified his legitimacy as ruler of Egypt, minus Sabri and the pro-Soviet bloc. For the long term Sadat, no doubt, looked to article eight as a major accomplishment.
In the interests of strengthening the defence capacity of the United Arab Republic, the high contracting parties will continue to develop cooperation in the military field...with a view to strengthening (Egypt's) capacity to eliminate the consequences of aggression. 45

Sadat obviously read this as a mandate for war. Elimination of "the consequences of aggression" meant, at a minimum, the re-occupation of his Israeli-held land. At the same, he overlooked what proved to be the qualifying clause, "defence capacity of the United Arab Republic." This misconception of Soviet intentions became the source of increasing frustration to Sadat and of antipathy between the two nations.

As an indirect result of the treaty, Egypt's developing relations with the United States also suffered. This can be considered a victory for Soviet policy makers. Article two of the treaty states:

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a socialist state and the United Arab Republic, which has set itself the aim of reconstructing society along socialist lines, will cooperate closely and in all fields in ensuring conditions for preserving and further developing the social and economic gains of their people. 46

This seemingly nebulous statement caused great apprehension in the West. It was feared to be an extension of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" which in 1968 justified Russian intervention in Czechoslovakia, not to safeguard against external threats, but to protect internal social and political developments. By signing the treaty and declaring herself a socialist state, Egypt seemingly placed herself "squarely and unequivocally in the camp of America's opponent." 47 Sadat's attempt to neutralize the U.S. and alienate her from Israel floundered. Washington lost all hope of softening the Egyptian stance and Rogers' initiative ground to a halt. American support for Israel became more vo-
cal and Sadat's resulting disillusion brought Egypt solidly back into the Soviet camp. 48

Overconfidence in the Soviet commitment caused Sadat to act with unfounded arrogance. On July 19, 1971, Sudanese Communists seized power in Khartoum and deposed President Ga'far al-Numayri. Moscow pressed Sadat to recognize the new government. Instead, he airlifted, from the canal zone, a brigade of loyal Sudanese troops to aid Numayri, who regained power within three days. 49 The Russians then asked Sadat to intercede on behalf of the condemned rebels, but he refused, stating categorically that he would never recognize an Arab Communist government. 50 As a follow-up to this incident, on July 23 Sadat announced to the world that 1971 was to be a "decisive year in the Middle East." 51 His intentions were overtly aggressive. On July 26 he renewed his pledge, promising to match Israel "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, depth raids for depth raids, and napalm bombing for napalm bombing." 52 The following day the Egyptian army was placed on full alert, the first of many demonstrations of force which would continue throughout the ill-fated year.

Sadat's commitment to force was a monumental blunder, for it falsely presupposed Soviet support for a military venture. The Russians seemed to concur with Haykal's wish that "the summer cloud which had appeared in the atmosphere of Soviet-Egyptian relations" be dissipated, as arms continued to flow regularly into Egypt. 53 Shipments included sophisticated SAM systems not yet available to Warsaw Pact nations. 54 But they were strictly defensive weapons, while Sadat sought-- and now required to fulfill his promise -- offensive striking power. In particular, he desired the new MiG 23, a plane capable
of penetrating deep into Israeli territory. In October he went to Moscow to plead his case.

Sadat went to the Soviet Union with a list of demands, but was greeted by a series of harsh rebukes. In short order, the Soviets informed him that they were highly displeased with his recent anti-Communist tilt and did not support his wish for war. Talks were held according to the joint communique of October 15, "in a spirit of frankness and cordiality," diplomatic slang for strain. At the opening luncheon Sadat was quickly taken to task and cautioned against anti-Soviet campaigns by "the imperialists and their agents" who conspired to "set the Arab countries at loggerheads with their most loyal friends and allies."57

Sadat left Moscow publicly bowing to every Soviet dictate. The Russians requested a greater role for leftist in Egypt (a month before, Sadat had appointed Murad Ghaleb, the former ambassador to Moscow and highly regarded, as minister of state for foreign affairs -- an explicit gesture of good will.)59 In the communique Sadat reaffirmed Egypt's goal to undertake a "socialist reconstruction of society" which would "try to use the rich experience of the Soviet Union... and rely on their experience and support."59 Furthermore, he condemned anti-Communism in the Middle East for "prejudicing the people's urge for liberation."60

Soviet-Egyptian relations in the fall, 1971, appeared "a meaning less, even farcical exchange of declarations." In what amounts to doubletalk, the Soviets publicly supported Egypt's union with Libya. Sadat, for his part, had nothing to lose by supporting Arab Communism, for he and his neighbors had successfully defused any such threat.61
An increase in the quantity of arms was arranged, but as later events were to prove, Sadat did not receive his specific order. Upon his return home he vowed: "The day is near when the Egyptian people will take the conclusive decision that will affect our destiny," but he would claim betrayal, referring specifically to a "certain agreement in October, after we had cleared everything up."62

Sadat, again, is guilty of misreading or ignoring Soviet diplomatic messages. He founded his "year of decision" on the twin convictions that: 1) "force and only force is the way to put pressure on Israel and to liquidate the aggression against our land," and 2) "the Soviet Union will be with us...at the time when we will have to settle our destiny." He also overestimated his bargaining power with the Soviets. Tahsin Beshir, press spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, caused a slight stir when he stated that Sadat planned to "exploit" the Kremlin. This was possible, he asserted, because "the Soviet Union could not afford to offend Egypt."63 Sadat failed to comprehend the complexity of Soviet-American relations -- how the Russians could maneuver for positions of influence and criticize American peace initiatives, while discrediting his own war of liberation. With much chagrin, Sadat watched détente unfold.

In spite of clear signs from the Kremlin, he persisted in promising decisive action. Adressing front-line troops in late November he announced: "The time for battle has come. There is no longer any hope whatsoever of peaceful or other solutions."64 Daily reports of military readiness -- "the largest assault force since the Allied invasion of Nazi occupied Europe" -- and tension within Israel built up the Egyptian people for an enormous letdown. The ended undecisively, al-
most comically, with last-minute practice drills.

Sadat's excuse for inaction was the outbreak of war between India and Pakistan which captured the public spotlight and drew superpower interest away from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Soviet and American responses to the crisis of December 1971 were unanticipated by Sadat and quite disenchancing. Washington's pressure on India for the immediate evacuation of captured territory seemed hypocritical. The haste with which Moscow moved to aid India also seemed duly uncharacteristic. While supporting the Indian war effort, the Russians implicitly expressed opposition to Sadat's plans by transferring a substantial amount of planes and personnel from the Aswan Dam region to India. 65

Sadat was faced with the realization that his hopes for 1971 were dashed. In an interview with C.L. Sulzberger that month, he tried to save face by implying "that he meant... a decision on what course to follow rather than a commitment to make a dramatic move before January 1." 66 Sadat explained the situation to his people by analogy, that of a fog which gathered as the hour of attack approached. Though the experience was bitter he learned a valuable lesson: "...it was wrong to think that our battle was isolated from the existing international balance between the major powers or was not influenced by events taking place around us." 67 His international image was pathetic and talk of his demise became commonplace. Sadat needed to re-evaluate his position regarding the superpowers. The U.S. he wrote off as "100 percent with Israel"; the U.S.S.R. he planned to visit in February to seek a clarification of policy. 68

At home Sadat's rule was vocally challenged. On January 15, 1972,
two days after the "fog speech," students at Cairo University took to the streets. Sadat labeled them a deviationist minority, and the students did represent a radical element, rejecting any political settlement in Sinai. But the questions they raised expressed legitimate concern for their country's lack of direction. They wanted to know how Sadat had failed in his dealings with the United States and, if the U.S. was indeed the enemy, was he prepared to strike at American interests in the Arab world. Progress with the Soviets was critically examined, as was the presumed war effort, in light of the fact that the homefront had never been mobilized and that the federation states did not have a uniform policy. Dissent also spilled over into domestic affairs. An end to censorship and one-candidate elections, along with a call for greater freedom on campus, highlighted demands for reform. The public domain was the one sector Sadat had effectively contained; now he was forced to call on the police and to exercise control with clubs and tear gas. 69

Haykal called the February talks in Moscow, "among the most important and delicate in the history of Arab-Soviet relations." 70 Sadat was in a very precarious position. Egyptian-American relations were almost non-existent. Nixon bore out Sadat's claim of total partisanship for Israel by condemning Soviet plots to upset the arms balance and, in turn, the U.S. released a new shipment of Phantoms which had been withheld. 71 Sadat could only wish that Nixon's complaints of Soviet over-involvement were accurate. In early January he granted the Russians major political concessions in Egypt. In a major cabinet shuffle, 'Aziz Sidqi was appointed premier, replacing Fawzi, and Murad Ghaleb was again promoted, now to foreign minister. In a
move of unfounded confidence Sadat declared a war economy and auster-
ity program and told the army he was to set the zero hour of assault
with the Russians.\textsuperscript{72}

Soviet disenchantment had grown, however, and the February trip
ported near disaster. The diplomatic language of the customary
communique hints at a serious personal setback for Sadat. The Rus-
sians promised traditional support for the Egyptian cause, but not
for Sadat personally, as was usual.\textsuperscript{73} Also noteworthy was a lack of
reference to the common goals of the two allies. Above all, Sadat
joined the Soviet Union in calling for a resumption of UN diplomatic
efforts and received no concrete match for the recent Phantom sale
to Israel.\textsuperscript{74}

In conjunction with diplomatic failure, Sadat encountered grow-
ing internal pressure from both the right and left. On February 15
he threatened to resign, but two days later received a unanimous vote
of confidence.\textsuperscript{75} Under pressure from the Kremlin he agreed to meet
with Jarring, but Sadat's real hopes rested on the visit of Marshal
Grechko, the Soviet Defense Minister, who was heading a military del-
egation to review Egypt's needs. By spring, 1972, disappointment gave
way to panic. In late April Sadat flew to Moscow to try to personally
convince the Soviets that "there is no shortcut to victory."

This trip of April 27-29 spelled unmitigated defeat. Sadat was
neither greeted nor seen off by either Brezhnev or Podgorny and left
one day earlier than scheduled. The Soviets did agree to "study a-
gain" Egyptian military needs, but in no way did they sanction ac-
tion or increase aid to any significant degree. A Soviet-American
summit was planned for June and Sadat emphasized his fear of a bar-
gain which would impose a settlement in the Middle East, but he had every reason to look forward to the next round of detente with great apprehension. 76

At home he doggedly struggled to maintain credibility and gradually the forces of political animosity focused on a new enemy -- the Russians. This shift was perpetrated by a political offensive of the right. As it became apparent that the Soviets were prohibiting the immediate battle championed by the left, both the Russians and their Egyptian counterparts lost favor. Anti-Soviet sentiment was first expressed publicly in a clandestine manner. On October 1, 1971, Cairo was flooded with leaflets denouncing "Soviet imperialism," circulated by mail, and signed only by the "Egyptian National Front." 77 It was generally recognized that the public, however grateful, did not welcome Russian presence on Egyptian soil. The Russians lived in separate quarters, were aloof and unfriendly. It was widely believed that the country was crawling with KGB agents, entangling small business and the media in a web of Soviet influence. 78 This, however, was street talk; the significant development was the anti-Soviet campaign of the intellectual right.

In a major speech on May 14, 1972, the first anniversary of the "corrective measures," Sadat revealed the existence of a memorandum he had received in April from prominent politicians advocating a new national front organization to superecede the ASU. The authors included 'Abd al-Latif Baghdadi, Kamal al-Din Husayn, and Zakariya Muhyi al-Din. Sadat while criticizing the document for attempting to subvert existing structures, passed over the anti-Russian message, in fact the crux of the statement which was leaked to the press.
It is now time to reconsider the policy of extravagant dependence on the Soviet Union. That policy, five years after the defeat, has not deterred the aggression nor has it restored the rights... The relationship with the Russians must return to the natural and secure framework of relations between a newly independent country which is anxious to protect that independence and a big state whose strategy -- by virtue of its ideology and interests -- embodies the desire to extend its influence.... It is time now for Egypt to return to a secure area between the two superpowers.

Recalling a Nasir claim that he would deal with the devil to regain his land, the memo concludes: "The policy of alliance with the devil is not objectionable, only until it becomes favorable to the devil."79

Similar views were expounded in late May, in a seminar on Soviet policy sponsored by al-Ahram. Besides Haykal and the editorial staff, participants included Isma'il Fahmi, Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs (later Foreign Minister); Tahsin Beshir; and Muhammad 'Awad al-Quni, former head of the Egyptian delegation to the UN. The group condemned the Kremlin for failing to assign the Middle East a higher priority. They also regretfully concurred that while the Soviet Union extended its presence in the Mediterranean, Persian Gulf, and Indian Ocean, it was not satisfied with the status quo in the Arab world. U.S.-Soviet policy was seen to be converging, leaving the area armed, but under tight control, locked in a stalemate. The Russians were reportedly demanding the dismissals of Haykal and Fahmi. Sadat did send Fahmi and Beshir on vacations of indefinite duration as a signal that the seminar did not portray official opinion (both were later -- in 1969 and 1970).80

Haykal remained unperturbed and was the dominant spokesman for those favoring a revisional of foreign policy. He published a series
of columns in which he analyzed the existing condition of "no war-no peace." His conclusion was that, excluding Egypt, all benefitted—especially Israel—and that even Russia had a strong stake in maintaining the status quo. The solution was obvious:

Egypt must take its own problems in hand and do what is necessary to solve them. The state of nowar-no peace constitutes a constant hemorrhage for Egypt, a death without heroism that is on the point of suffocating the country.

Egypt, he claimed, was already well on its way to becoming a "dependant or a satellite."81

Sovereignty became a major concern, Soviet bases, the focal issue. The main sources of contention were the airbases, from which Soviet pilots flew reconnaissance and which housed the most sophisticated Russian weaponry—everything which Sadat had requested for his own troops. The most controversial base, due to its proximity to the capital, was the Cairo West airfield. Like the others, it fell totally under Soviet jurisdiction and Egyptian officers—including the air force commander and, it was rumored, Sadat himself—needed Russian consent to enter. This was the ultimate affront to national pride. On at least two occasions Sadat was pressed to clarify the situation before the ASU Gen. Committee. In an April meeting, seventy-five percent of the questions asked of Sadat concerned the bases and other issues related to Soviet influence in the armed forces.83

The army was a hotbed of discontent. The blatantly condescending Russian attitude made the military extremely sensitive to the preponderance of outside experts. The Russians made it very clear they trusted neither Egyptian military judgement nor capability. Their
cynicism was often expressed without tact in the course of their daily dealings with Egyptian officers. In February the chief of the Soviet mission was expelled from the country for an offensive quip: "The Egyptian army is like a balloon; it only takes one pinprick to deflate it." The Egyptian high command, notably War Minister Sadiq, who was involved in negotiations with Moscow and felt the Russians had broken promises, had come to the conclusion that the Soviet presence was no longer necessary. In a memo to Sadat, senior officers testified that in the past year Egyptian soldiers had proved themselves qualified to operate all Soviet equipment without supervision.  

As the Soviet-American summit approached tension within the government heightened. On June 1 Sadat submitted to the Soviets a seven point questionnaire on Kremlin policy. The Russian response was a vague reassurance and an attack on the Egyptian press. All of Sadat's fears were borne out by agreements stemming from the Nixon-Brezhnev talks later that month. Within the framework of detente both nations claimed "a special responsibility...to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tensions." A special pledge to "exercise restraint in preventing situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations," and a call for settlement of conflict by peaceful means, convinced Sadat that a new stage of Soviet-Egyptian relations were in order.  

One month later Sadat set the stage for a dramatic turn of events. He sent Sidqi to Moscow on July 13 to present his demands in the form of an ultimatum — deliver or leave. Again, in a time of great pressure, he acted alone, reportedly choosing this course on July 8,
ten days before shocking the world. Sadat claimed he had been con-
templating such a move for a long time: “I ought to have made my
decision at the end of 1971 when they didn’t live up to their com-
mitment, but I waited for the Soviet-American summit to give our
friends another chance.” On July 9 he revealed his decision to
Syrian President Hafez A. Assad who tried to dissuade him. During the
following four days Sadat broke the news to his closest confidants --
Sidqi, Sadiq, Hafez Isma’il, his top national security advisor:
Sayyid Mar’i, the ASU Secretary General. Sidqi’s trip was to last
three days, but one was enough for the premier to realize there would
be no breakthrough. He delivered Sadat’s message on July 14. The next
day, three days before Sadat went public, the Russian exodus began. 99

July 15, 1972, was a great day for Egypt, and assertion of sov-
ereignty and national will. It was a day of three “important deci-
sions.” First was the termination of the Soviet military mission.
Second was the nationalization of all military installations. Last
was a call for the reworking of relations between the estranged al-
lies. In expelling the Russians, Sadat levelled two basic charges --
breach of promise regarding arms shipments:

These arms did not arrive on the agreed dates
and that is what made me say then, we need to
re-evaluate our position.

And the Soviet attempt to impose conditions on the use of delivered
arms:

(1) refused to place any restriction on the use
of arms, whatever their kind, based on the Egyp-
tian principles that any political decision must
be made in Egypt by its political leadership,
without having to seek permission from any quar-
Sadat clearly stated that he did not seek a cessation of relations, and, in order to make certain not to further antagonize the Russians, gave them no deadline, asked that instructors remain where needed, and allowed them to keep their naval stations intact. Even so, the mood was one of triumph as Sadat declared that, henceforth, Egypt would stand alone, "on the battlefield if need be."

Sadat perceived that the only way to alter the status quo was to apply an "electric shock" to existing foreign relations. He posed, once again, as national hero, portraying an image of strength and courage, a desperately needed tonic for growing Egyptian malaise. Much of the blame for the people's disillusion lay with their president. Sadat had committed himself to a deadline and had geared Egypt psychologically for a war he could not produce, because he was dependent on the Soviet Union for armaments the Kremlin did not wish to supply. Haykal admits that Sadat's demands were excessive. Sadat and his generals exaggerated both Soviet productive capability and the percentage to which Egypt was entitled. The Soviets did not act with complete honesty, yet their diplomatic messages, which Sadat either misread or mistakenly thought he could ignore, often were quite clear. In the end, the only demand Sadat could make was that the Russians leave his country -- a demand he wisely tempered with the utmost politeness.

Sadat's decision was rooted both in personal frustration and domestic unrest. After the ouster it was widely supposed that he acted in fear of the military. Sadiq had reportedly warned Sadat that unless he moved against the Russians, "the army would impose the measure by
direct intervention in the country's political affairs." The source of these reports, however, was the newspaper al-Nida, the mouthpiece of the Lebanese Communist Party, with an editorial stance "close to Moscow." It is credible that "some Egyptian military quarters were calling for the liberation of Egypt before the liberation of occupied Sinai," but there exists no hard evidence of an impending coup.

Sadat's retention of favor was the consequence of his focusing blame for his own failings on the Soviet Union. This proved an astute tactic, as the military, like the rebellious right-wing, accepted and furthered this transferral of fault. The Russians were scapegoats for Sadat's errors. Yet, much of the case against them was legitimate. Soviet and Egyptian aims had truly grown disparate and intellectuals recognized this as a logical trend, as both nations pursued sovereign interests. This was a fact Sadat also came to accept. He acted under great pressure, but he was not flouted by the army, nor manipulated by the right. He allowed both factions to speak freely and gradually grew in league with them. To an extent he even orchestrated the anti-Soviet campaign. He did not censor Haykal or other journalists espousing similar lines. Although censuring the April manifesto, he did publicize the opposition and hint at their significance. Throughout, he maintained close ties with Sadiq and the military. True to character, Sadat schemed secretly, without counsel, but when the moment for decisive action arrived, he was able to turn to his associates and gather loyal forces.

However limited his options, Sadat, perceiving a new image for a non-aligned Egypt, did act with some foresight. He would not totally sever ties with the Soviet Union, for he desired ongoing support, par-
particularly spare parts and technicians. 96 The U.S.S.R. remained Egypt's only major economic ally, with a two billion dollar investment in non-military projects, like the steel complex at Rawan and an oil refinery and shipyard at Alexandria. Much of Egyptian industry was specifically geared to Soviet needs, such as cotton and inexpensive consumer goods. It was a relationship which could not be severed without economic disaster befalling Egypt. 96 At the same time, Sadat looked to new allies -- the West and pro-West, oil-rich Arab states. For arms he approached the British and French, both of whom had an embargo in effect for the area and assumed a neutral stance. For political support he again turned to the United States.

The impetus for broadening perspectives was derived, in part, from a June meeting in Washington, between Nixon and Saudi Defense Minister, Prince Sultan. In the course of discussion, Nixon had implied that Soviet presence kept the U.S. from assuming any role other than champion of the Israeli cause. 97 In his first major speech after the ouster, on July 24, Sadat bitterly attacked America's unwavering stance, a sentiment he echoed in the days that followed. Yet, it was not Sadat's intention to alienate the U.S., but to show Nixon the constructive role he could play with a more even-handed approach. Implicit in the attack was an admission of jealousy. Referring to the Soviet Union as "our overly cautious friend," Sadat queried the United States: "why can't we have a friend like this?" 98
Egypt Turns Inwards

For Egypt, the next six months was to be a period of national reflection and dramatic political upheaval. Any scheme for liberating Israeli-held territory, whether by force or diplomacy, had been decidedly postponed by the Soviet exodus. Sadat, as his detractors claimed, had "stripped the country politically naked," leaving it without allies or hope. The question of Israel remained unanswered and predominant as a national cause, yet this was to be a time of political rebuilding on an international level, not of rearmament. As it became apparent Egypt would be forced back into the Soviet sphere there was a price to pay politically. Sadat found himself at loggerheads with the powerful right-wing, which he had nurtured, including the army, as well as faced with the resurgence of a zealous left. Without the "war of liberation" as an internal unifier, Egyptians began to look more towards domestic issues and did so with a highly critical eye. Dissent was voiced publicly, often angrily. Sadat, who had never been challenged so blatantly, reacted with his strongest demonstration of force to date.

The Soviet departure was quick, quiet, and thorough. The Russians left unharrassed and without retort. TASS, refusing to admit embarrassment, stated simply that Egypt's "friends" from the Soviet armed forces had completed their mission and the Egyptian forces were now qualified to perform "the necessary tasks for their country's defense." By October only 500 Russian technical advisors remained on Egyptian soil. The Soviets removed nearly all their own strategic forces and equipment, including devices desperately sought by the
Egyptians. According to both Israeli and American intelligence, virtually all air reconnaissance ceased as the Soviets withdrew their spy planes, some six ultra-sophisticated MiG 23s, approximately seventy MiG 21s (which flew in Soviet interceptor squadrons), as well as the most advanced SAM systems.\textsuperscript{101} Even so, there appeared no signs of Soviet vindictiveness, as much of the remaining SAMs and MiGs were turned over to the Egyptian army.\textsuperscript{102}

The Russians stood to gain by swallowing their pride and bowing gracefully. They would not aquisce to unconditional Egyptian demands for offensive weaponry and, thus, were forced to face the consequences. Once Sadat had gone public and announced the expulsion their hands were tied. They could not react with any force without threatening détente. In addition, by accepting the sovereign dictate of a weaker ally, the Soviet Union hoped to dispel lingering fears its Third World friends held of Russian domination.\textsuperscript{103} At most, the loss of Egypt was a "nuisance...hardly a crippling blow." Strategically, the removal of spy planes was compensated by reinforced naval strength and satellite surveillance. The Soviet posture was stoic. A friendship treaty with Iraq and a Syrian arms accord were signed, indicating that the Russians sought new connections in the Middle East. But their press took every opportunity to remind the Egyptians of the commitment to long-term friendship. The Soviets appeared to be planning for the future, undoubtedly predicting that their absence would be of short duration.

Within Egypt, the press reflected the troubled state of the nation's search for identity. Clovis Maksoud, writing in \textit{al-Nahar}, presented most clearly the dilemma. Having divested itself of its only
ally prematurely, without a guaranteed replacement, Egypt’s position of non-alignment was quite precarious. It was an illusion to count on the U.S. filling the vacuum. The timing, Maksoud claimed, was poor. In an election year, traditional American support of Israel was bound to be stressed and promised. Furthermore, with the Soviets gone, Egypt had lost any effective deterrent to a total American commitment to the enemy. The rightest press was not yet ready to deal seriously with such issues. With continued unofficial sanction, the right expanded the anti-Soviet campaign. Ihsan ‘Abd al-Quddus, who was very close to Sadat, was most outspoken, stating:

The mission of the Soviet military experts had, perhaps, ended with regard to the weapons that the Soviet Union had provided to us. But it would not have ended had the Soviet Union actually provided us with the weapons it had agreed upon.

The Soviets, after retreating with surprising tact and seeming respect, in an attempt to retain dignity and friendship, now found their motives challenged, their press slandered, even their immigration policy attacked — as they were accused of willfully providing Israel with the manpower to carry American arms against the Arabs.

There was also, more typically, an ambivalent stance. This was an ambivalence of the moment. Maksoud’s critique deserved answering, but for the moment the sensation of triumph was too great to submerge. Haykal wrote:

There is no substitute we can obtain in place of our friendship with the Soviet Union....Our military investments with the Soviet Union are tre-
mendous. The arms of our land armies and of our sea and air fleets are now all from the Soviet Union. If we allow an astute crisis to flare up between us and the Soviet Union, it would mean that we had decided to defer the liberation of our land for a long time.

Concurrently, it was he to initiate series of blasts at the Russians with the revelation of an incident in the summer of 1970 when five Soviet-floeg MIGs were downed in an airfight with Israeli pilots within one minute. Implicit in the continued debunking of the Soviets, their political system and military, was an invitation to the West to play a greater role. Washington, however, remained silent, refraining from sending Sadat even an indirect diplomatic signal, and neither France nor Britain moved to terminate their respective arms embargoes. Sadat accepted the notion that election politics was restraining American involvement. The campaign did have an effect, but what he did not comprehend was the fact that the United States was acting on convictions deeper than political rhetoric. American foreign policy at the time was geared towards the Soviets and, like its counterpart the Kremlin, the State Department refrained from taking any action which could be perceived as aggressive. The U.S. was very content with its position in the Middle East. Israel had always contended that unfaltering American support was the greatest deterrent to war. Without budging from that stance, the U.S. now saw Egypt move against the Russians, a seeming verification of the Israeli thesis. Without threatening detente the United States could quietly maintain a status quo in which it enjoyed sole predominance. Sadat, thus, received no support, material or moral, from the West.
To make matters worse, the Soviets had responded in a "cold war" dialogue with the United States in the world. The Soviet Union reportedly received a message from another country proposing a high-level meeting to discuss means of improving relations. This response gives credence to rumors that the Soviet overture was cold and insulting. On August 17, before the People's Assembly, Sadat declared:

The language, contents, and type of the letter are totally unacceptable. I could easily get angry with this type of letter and others I have received from the Soviet leaders. (But) I do not want to sever relations; I want to get them back on a healthy line. 110

Moscow rejoined by warning Egypt not to take its friendship lightly, and the Soviet press began its own attack of Quaddafi and others. Sadat was frustrated. In an interview with the French newspaper Le Figaro, on August 21, he suggested that the West owed Egypt "a response to the initiative which I took to help them." Russo-Egyptian animosity appeared to peak in early September when Sadat replaced Murad Ghalet as foreign minister. Like two previous promotions, Ghalet's dismissal was an indicator of the president's mood. Both parties had already withdrawn their respective ambassadors and a long stalemate was foreseen.

Egypt, however, could not long stand the isolation in which it found itself and a thaw was soon initiated. On September 29 Sadat announced that he was awaiting a response to a letter he had sent to Brezhnev proposing a resumption of constructive dialogue. In conjunction with this overture he sent his ambassador back to Moscow, a move the Soviets soon reciprocated. Two days later he announced an upcoming visit to Moscow by Sidqi, on October 16. The thrust of what were
to be the first high-level talks since the ouster, was reportedly the Egyptian army's need of spare and replacement parts for Soviet weaponry. Through his media connections, Sadat let it be known the talks would be tough. The visit was clearly not in response to any Soviet concessions and there was no facade of improved relations.  

This offer to repair ties, described as "the politics of lack of eagerness," by Lebanese journalist Fuaad Matar,114 was at the same time the politics of necessity. In a speech on the eve of Sidqi's journey, Sadat "went out of his way" to appease Moscow.115 He sharply criticized the United States, whose support for Israel, he said:

...has turned into something like a pipeline through which pumping is never stopped day or night. The race between U.S. politicians to please Israel has become a farce or a tragedy unprecedented in international relations. The United States has foiled every attempt and blocked every path in order to put us in a position of having to accept the fait accompli.

By "fait accompli" Sadat was referring to the Israeli occupation. The term could just as easily be used to designate Egypt's return to the Soviet sphere. Missing from this speech was the usual bitter reiteration of Russian responsibility for the ouster. Instead, the expulsion was labeled an "objective pause" and the resultant falling-out a "transient condition" which "we will make every effort to surmount." 116 Disillusioned with the West, Sadat was forced to backpedal to the Soviets, two and a half months after releasing his country from dependence on them.

The Soviets did not greet the Egyptian initiative with any signs of warmth, but they did appear ready to re-establish normal ties.
Press accounts, reflecting the Russian demeanor, cite the Sidqi visit as non-productive. The "frankness" of discussion was again noted, as was the fact that Sidqi did not meet with Brezhnev or receive public pledges of economic or military aid. Analysts believed the breach was largely unhealed.\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Al-Ahram}, however, reported that all objectives had been completely achieved.\textsuperscript{117} Soviet leaders had agreed to visit Cairo, consented to ease the quasi-embargo on spare parts and replacements, and promised to return some SAM-6s which had been evacuated.\textsuperscript{118} On October 28 Sidqi reported to the ASU that he was pleased with his reception, that he and the Soviets concurred on matters relating to the struggle with Israel, and that the foundations of a solid friendship had been rebuilt.\textsuperscript{118}

Sadat's clear, but cautious turn to the Soviet Union incited a new wave of political conflict within Egypt. The moderate left, represented by Sidqi, greeted the foreign minister's report with satisfaction and relief. As the fortunes of the left-wing rose, the right felt its influence wane. The first serious expressions of discontent came from the army. In military circles, post-July relations with the Russians were viewed as sufficient -- "just the right mixture of distance and cool-headed cooperation."\textsuperscript{119} The resumption of arms shipments was welcome, but ties were seen as growing too intimate. On October 21, the BBC broadcast a report of the arrest of 200-300 officers involved in an attempted coup, a story which was never confirmed and was denied by the Egyptian government.\textsuperscript{120} Yet the existence of heightened tension within the armed forces is borne out by succeeding events.

Within a week of these first reports of grumbling within the
military, Sadat shuffled his high command in an effort to defuse the situation. On October 26, one day after Sidqi’s speech to the ASU, War Minister Sadiq resigned.\(^{121}\) Extremely popular in the armed forces, Sadiq had been one of Sadat’s staunchest supporters, whose favor during the purges of May 1971 had been vital. As anti-Soviet tension spread throughout the ranks, prior to July 1972, he served as intermediary between the president and the army. There were claims that the Russians, knowing the general to be a formidable opponent of rapprochment, demanded his ouster as a pre-condition.\(^{122}\) There was also speculation that Sadiq consented to step down, agreeing it was in the nation’s best interest, and that he and Sadat parted friends.\(^{123}\) In fact, a falling-out between the two men did occur, and any claims to the contrary belong in the realm of political fantasy.

The dismissal was triggered by disagreement over vital questions of military strategy. Haykal describes a heated session of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, on October 24, after which Sadat determined to change commanders. Sadiq and Sadat, he reports, differed in their conceptions of battle — Sadiq intransigently advocated full-scale war, for which he claimed the army was not equipped; Sadat favored a small war of limited objective.\(^{124}\) Sadat, in his autobiography, accuses Sadiq of disregarding orders to mobilize the army for war by November 15. This, he claims, was the crux of confrontation in the same meeting Haykal cites (although Sadat dates it October 28, two days after the resignation.)\(^{125}\) Insubordination was alleged at the time by Quddus and Ahmed Isma’il, Sadiq’s successor, who related that the war minister failed “to relay a certain decision communicated to him during the summer months and to carry out other decisions.”
Alvin Rubinstein portrays him as awed by Israeli fortifications, fearing an attack, and therefore favoring a defensive buildup. As a result, Sadiq's willingness to fight, in general, was questioned and he was characterized as "too defensive minded a general." 126

Yet, it seems clear that disagreement on strategy, while the catalyst, was not the compelling reason for Sadiq's downfall. Sadat dumped the general to appease the Soviets and to enhance and safeguard the new relationship. Sadiq was a hindrance and potential threat due to his political fanaticism. According to Haykal:

The President also thought him (Sadiq) too extreme in his attitude towards the Soviets and felt that he tended to get himself too involved in politics -- he was, for example, strongly opposed to the Prime Minister, Dr. Sidqi, whom he accused of being pro-Russian -- and he expressed his opposition in front of other senior officers.

Sadiq was replaced by Ahmed Isma'il, according to Haykal, "apart from any considerations of expertise, largely because of (his) lack of politics." 127 Along with his war minister, Sadat replaced the commander of the navy, a close friend of Sadiq's, and much of their staffs. In the aftermath, Sadat was to purge the officer corps of many past irritants to the Soviet Union. 128

Sadat thus moved effectively to de-politicize the high command. But discontent had apparently filtered down to the junior officers. The New York Times, on October 29, reported the dramatic parade of three armoured personnel carriers through downtown Cairo to the al-Musayn mosque, where the leader, a "fanatic" captain, spoke in favor of immediate military action against Israel. More discontent was expressed with less openness. Another attribute of Ahmed Isma'il, one that Haykal fails to mention, was his experience in intelligence. The
new war minister kept close watch over his subordinates. Joseph Kraft reported that in November 1972 there occurred "three outbreaks of hostility," at bases outside of Cairo, "serious enough to warrant arrests." These were: 1) two dozen air force officers on November 11, 2) more arrests on November 13, 3) arrests at an armour base on November 17. Many of the arrested, Kraft relates, were merely questioned, but the belief was that plots shelved after the Russian expulsion were being revived. Their aim was supposedly to name Sadiq leader of a provisional military government, but his complicity was never substantiated.\(^\text{129}\) The *New York Times*, in December, reported the arrest on November 22 of twelve officers for disciplinary purposes. The air force was again cited as the seat of sedition, the twenty-five to thirty arrested being mostly colonels.\(^\text{130}\) This account, while possibly overlapping with an incident Kraft reported -- with only minor differences in dates and numbers -- does corroborate the existence of political activity within the military. The reports also confirm close surveillance by a now loyal high command and sweeping action to insure loyalty throughout the ranks.

One month later, open defiance erupted in the civilian sector, spilling from the halls of parliament, onto the campuses, and into the streets of Cairo. On November 27 Sidqi reported to the People's Assembly that plans were underway for war. A rebuttal by Deputy Speaker Gamal al-Oteifi led to four days of unprecedented criticism and debate. The assembly went on record as being unconvinced the government was really preparing.\(^\text{131}\) Support was voiced for the turn towards the Soviet Union, accompanied by serious questioning of the political role of the army. Parliament had been flexing its muscles of late. In October a motion was proposed which would allow the as-
sembly to challenge the president on specific policy, insist on debate, even call for a vote of no-confidence. In addition, parliament claimed the power of inquiry and the right to hold cabinet officials accountable. No action had been taken on the motion and parliament had been gearing for a major outburst of discontent.\textsuperscript{132}

Sadat emerged from the "unprecedented free-for-all" unscathed. His policies were under fire, but it was his underlings who were taken to task. In conjunction with the attack on the military, Ahmed lama'il was faulted for not being present to answer charges.\textsuperscript{133} The primary target, however, was Sidqi, who, despised by the Cairo establishment, was now singled out as the brainchild of the rapprochment. The dismissal of Sadiq had upset a balance in Sadat's government. There was speculation that Sadat fostered the revival of parliament to discredit his prime minister. What is more likely is that Sadat sensed the extent of discontent and allowed the debate to proceed -- to appease the right and, if necessary, ease Sidqi out of office.\textsuperscript{134}

Sadat was lauded for this episode of greater democratic rule, but what followed was a chain-reaction of dissent which left him in a precarious position. Student activity had been aroused in late November; now in the third week of December, demonstrations flared up on the scale of the previous January. Sadat's liberalism was again praised as the demonstrations, illegal since 1968, were tolerated. Yet, there was increasing talk of weakness and indecision on the part of the president.\textsuperscript{135} On December 30 students at Cairo University began a boycott of classes and staged a sit-in on campus. Two days later Sadat had seen enough and cracked down on student leadership. The government acknowledged forty-three arrests, while the stu-
dents claimed there were 100, On January 3, 1773, 2000-3000 students marched off campus towards downtown Cairo, in response to a communique from the state prosecutor stating that charges against their forty-five arrested comrades (the official figure) would not be made public for two weeks. The march was seen as a blatant challenge to Sadat, who had allowed protests to take place on campus only. He responded by calling out the police who forcefully dispersed the demonstration. He then ordered the universities closed until the mid-year break on January 13. By the next day the campus was quiet, the few hundred remaining students having been evicted.

The interesting aspect of the student rebellion was the greater concern for domestic issues. Much of the indictment did come from radical leftist, pro-Palestinian factions, and thus carried demands such as the renunciation of UN Resolution 242, "which involves the recognition of Israel and the guaranteeing of secure frontiers." Demands also included the establishment of a war economy and "committees of battle", the promulgation of a "revolutionary culture" and the arming of the masses, the confrontation of Israel's "reactionary" friends abroad and colonial interests within Egypt. The demand for military action, however, was never unanimously chosen as a slogan. The student body was significantly divided on the issue. As the students' manifesto spelled out, unity was found in demands that:

...the people be granted their democratic rights, that all procedures regarding persecution, repression, and arrests, together with the concealment of facts, be discarded, that the standard of living of the poorer classes of the people be improved, and that they should be delivered from injustice, exploitation, and coercion.
Specific demands included freedom to form organizations, a free press without censorship, the right to demonstrate and strike, the de-politization of the police, and popular participation in law-making. 137

The students represented a developing consciousness among the educated of internal problems. The universities were under-staffed and over-populated. Teachers, in order to earn a decent living, spent much time tutoring privately, and many students felt classroom instruction suffered as a result. The job market was saturated, and while the state guaranteed each graduate a job, employment was very often not field-related. Sadat’s liberalism did have a positive influence on student life. He had increased scholarships and wages for degree holders, as well as ending police surveillance in the classroom and allowing on-campus demonstrations. But this only served to whet appetites and foster greater expectations. 138

The students were joined in their outcry by a vocal core of Egyptian intellectuals. Support from the working class, which the government feared, was lacking. But in late December journalists issued a public memorandum echoing the call for an end to censorship. 139 Most striking, for their blatant condemnation of Egyptian society and politics were writers. In a communiqué, published in Lebanon against government requests, the Egyptian Writers’ Association proclaimed:

As writers we feel called upon to complete the picture presented in the press by exposing what lies hidden and obscure behind outward events.... The state is seething from within to such an extent that no one can be blind to it. There is a general feeling of anxiety, a prevailing mood of frustration and confusion.
The source of this national malaise, the writers contended, was the monomaniacal belief that war was the "only road to take." After finishing school, men were sent directly to the front where they sat idle. While the likelihood of war was fading,

The other citizens of the nation are subjected to a difficult life; public services are atrocious, but every shortcoming, act of negligence, failure, or mishap is attributed to the "forthcoming battle," and every complaint is met only with arrogant references to the battle.

The writers alluded to a growing concern among the populace for domestic livelihood:

The state should take due and sincere note of freely voiced Egyptian opinion. It should formulate its policy on the basis of the views of the people and their representatives and not confine itself to propagating slogans which are aimed at imposing its ideas upon the citizenry.

This was the first time a dissident opinion concerning "the battle" had been published. Quddus, in analyzing the dissidents, found them not traitors but patriots, guided by social and economic interests.140

Sadat, disagreeing, denounced dissidents as irresponsible extremists. On January 29 parliament endorsed a report, drawn up by the president, blaming leftists for the recent disturbances and connecting the agitators with Ali Sabri. Sadat asked for tighter security on the campuses, instituted a special civilian police force, and threatened to charge student leaders with disruption of national unity -- a crime punishable by imprisonment.141 The following day Sadat accused the left of attempting to form a new party outside the ASU, including a shadow cabinet. At the same time he extended blame to
the far right and hinted that the period from October to December, 1972, had been politically dangerous: "There were grudges, mutiny, and deviation, and that has to be cured."142

The remedy came four days later in the form of a sweeping purge within the ASU. Sixty-four intellectuals, writers, and journalists were dismissed. They were charged with relaying false information to foreign correspondents and of signing misleading statements, creating the impression abroad of political instability. This censure automatically led to the loss of jobs, most significantly that of Ioutfi al-Khali, the renowned pro-Soviet, Marxist editor. By February 9 the numbers purged had swollen to eighty-nine, with another fifty expected. Dismay at Sadat's seeming reversal was pronounced.143

Sadat had tolerated all the dissent he felt was possible. The threat of the army seemed remote, but the public display of criticism had gotten out of hand. Leniency on his part was being interpreted as weakness and a show of force was, therefore, deemed necessary. The Soviets were concerned by his turn against the left, but Sadat, nevertheless, chose to demonstrate his control over the home front. On February 11 the government decreed a series of austerity measures to free funds for war. Long-term industrial and agricultural projects were to be scrapped, new taxes levied, government salaries frozen, and consumer goods imports cut back. Sidqi explained, "The present explosive situation makes it imperative for us to start the immediate mobilization of our entire economy."144 Students and police fought again outside Cairo University for four days, but this time the police reportedly acted as if ordered to use more restraint. Sadat by now was able to react with greater moderation. In what was
seen as a government concession, newspapers published a statement signed by 900 students professing patriotism and obedience, and outlining grievances. The students, in a respectful tone, asked for dialogue with the authorities.145

Sadat now needed to make only a few key moves to definitively hold power. On March 25, Sidqi resigned, the highlight of a major cabinet shakeup. The new government marked a shift to the right, reflecting a growing influence of the rural bourgeoisie, more traditionalist conservative Muslims. The ASU was reorganized and Sayyid Mar‘î, its leader was replaced. Qudus claimed that differences between the party and government were the cause, having "reached the point that there were two governments in Egypt: the official Government and the government of the Socialist Union; each ignoring the other in its actions."146 The revamped ASU "would mobilize the masses and implement Government decisions; it was not to be an independent source of decisionmaking power, vying with the president."147 Sadat, once again, castigated "a great part of the Left Wing, which was linked to the centers of power," and moved to thwart their disruptive influence.148

Yet, while the government was of the right, Sadat ruled very much in the style of the left. In an effort to consolidate greater control in his own hands, Sadat not only assumed the premiership upon Sidqi's resignation, but on March 29 proclaimed himself Military-Governor-General. Implicitly threatening martial law, he called for a stronger crackdown against the "offenders of national unity." As his deputy, Sadat appointed Hamdouh Salem, significant in that Salem was not a politician, but a career police officer. One could not help comparing him to Sadat's old rival Sha'rawi Gum'ah.148
Toward October, 1973 -- The Promise Fulfilled

In the spring of 1973 Sadat's administration bore a striking resemblance to that of Nasir. Discussing the 1971 purge, Vatikiotis analyzed the consequences of Sadat's dismantling the highly efficient -- albeit repressive -- security apparatus which Nasir founded, without creating his own. By surrounding himself with relatively harmless technocrats and basing his rule on leniency, Vatikiotis contends, Sadat exposed himself to undue and embarrassing public dissent.149

The widespread unrest of early 1973, no doubt, finally convinced him that internal security was indispensable to political survival.

Ultimately, the primary issue of political legitimacy remained the struggle with Israel. The national obsession with war, the eternal desire to reclaim the lost territory, was Nasir's undying legacy. The government claimed to be preparing, but as already noted, had lost credibility and encountered escalating opposition. Conditions within the country were dire. Population growth since the Six Day War was three percent annually and defense expenditures were five times the amount allocated to socio-economic development. Sadat described the economy as having reached a "critical point":

Securing a loaf of bread in 1974 was not on the horizon. We had debts due for payment in December according to international regulations, and there was no way we could repay them....This was one of the factors which contributed to my decision to go to war, because if 1974 were to come with us in that state, Israel would not have needed to fire a single shot. 150

Dissent was the outcry of a nation which had been steadily mobilized since 1967, five years "of sacrifice and austerity such as no people
could be expected to put up with indefinitely." 151

The dominant impetus for war was the growing sensation that the status quo was becoming frozen by the de facto consent of the superpowers. Only when war seemed virtually impossible did domestic issues momentarily command public interest. Even in the blistering attack by the writers the underlying thesis was that if "the battle" was a tangible option, spirits would rise and hardship be justified. Quddus spoke for many when he wrote: "There is no doubt that nothing will change the situation we are living through, and also bring about a change in the big powers surrounding us, except war." 152 The pressures towards war had been intensified by Sadat's own hard-nosed diplomacy and ill-fated promises. He was learning to act with greater pragmatism and was developing a mature awareness of world affairs. In order to survive as a credible leader, however, Sadat needed to direct his energy, however cautious, towards a dramatic move which would shatter the complacency of those who favored the existing situation in the Middle East. Indefinite procrastination was almost as dangerous and far more exacting and humiliating than the risk of battle.

The vital prerequisite for war was the resumption of normal relations with the Soviet Union. Arms were crucial and overtures to the West had been flatly rejected. The Russians, verbally conciliatory, were exerting no great effort to provide relief. A military mission to Moscow in November negotiated more spare parts and replacements, but was a disappointment. Hoping to break the deadlock Sadat, in December, offered to extend Soviet naval privileges, due to expire in March, another five years. This overture served as verification
of the Egyptian desire for solid relations, as the Soviets responded favorably. In January Sadat and the Soviet ambassador -- meeting for the first time since the Russian had returned to Cairo -- arranged for a Russian military delegation to visit Egypt and Hafez Isma'il to travel to Moscow. 153

Although displeased with Sadat's domestic crackdown, the Soviets allowed the thaw in relations to proceed. Isma'il was in Moscow between February 7-10, during which time he met with Brezhnev for a widely reported series of talks. The absence of "frankness," as well as any Soviet statement of "unequivocal support," hinted that while differences were not settled, both parties were striving to reach common ground. Both publicized a Soviet promise to strengthen Egypt's "military capabilities." Egypt restated its opposition to partial settlement, pleasing the Kremlin which, in turn, reaffirmed the right of Arab states to use "any form of struggle in liberating their occupied territories." Most important, there was very little talk of internal politics, socialism, or "anything remotely ideological." Both parties emphasized the importance "of holding regular contacts between the leaders of the Soviet Union and Egypt to exchange viewpoints and coordinate the steps and actions" of the two nations. 154

Coinciding with the Russian change of heart was Sadat's final disillusionment with the United States. Interviewed in early January, Sadat related that he had abandoned all hope for a constructive American initiative: "I have reached the limit of my patience. I find it strange that certain Arabs have not reached the same conclusion at the time Israel is still being flooded with United States assistance." Even so, before swinging totally to the Soviets, in late
February Sadat sent Hafez Isma’il to sound out the new Nixon administration. Certain changes in Washington were forecast. With the signing of the Paris peace accords in late January and Viet Nam quiet, Henry Kissinger announced that the Middle East was top priority and appeared eager to try his hand at affecting a breakthrough. Although he was six months away from replacing Rogers, Kissinger as head of the National Security Council had by 1973 totally usurped influence from the State Department. He had no desire to revive the Rogers Plan. He felt that the basis of the plan -- the attainment of a total Israeli withdrawal and the conclusion of a separate peace treaty -- was impractical, too fundamental to the source of conflict to succeed in ever bringing the parties to the negotiating table. Rather, he sought to develop a formula in which simpler, easier obtained agreements would serve as icebreakers and lead to discussion of the basic issues.156

With his penchant for the dramatic, Kissinger and Isma’il met for two days of secret talks in a private New Jersey mansion. Isma’il was reportedly sent to clarify Egyptian policy -- a peace agreement with Israel was conceivable, but not at the cost of territorial loss.157 Kissinger, in turn, presented his schematic -- Israeli recognition of Egyptian sovereignty of Sinai, coupled with an Egyptian-American guarantee of security and a long transition period, during which negotiations towards a permanent settlement would continue. The two discussed the obligations of both Israel and Egypt in striving for peaceful coexistence, the requirements of Israeli security, and the role of the Palestinians. No breakthrough was achieved, but the two agreed to continue the dialogue, Isma’il accepting the no-
tion of secret talks with Kissinger as mediator. U.S. sources stressed the "good rapport," but observers noted that both sides went to great pains to emphasize cordiality.

The outcome of the visit convinced Sadat that while characters and tactics might change, Nixon's policies would not. It was Egypt that was required to bend. According to Haykal, Egypt was expected to match an Israeli withdrawal and the resultant loss of "concrete and material security" with political and territorial concessions. This ran directly counter to the message Isma'il had brought to Washington. The United States, kissinger stated, would never impose a settlement on its ally, but would consider exerting pressure which Israel would be unable to ignore, "if a 'moral basis' for their use existed and could be shown to exist to American public opinion." The Kissinger program was not perceived as even-handed; Egypt felt pressed to sacrifice more than under the Rogers Plan.

One month later Nixon provided further proof that U.S. policy was "virtually identical to Israel's." On February 28, three days following Isma'il's visit, Golda Meir arrived in Washington and succeeded in arranging a major arms purchase. Nixon's intent, in addition to demonstrating American determination to maintain a weapons balance, was to encourage Israeli negotiating flexibility. Nevertheless, the promise of four air squadrons (forty-eight planes) plus production assistance to the Israeli aircraft industry, was an incredible blow to Sadat. Isma'il met with Kissinger again in May, but talks were strained; the two dealt more with U.S. arms policy than issues discussed the previous February. Another meeting was not planned, as the matter was left hanging. The Nixon adm' stration
soon became embroiled in Watergate and the momentum behind Kissinger's drive faded. Any real hope for peace was shattered by the American-Israeli arms agreement. Within a week of its announcement, on March 14, Sadat regrouped his government, proclaimed himself military-governor-general, expressed exasperation with the United States, and declared an era of total confrontation. Henceforth, there would be no surrender of territory, no canal accord, no separate peace, and no negotiation. By the end of March, air raid drills were instituted. In early April Sadat told Newsweek, "Everything in this country is now being mobilized in earnest for the resumption of the battle which is now inevitable."

The campaign to incite popular support and readiness was far more extensive than during previous periods of psychological mobilization. The lack of civilian-military coordination was a specific grievance of the students in January 1972. Now emergency war measures were proclaimed daily. Typical was: "All public utilities and state institutions will be placed at the disposal of the Air Forces." The formation of battle committees was encouraged and special laws, almost martial in content, were decreed. One such law instituted a six-month jail sentence for "breach of peace," an offense which included excessive noise after ten o'clock at night. In an effort to lower prices, spies were sent into stores, an action which led to the arrest of thirty-eight shopowners in one day. Above all, there was an attempt to underline the serious nature of events. To this end, Sadat announced that the government had moved into the "operations room."

The key to Sadat's mobilization was his success in procuring Soviet weapons for the military. Immediately following Hafès Isma'il's
mission to Washington in February, War Minister Ahmed Isma'il jour-
neyed to Moscow. In a meeting with Brezhnev, the Russian denied that
the U.S.S.R. had ever favored a situation of no war—no peace and
agreed on details of the first major arms package since the break.
Arms soon began flowing regularly. Quddus reported on March 24 that
Egypt was "no longer concerned with the types of weapons," having
resolved the problem of "continuity of arms supply." Two days later
Sadat confirmed his success in placing "our cordial relations with
the Soviet Union in their proper perspective and straightened them
out completely." This was the result, he continued, of the Russians
"supplying us with everything they can." He concluded that he was
"completely satisfied." 166

A Soviet-American summit, however, was scheduled for late June
and Arab fear of a superpower deal revived. Sadat mounted a public
campaign to pressure the Soviets to uphold their commitment to the
Arab cause, explaining:

Our friends in the Soviet Union must know that
the peaceful solution, which the United States
has been talking about, is fictitious. The
peaceful solution which the United States has
been talking about is a deception and a mirage.

Brezhnev, through Egyptian Foreign Minister Muhammed Hasan al-Zayyat,
assured Sadat that the Soviet Union would not forsake Egyptian inter-
est. But Sadat remained wary. Complaining that "In its assessment
of the dangers in this area, and its interest in lessening tension
with the United States, the Soviet Union does not consider our own
analysis as it ought to do," he looked forward to the summit with
great concern. 167.
The Soviets never succeeded in allaying Egyptian fears that they would desert their ally. The Nixon-Brezhnev talks of June 26-28 hold no great significance for the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although discussed at length, the Middle East was barely mentioned in the joint communique. The statement was bland:

Both parties agreed to continue to exert their efforts to promote the quickest possible settlement in the Middle East. This settlement should be in accordance with the interests of all states in the area, be consistent with their independence and sovereignty, and should take into account the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people. 169

Kissinger acknowledged that these were the toughest items of discussion during the course of the summit.169 Both sides, faced with the prospect of stalemate, balked at serious confrontation and passed on to other issues. Brezhnev did speak on Egypt's behalf, stressing Sadat's determination and warning that only strong American pressure on Israel could possibly avert war. But the lack of public comment was disturbing.170

Sadat's propaganda campaign and Soviet reassurances continued throughout the summer. In mid-July Hafez Isma'il reported: "The two sides are in total accord in their assessment of the Middle East situation. They are also in agreement on future steps and in their approach to relations between the two countries." The arms flow continued, he said, because the Russians were "determined to strengthen Egyptian and Arab capability to confront the Zionist occupation."171 The press remained critical. Quddus and others decried a Soviet shift away from Egyptian goals. In August Sadat stated that a new approach was necessary, in light of the "embraces" of the powers. He
again bemoaned the circumstances in which total American support for the enemy was countered by the cautious, half-hearted backing of the Soviets.**172**

Complementing the "all-out preparation for battle" was an ongoing diplomatic campaign. The thrust of diplomacy, however, was now directed at the Arab countries, from which Sadat sought financial and military support. Here Sadat succeeded where Nasir had failed -- in creating a coalition of nations which, save for the presence of Israel, would long ago have turned on each other. In 1973 the Arab world was sorely divided. Each state was in search of a strong ally; many nearly jumped into Sadat's open arms. To deal with all simultaneously required statesmanship Sadat had rarely demonstrated. Yet, he not only forged alliances, but affected a rapprochment among hostile neighbors. He did not attain intimacy with all, nor did he intend to, but the Arab world went into the October War more unified than it perhaps ever had been.

Sadat's achievement was the result of a major public relations offensive. Its design was to discredit the United States and isolate Israel; to demonstrate Egypt's will to fight and the desirability of a coordinated Arab effort. At the Arab League conference in early February, eighteen nations signed an accord calling for long-range military action and pledged to consolidate foreign policy under the supreme command of Ahmed Isma'il.**173** Throughout June and July Sadat used the United Nations as an international podium to decry the Israeli occupation and American complicity. The product of the UN's first major review of the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1967 was a resolution which "strongly deplored" Israeli policy. Only a U.S. veto
prevented its passage, which further fueled Sadat's rancor. In August, Sadat instituted a new phase of economic reforms. He spoke of expanding free enterprise, currency controls, free customs zones, the abolishment of many import license requirements, and the easing of foreign investment regulations. Extremely pleasing to the right, this program was primarily intended to attract foreign Arab capital.

A major shift in Israeli policy, which threatened to further fortify the status quo, provided indirect support to Sadat's campaign. With Arab positions hardening, the Israelis followed suit. In August 1972, the Knesset had been willing to explore the possibility of "proximity talks," but following the Munich massacre in September, in a dramatic reversal, declared that negotiations were not acceptable until terrorism was eradicated. During her visit to Washington, in February 1973, Golda Meir did relent somewhat, consenting to the principle of Kissinger's secret talks. At the same time, however, an increase in terrorist activity heightened tensions along the Israeli borders with Syria and Lebanon. On April 10, in a pre-dawn retaliatory operation, Israeli commandos raided the downtown Beirut headquarters of the PLO, killing seven, including three important terrorist leaders. In late April, al-Mahar reported a full alert of Syrian forces following the capture of six guerrillas in the Golan by an Israeli border patrol. On August 10, Israeli pilots intercepted a Middle East Airlines plane outside Beirut, forced it to land in Israel, and after a passenger check allowed it to resume its flight. Reportedly the intended prize was George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an offshoot of the PLO.

As a consequence of such aggressive retaliation, Israel found itself
regularly condemned by the UN and increasingly alienated in the world.

Compounded by internal pressures, the result was the promulgation of an equally aggressive policy in the occupied territories. Israeli strategy since 1967 had been to administer the captured lands by military government, to not incorporate them into Israel proper, and by offering them as bargaining points to lure the Arabs to the negotiating table. After six years and a multitude of proposals concerning how much territory could be retained, within the framework of secure boundaries, pressure was building for a concrete decision. Most vocal was Defense Minister Moshe Dayan who expressed extreme pessimism at the turn of events. Stating publicly that the chance for peace in the ensuing ten to fifteen years was remote, he advocated integration of the occupied land into the Israeli economy and political system. He proposed that the ruling Labor Party adopt his plan as its platform. 178

Dayan's prognosis was by no means universally accepted, nor was his remedy. Most important figures in the government rejected the Dayan Plan -- which abolished the ban restricting purchase of property in the territories to the government -- on the grounds that it foreclosed chances for peace and put governmental decisionmaking in the hands of private individuals. 179 The plan was denounced as "creeping annexationism" and was rejected by the cabinet on April 9. To avoid a cabinet crisis Dayan yielded, but with elections approaching the government coveted his political value regardless of his maverick ideology. Labor faced its toughest election in the history of the state, many prominent members having deserted to form a myriad of
lesser, one-issue parties, unaffiliated with the ruling coalition. Labor also had to contend with the recently formed right-wing bloc of Menachem Begin, Likud, which would certainly support the de facto annexation of what it claimed as "liberated" territory. The prospect of Dayan's defection to the ranks of Likud led Labor to reach a compromise with him in early September.

This compromise, known as the Galili Doctrine, only furthered Arab hostility. Passing 78-0 (with one abstention) as a four-year program, it was a resounding victory for Dayan. Specific projects were outlined -- the creation of new settlements in the Golan and West Bank, the expansion of new Jerusalem to the east, and the highly touted development city Yamit, south of Gaza, on the coast of Sinai. This change of policy, although recognizably far-reaching, drew only mild criticism from the United States. Kissinger believed that little could be achieved prior to the elections in Israel. Consequently, rather than create a stir, official displeasure with the Galili-Dayan program was conveyed by a minor State Department spokesman. Particularly offensive to Sadat was the Yamit project. "Every word spoken about Yamit," he told Haykal, "is a knife pointing at me personally and at my self-respect." Any hope that the new policy, as suggested by some, would incite a diplomatic breakthrough by pressuring the Arabs to negotiate before permanent Israeli occupation became a fait accompli was futile.

Sadat's easiest connection was with Syria. He and Assad shared much in common, both coming to power in autumn of 1970, both promoting liberal rule. The two leaders had maintained close contact through the years, considering renewal of federation and emphasis-
ing the need for a coordinated strike against Israel. Assad steadily improved his relations with the U.S.S.R., benefitting materially in the aftermath of the Soviet exodus from Egypt. He assumed the role of mediator between Brezhnev and Sadat in the months surrounding the break. Although shunned by the latter, the revival of Soviet-Egyptian ties erased any antipathy towards him that Sadat may have felt. 184

When the time for battle arrived Assad and the Syrians were more than eager. Syrian fanaticism regarding Israel was deep rooted and unrivalled. The Syrian-Israeli border seethed with tension. Heavy fighting erupted in November 1972 and again in early January 1973. On January 2, in a skirmish over Lebanon, a Syrian MiG was downed. Six days later, Israeli air strikes drew Syrian retaliation. The result was a day-long air and land battle in which Israeli pilots flew seven raids, downing six opponents and striking both terrorist and Syrian army bases. On land the Israelis were equally effective, knocking out five tanks while sustaining a minimum of casualties. 185 Sadat initiated overtures to Assad in early spring. Ahmed Isma'il visited Damascus on April 2 and again on May 2. In June Sadat and Assad met. One month later it was announced that Egypt and Syria were in agreement on a common policy — Assad finally recognizing UN Resolution 242 and Israel's right to exist within pre-1967 boundaries. All that remained to be done was the adoption of a battle plan. 186

Recruitment of Jordan was a much more notable accomplishment. King Husayn was the political outcast of the Arab world. Most countries had severed relations with Jordan after his massacre of the Palestinians in "Black September" 1970. Only the threat of American-Israeli intervention forestalled Syrian tanks from coming to the aid
of the guerrillas. Besides a hostile border, Husayn was financially beset by the cessation of Kuwaiti and Libyan foreign aid. Sadat severed ties with Jordan in April 1972, in response to Husayn's proposed federation of an autonomous West Bank with his kingdom. The earmarking of Jerusalem as a joint capital rounded out what appeared to be a separate settlement with Israel. It was common knowledge Husayn had secretly met with Israeli representatives on several occasions. With the enactment of the "open bridges" policy, allowing Arabs free passage between Israel and Jordan, a state of de facto peace existed between the two nations. After permitting himself to be dragged into the Six Day War, in which he lost the most productive land in Jordan, Husayn concluded that "another war would be disastrous." 187

Sadat, thus needed to play off ontracism by the Arab world against Husayn's tendency towards practical individualism. Husayn began the new year with a fresh drive for settlement, slashing his defense budget and diverting more revenue to economic development. 188 According to Jordanian sources he was prepared to open peace talks if Israel showed flexibility on the question of Jerusalem. 189 On February 3, at the Arab League conference, he agreed to "reactivate" the Eastern front, but the next day added the condition that a new peace initiative proceed any resumption of hostility. 190 By September Husayn apparently had lost enough hope to succumb to Sadat's overtures. Israeli intransigence -- the decision to bolster the settlement of Kiriyat Arba, then to annex the West Bank -- as well as Saudi intervention on his behalf with Kuwait, no doubt, played major roles in bringing the Jordanian monarch to Cairo in mid-September.
for a summit of the "frontline" leaders.

Cessation of hostility with his Arab brothers proved to be of primary importance to Husayn. To regain favor he was pressured not only to reactivate his border, but to sanction the return of Palestinian irregulars to Jordanian soil. Husayn yielded and Syria and Egypt renewed diplomatic ties with Jordan. Initially the King hedged on fulfilling his concession to the Palestinians, but on September 18 he declared a general amnesty for 1500 prisoners. The following day he personally oversaw their release and even had tea and coffee with the pardoned Fatah leader, Abu Daoud.

It remains unclear how much Sadat and Assad revealed to their compatriot of the plans for war. It is doubtful he was provided details -- on September 23 he spoke of evading hasty action, "so that we do not suffer shocks and defeats as in the past," -- nor that he promised more than rearguard action to keep the Israelis mobilized on a third front. The Jordanian front, in fact, remained quiet. Husayn entered the war on October 13, one week after its outbreak, by merely sending a brigade to aid Syrian forces.

Securing financial support proved more complicated as Sadat encountered one major snag in his plans -- the irrepressible Qadhafi of Libya. Relations with the Colonel had turned steadily sour since August 1971 when the two states embarked on the program for union. Qadhafi drafted the first concrete proposal in July 1972, responding favorably to Sadat's break with the Russians. This inspired negotiations which led to the establishment of September 1973 as the target date for full enactment of the merger. Qadhafi's impetuosity, however, soon collided with Sadat's cautious pragmatism. The charm
of the fanatically ideological, self-styled protege of Nasir, faded in Sadat’s eyes, and the Egyptian president became frustrated.

The Libyan’s complete lack of political tact or statesmanship deterred Sadat from actively pursuing any close cooperation. On February 22 Israeli pilots downed a commercial Libyan airliner which strayed over Sinai on a flight to Cairo. Seventy-four died in what the Israeli cabinet claimed was last resort action -- the Libyan pilot having acknowledged, but ignored warning signals and instructions to land. Qadhdhafi, according to Haykal, was prepared to bomb Haifa in retaliation, but was restrained, as he later was from torpedoing the Queen Mary enroute to Israel.194 In April he proclaimed a “cultural revolution,” the primary aim being the institution of fundamentalist Islam in place of secular law and lifestyle. The prospect of such “culture” being unleashed in Egypt was intolerable to the modernized population. In late June Qadhdhafi flew into Cairo unannounced and set about promoting his ideas to a skeptical audience. The Colonel then tried to force the issue of merger by gathering 20,000 countrymen, who crossed the border and began marching on Cairo, hoping to arouse a demonstration of popular support. Alarmed at the inflow of the zealously religious Libyans Sadat blocked their path and upbraided his neighbor for the irresponsible act.195

Soon after, Sadat delivered the death blow to federation. With the scheduled date of merger approaching, he stalled, calling for a constitutional assembly to review the premises and details of the prospective move. In the meantime, each nation would retain independent sovereignty. When war came Qadhdhafi was definitely not part of the coalition. The Colonel was incensed at Egyptian friendship with
conservative regimes; Sadat could not trust him with details. Qadhdhafi told *Le Monde* on October 23, "Sadat and Assad have taken their decision (to go to war) without my agreement, without consulting, without even informing me." 196 True to character, the insult did not deter him from both criticizing the war and scourging Libya "for arms and aid of every description." 197

The spurning of Libya was more than compensated for by Sadat's successful courtship of the Arabian oil kingdoms. Egypt's unprecedented alliances with the conservative sheikhs, notably Faysal of Saudi Arabia, signifies a dramatic shift away from Nasirism. Faysal was the key and he was extremely receptive to developments. The deterioration of Soviet-Egyptian relations was eagerly observed in Riyadh and prompted the anti-Communist Faysal to intervene with the United States on Egypt's behalf. Desperate for money to buy arms, Sadat responded to Saudi overtures and initiated ties with the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms as well.

Sadat's turn back to Russia did not dissuade Faysal from providing financial support, which started arriving in December 1972. Sadat, in expelling the Russians, had honored the King's advice and accepted his guarantee of American support. Now Faysal, deeming Sadat's influence too great to forfeit, felt compelled to aid Egypt -- even if it meant providing revenue to buy back Soviet support. It was only after 1973 that Saudi Arabia emerged as an important political entity, and Faysal as a "Man of the Year." Before the October War his kingdom was isolated -- surrounded by hostile neighbors, despised by the bulk of the Arab world for his reactionary monarchy, and fearful of Communist influence spreading in the Middle East. Paradoxically,
it was Saudi money that enabled Sadat to purchase the first major new arms package from the Soviets in February.

The decisive factor in perpetuating Faysal's favor was Sadat's determination to wage war. Israel again proved the great unifier. A fundamentalist Muslim of the traditional Saudi mold, Faysal found the presence of the Jewish state intolerable, especially after its conquest of holy Jerusalem. The "protector of the two holy cities" had no army to speak of, but had vast wealth, connections with the smaller oil magnates, and saw his star rising as benefactor of the Arab cause.

Beyond money, it was Arabian oil that Sadat saw as Faysal's greatest resource. The chain of events that led to the use of oil as a political weapon actually began in Cairo. Sadat saw economic blackmail as the last means of forcing the West to intervene against Israel. Unfortunately, as the status quo was freezing and time was running out for war, so the oil weapon had a limited duration of possible effectiveness. With alternate energy sources on the horizon, Haykal estimated "we have altogether between three and five years to join forces and to develop a unified Arab (oil) policy." Ahmed Isma'il flew to Riyadh in April 1973, the first of an exchange of emissaries, undoubtedly centering on the oil issue. Initially Faysal balked at any such idea. His was one of the few Arab regimes whose basis of support was the United States and he legitimately feared exploiting the energy pipeline. Haykal claims the Saudi princes were divided on the question. Faysal remained opposed until his last meeting with Sadat prior to war, in late August. On August 27, the day Sadat returned from a five day trip to Saudia Arabia, Qatar,
and Syria, Faysal's oil minister, Ahmed Zaki al-Yamani hinted that Arab oil policy would hereafter be colored by recipients' relations with the United States and Israel.

The Arab coalition was set; all that remained was a Soviet guarantee of support. Soviet policy makers faced a difficult dilemma. The U.S.S.R. concurrently sought peaceful coexistence with the United States, yet was not prepared to abandon its rivalry with the West or to sacrifice in-roads established in the Third World. The hope was that continued support for the Arabs and agitation against the U.S. and NATO could logically coincide with successful compromise on major issues of mutual concern, such as strategic arms limitation. The Kremlin received Sadat's offer to extend naval privileges with great favor. Egypt was the best base of operations for Soviet activity in the area, being the most stable of the Arab countries. Sadat's future was no longer as tenuous as it had been the year before. The Russians were probably growing to respect his leadership and assertion of independence. At the same time, most Soviet leaders undoubtedly assumed that having backtracked so quickly, Sadat would be less likely to reject them a second time.

The serious prospect of war, however, put great pressure on the Soviet scheme and intensified the dilemma. A tightrope act prevailed throughout the Nixon-Brezhnev talks in June and posed no barriers, as both parties deferred discussion on irreconcilable matters. At the same time, the Russians came to realize that the U.S.S.R. could not diplomatically afford to reject Sadat's requests. By summer, a decision to deny Egyptian needs would have been tantamount, in Arab eyes, to forsaking their cause and admitting that Soviet-Arab inter-
ests were no longer compatible. Sadat's public relations campaign was particularly effective in reminding Brezhnev of this. The Russians could no longer walk away from Sadat and find open arms in another Arab state, for all of note had tied themselves to Egypt. Beset by contradictory goals, the Kremlin chose not to make clear-cut decisions or policy statements, but continued to appease the Arabs by leaving the arms pipeline open. 202

In retrospect the risk was minimal, but Soviet determination to support Egypt suggests a willingness to subvert detente. The Soviet Union provided Sadat with arms unconditionally, “at no cost other than cash: he made no concessions, no promises, and no changes of policy of benefit to Moscow.” The Russians delivered everything Sadat could afford to purchase. His army was inundated with highly sophisticated equipment — SAM 6s, SAM 7s, Saggar anti-tank missiles — all easy to operate and maintain. Unofficially, the Kremlin had made a de facto commitment to the Arab cause. 203 The new dilemma was “not whether it should support (war), but how far its involvement could go without unduly antagonizing Western believers in detente.” 204

The Soviet armament of Egypt, as in 1969, made war a foregone conclusion. Most significant was Sadat’s acquisition of Scud surface-to-surface missiles. With the capability of carrying a nuclear warhead and a range of 180 miles, the Scud was capable of striking inside Israeli territory. The equivalent of a medium-range bomber force, this fulfilled Sadat’s dream of offensive capability. Former Israeli general Chaim Herzog, from a military perspective asserts, “In truth, the final decision which led to war was made in the Krem-
lin by those who decided to supply the Scud to the Egyptians." 205

The batteries were Soviet-manned; the missiles were therefore not likely to be unleashed against Israeli targets. But their symbolic presence was not lost on Sadat.

Brezhnev was kept abreast of developments throughout the summer, but Sadat refutes any claims of collaboration. As late as October 3, in a message to the Soviet leader, he still sought clarification of Russian policy:

I'd like to inform you officially that Egypt and Syria have decided to start military operations against Israel so as to break the present deadlock. I would like the Soviet leaders to give me an urgent answer to this question: What will the Soviet attitude be?

He admittedly did not reveal the date of attack, but decided to do so the next day, which "was preferable, we thought, in view of my bad relations with the Soviet Union." The Soviet response, he asserts, avoided the question of attitude; the Kremlin merely requested permission to evacuate families of Russian advisors. Sadat felt this to be a sign the Soviets lacked confidence in him. 206

Soviet behavior during the October War suggests that forces within the Kremlin never concurred upon a specific policy, but continued to vacillate on the basis of events. Ignoring the protocol of détente, Brezhnev did not warn the United States of war's imminence. The airlift of Russian families began on October 4, TASS warning of Israeli preparation for an offensive. Massive aid was supplied, but only after October 8, when early Arab success had been confirmed. One ship in particular, Sadat reveals, bound for Egypt with supplies,
received orders to "wander around a little in the Mediterranean" before being dispatched directly. 207 Once committed to the military venture Soviet support assumed remarkable proportions. Propaganda directed at the Arab world encouraged force:

Arab fraternal solidarity must, more than ever before play a decisive role. Syria and Egypt must not be alone in their struggle against a treacherous enemy. There is an urgent need for the widest aid and support of the progressive regimes in these countries who...stand for hope and freedom in the Arab world. 208

The Soviets did not actively press for a cease-fire until the Egyptian advance stalled and the Israeli army had rallied. The pinnacle of the Soviet swing towards the Arabs was their mobilization of seven divisions (50,000 men) and the threat to intervene on October 24, which threatened to spark an international crisis.

Behind the web of diplomatic events Sadat doggedly prepared for war. In May Ahmed Isma'il visited Syria and the basic concept of battle began to be formulated. By August, at a planning and coordination conference in Alexandria, the chiefs of staff of Egypt and Syria discussed the date of attack. In conjunction with the political leadership, October 6 -- the tenth day of Ramadan and Yom Kippur -- was selected. The plan was named Operation Badr after the battle in which Mohammed conquered Mecca, the preparation of which began on Ramadan 10, 634 A.D. On September 6 Isma'il issued orders placing the Syrian and Egyptian armed forces on full readiness. On October 1 he issued instructions for a joint air strike at 2:05 p.m. on October 6; on October 3 he visited Damascus and confirmed plans with President Assad. On October 1 Sadat met with the Supreme Council of the Armed
Forces and declaring, "I bear responsibility before history," signed the war order. 289

October 1973 -- The Consequences Of Aggression

War erupted on schedule on October 6, 1973. The Israelis, fearing the political repercussions of a pre-emptive strike, sacrificed certain victory, and miscalculating the time of attack, were taken by surprise. Suffering heavy casualties the Israeli army withdrew down the slope of the Golan and away from the banks of the Suez Canal. Not until ten days later did the tide turn and Israel, having fully mobilized, secure the Syrian front and mount a successful counter-attack in Sinai. On October 6 Soviet aid began arriving. The following day Israel sent Washington an urgent appeal for arms, and Egypt rejected American overtures for a cease-fire in place. Israel also categorically opposed the notion, but as promised supplies did not arrive, their resolve gradually weakened. In this period American supplies played a crucial role -- Nixon initially withheld arms in order to pressure Israel to accept a cease-fire; then, when Sadat refused to cooperate, he resumed shipments to signal the Egyptians that further aggression would not be countenanced. While American transports were mid-air the decisive battle of the Sinai was fought and the Egyptian drive toward the passes halted. On October 16 the Israelis crossed the canal; by October 19 Moscow was ready to talk cease-fire. On October 22 the first was proclaimed, but by the next day it proved meaningless. As Israel moved to surround the Egyptian Third Army the Russians mobilized and Nixon responded with a full
alert of American forces. On October 25 UN Resolution 340 was passed, calling for an immediate end to fighting and the dispatch of UN observers and an emergency force. The Egyptian army was spared and Sadat's war officially ended.

Militarily, the war destroyed the image of the incompetent Arab soldier and quashed, not the notion of Israeli supremacy, but certainly the sense of invincibility. The Israelis encountered a well-prepared Egyptian army, whose commanders had studied every aspect of their operation and opponents behavior; whose individual soldiers had painstakingly practiced the most specific functions.

For years the individual soldier was trained in his particular role in war. Each unit dealt with its own problem and nothing else. One unit did nothing for three years but train in passing across a water barrier a pipe for transporting fuel...

During the opening days of the war Egyptian forces were extremely successful -- establishing a foothold on the east bank of the canal, then shifting to a defensive strategy. This effectively checked initial Israeli efforts to repulse them.

For the Israeli Defense Forces the October War was truly a "war of atonement." The Israelis suffered greatly for their over-confident belief that an Arab attack would be hopeless and that Arab leaders recognized this. The result was a laxity in intelligence analysis and command. Herzog contends:

The basic errors of the Israelis in the Yom Kippur War grew, paradoxically enough, out of their victory in the Six Day War. It was never properly appreciated that in that war the Israeli Defense Forces had attacked a comparatively hastily deployed Egyptian army...
The false sense of security had been so exaggerated that strategists failed to analyze changes in the weaponry of the Egyptians, such as the anti-tank and anti-aircraft capability Sadat received from the Soviets. Nor did the high command seriously consider parallel troop movements on the Egyptian and Syrian borders. By the time Israeli leaders recognized the true danger, it was too late to meet the combined onslaught with a fully mobilized force.

Israeli complacency was precipitated to a great extent by the character of Sadat. How extensive a program of deliberate deception he conceived is uncertain. Russian collaboration in the deception, suggested by some, is rather doubtful. The Soviet motive in supplying a weapons system like the Scud is unclear, even if it was a pure cash deal with diplomatic conditions or encouragement. The notion that the press campaign of early August, which doubted Russian sincerity, was orchestrated in conjunction with the Kremlin is highly unlikely. The mobilization of reservists some twenty times in 1973, while causing Israel in May to respond in kind, is easily projected as military necessity, especially in light of the intensity and detail to which the Egyptian army drilled. Israeli intelligence was at fault and its political leadership overly preoccupied with internal affairs. Sadat's greatest aid in surprising his enemy, as well as the United States, and conceivably the Soviet Union upon revelation of the plan, was his past. To most observers, especially after the May threat fizzled, Sadat was merely rattling his sabre another time.

Several events do stand out as aspects of a concerted effort to deceive the foe. While not necessarily brilliant devices, the following incidents probably added to the surprise of October 6. In late
September all reservists were activated for a tour of duty which supposedly was to end October 8. Unlike the previous spring, the home front was not mobilized. On September 29, the third anniversary of Nasir's death, Sadat mentioned "the battle" only in passing:

I have deliberately not broached the subject of the battle because there has been enough talk. I only say that the liberation of the land as I have told you is the first and main task facing us. God willing we shall achieve this task. 212

The same day Sadat declared clemency for more than 200 dissident journalists and students due to go on trial within ten days. With their pardon and return to work insured, Sadat appeared on the brink of a new phase of domestic liberalism to appear the war-hungry populace. On the diplomatic front Egypt seemed prepared to resume talks with Kissinger in November after the elections in Israel. A further sign of peaceful intent was the agreement, on October 1, with Bechtel International, awarding the San Francisco firm the contract to build a $400 million oil pipeline from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. By doing so, Sadat opened the door for the first American involvement in Egypt since 1956. Furthermore, the bypassing of the Suez Canal was perceived as an attempt to encourage foreign purchasers to pump oil through Egypt rather than shipping around Africa or via the Israeli pipeline. This would allow Egypt to regain a major source of revenue, lost upon the canal's closure in 1967, without its reopening. 213

Militarily the war did not end as he would have liked, but politically it was a tremendous success. Instead of maintaining a foothold in Sinai, he found his Third Army surrounded and he turned to the big powers to intervene and forestall its annihilation. The
Israeli army proved itself far superior under improvisational conditions, while Sadat steadfastly refused to consider a cease-fire in place, the Israelis quickly turned the tables on him. Yet, Sadat never lost the political advantage. In assessing what he considered "a new type of war," Haykal noted the inevitability of superpower intervention and stressed the need for short-range, limited objectives and a political strategy to supplement force once the fighting had ceased.\textsuperscript{214} Sadat's strategy was bolstered by an unexpected shift in the attitudes of the powers -- the Soviet Union whole-heartedly behind the Arab cause and the United States beginning to seriously question its unconditional support of Israel. The American hesitancy to re-supply Israel, the decision to seek a cease-fire with Egyptian troops in Sinai, then to insure that Israeli forces did not administer the death blow to the encircled Third Army, revealed to Sadat an unexpected ally in the post-war diplomatic struggle to achieve some settlement of the overall Arab-Israeli problem.

From war emerged a new era of diplomacy. By going to war Sadat succeeded, almost instantaneously in erasing the status quo and in causing most parties involved in the conflict to re-evaluate and modify hardened stances. Some grew more obstinate. Syria remained tradionally rigid in its unwillingness to reckon with a Jewish state, and Nasser found the oil weapon much to his liking -- a means of becoming more than the Arabs' benefactor, an international force. For Israel the "war of atonement" affected more than military thinking, having far reaching social and political consequences. The euphoria of June 1967 was suddenly quashed by the staggering casualties of October 1973. In the war's aftermath the immediate concern was se-
curing a cease-fire and an exchange of prisoners, but the future was uncertain. Resolution of the problem of the occupied Arab land could no longer be delayed. The potential for serious discussion with the Arabs existed, but so did the likelihood that American support would wane. The United States also came to realize the serious nature of Arab aspirations and embarked on a new, more successful peace initiative which featured a truly even-handed approach. The Russians faced the unenviable fact that they had exhausted much of their importance in the Middle East. As the Kremlin watched Israelis and Egyptians sit together for the first time at Kilometer 101, in Sinai, Soviet policymakers realized that while playing the instrumental role in fostering war, they would have no part in the search for peace.

Sadat deserves much credit for fostering and adapting to the new political realities. Alliances with the rich Arab nations proved sound, as he received $500 million upon the outbreak of fighting. These desperately sought revenues, Sadat related, were the reward for making war: "You must realize that it was not possible for us to get one dollar of this Arab aid before we wrote the heroic story of the crossing with our blood. During the first week after the October battle, the Arab brothers sent us this aid."215 Improved relations with the United States were affected largely by his own initiative. On October 29 Isma'il Fahmi was sent to Washington to arrange a Kissinger visit, implementation of the cease-fire, and the resumption of normal diplomatic relations between Egypt and the U.S.216 On November 11 Israeli and Egyptian negotiators concluded a six-point cease-fire and disengagement of forces. The Geneva Conference convened on December 21, but was adjourned the following day,
Syria having boycotted the proceedings and Israel having refused to sit in the presence of a Palestinian delegation. Yet the talks at Kilometer 101 proceeded. The new year began with the first stable foundations for peace established and hopes raised for continued progress.

Hero Of The Crossing

After three years of uncertain rule Sadat truly demonstrated himself to be a national leader. From the outset he determined to create his own identity. If he had compromised himself for eighteen years, under Nasir, in order to survive politically, he refused to do so as president. He emerged from the shadows a man of strong ideals and would not bow before those who deemed themselves the rightful heirs of Nasir. With characteristic arrogance he alienated himself from the "centres of power," then determined to liquidate them. This proved less dangerous than originally expected and from May 1971 onward, the home front was controlled with relative ease. Sadat made peace with remaining political opponents and wooed public support with his liberal measures. His liberalism, however, was more than a political ploy. Sadat is basically a man of the right. The original appointment of Mahmud Fawzi as prime minister and the initial reforms tend to indicate a genuine concern for domestic affairs, and a basic belief that freer enterprise would best revive Egypt's economic ills. Sadat did not hesitate to use force when threatened, but except for an interlude from March 1973 through the war, his regime always reflected more closely the political vision of the
Foreign affairs had always been Sadat's stumbling block. In the superpowers, Sadat encountered forces much greater than any with which he was familiar. His arrogance dealing with them led to consecutive failures, for which he faced renewed opposition at home. The Soviets constantly reminded him who called the shots. In the "fog speech" of January 1972, Sadat appears to have recognized the reality, but by July 1972 he had thrown out his dubious ally. He never did respect the Kremlin's interests, towards the United States he acted with greater deference, but again assumed he could command American policy. With his coalescing of the Arab nations -- terrain with which he was more familiar and on which Egypt held a comparative advantage -- Sadat demonstrated a growing mastery of diplomacy. With the Arab world unified he could confront the powers with authority. The Russians had little choice but to arm Egypt. Through war Sadat finally proved to the world that the pre-October status quo was intolerable and that he would act forcefully to prevent its becoming a permanent reality. There was no avoiding war, but once the cease-fire held, the roads to peace were substantially cleared.

In Egypt Sadat was experiencing the peak of his popularity. He rode the crest of a new wave of de-Nasirization which was much freer and far reaching. According to Rubinstein:

Indicative of the extent of the process is the frequent contrasting of Nasir's failure in 1967 with Sadat's success in 1973. For example, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the October War, at a conference in Cairo... the official spokesmen talked about their "glorious
triumph in 1973” and stressed that in 1967 “the political leadership,” and not the army, had been responsible for the defeat. With the denigration of Nasir came the cult of Sadat. 217

The accolades included reference to his domestic reforms, but glory was bestowed upon Sadat as the “Hero of the Crossing.” His reputation was well-deserved; “the battle” was Sadat’s definitive test. It is with the October War that the era of Nasir ends and Anwar Sadat emerges as his rightful successor.
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