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The Origins of Alliances

STEPHEN M. WALT

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From the Six Day War to the Camp David Accords

This chapter continues the historical account by describing the alliances that formed in the Middle East from 1967 to 1979. The story begins in the aftermath of the Six Day War and ends following the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

MAIN THEMES

This period in Middle East diplomacy can be summarized in terms of two main themes. The first is the gradual rise and dramatic decline in Arab collaboration against Israel, both the result of Egypt's abandoning its quest for hegemony in the Arab world. Egypt's new-found moderation was predictable; the Six Day War had left Nasser dependent on subsidies from his former rivals, and the ideological conflicts that characterized inter-Arab politics before the war were trivial in light of Israel's occupation of the Sinai, West Bank, and Golan Heights. As Malcolm Kerr put it, "There could hardly be a competition for prestige when there was no prestige remaining."¹ Incapable of pursuing their earlier ambitions, Egypt's leaders were forced to focus on a far more pressing set of problems.

This change—begun under Nasser and reinforced by Sadat—made an effective Arab alliance against Israel both necessary and feasible. It was necessary because only substantial pressure could regain the territories

1. Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, p. 129 and passim; Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, pp. 50–54; and Daniel Dishon, "Interarab Relations," in *From June to October*, ed. Itamar Rabinovich and Haim Shaked (New Brunswick, N.J., 1978), pp. 159–65. For a thorough analysis of the effects of the war on Arab political thought, see Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967* (Cambridge, England, 1981), chap. 1.

on terms the Arabs would accept. It was feasible because Egypt was no longer the main threat to the other Arabs. The alliance that fought the October War was one result. Even more important, Egypt's new policy also made possible Sadat's decision to seek a separate peace with Israel while simultaneously realigning Egypt with the United States. Although abandoning Arab solidarity was costly, it was a viable option once Egypt was no longer concerned with maximizing its prestige in the Arab world. Paradoxically, therefore, Egypt's reduced ambitions made both war and peace possible. And once Egypt moved toward a settlement on its own, sharp divisions reemerged in the Arab world.

The second theme characterizing alliance relations in this period is the increasingly active role played by the superpowers, especially the United States. Because the campaign to regain the occupied territories involved large-scale military action (beginning with the War of Attrition in 1969 and culminating in the October War in 1973), both superpowers gave even more support to their clients than ever before. This support continued during the peace process as well, and it enabled the regional states to bargain more effectively with one another. Although Egypt's realignment allowed the United States to seize the diplomatic initiative for several years, Soviet ties with its remaining Middle Eastern clients also increased. To show how these themes affected alliance formation during these years, the chapter will begin by exploring the events that followed Israel's victory in June 1967. Given the extent of the Arab defeat, it is not surprising that Egypt and Syria quickly turned to Moscow for assistance.

SUPERPOWER COMMITMENTS AND THE WAR OF ATTRITION

Although Soviet brinkmanship had helped cause the Six Day War, the crushing defeat that Egypt and Syria had suffered forced them to rely even more heavily on Soviet support. The Soviets responded quickly. President Nikolai Podgorny arrived in Cairo on June 21, 1967, and the Soviet Union had replaced 130 aircraft by July 15. Soviet vessels were moored in Egyptian ports to deter Israeli air raids, and the Soviets dispatched several thousand military advisers to Egypt at Nasser's request. For a leader who had once struggled to rid Egypt of any foreign military presence, the Soviet presence was a humiliating symbol of Egypt's plight. Nasser now granted the Soviets base rights in Egypt as well, and Soviet naval and air units began operating from Egyptian facilities.²

2. See Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, pp. 66–68; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 22, no. 1 (1968): 60; Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship since the June War* (Princeton, N.J., 1977), pp. 46–53; McLane, *Soviet-Middle East Relations*, p. 32; and Remnek, "The Politics of Soviet Access," pp. 369–72.

Soviet support for Syria and Iraq increased as well. Podgorny and Soviet Defense Minister Grechko visited Damascus and Baghdad in July 1967 and March 1968 respectively, and both countries received new arms shipments to replace their wartime losses.³ The Soviets were initially suspicious when the Aref regime was overthrown by the resurgent Iraqi wing of the Ba'th Party in March 1968, because of their difficulties with the Iraqi Ba'th in the early 1960s. The new regime's openly leftist policies gradually overcame Soviet reservations, however, and several important agreements for oil development were signed in July 1969.⁴

Despite these favorable signs, several significant disagreements marred Soviet relations with the two Ba'th states. In Syria, the Soviets favored Ba'th Party leader Salah Jadid in his struggle for power with Defense Minister Hafez el-Assad, which led Assad to question Syria's exclusive military relationship with the Soviet Union. Even more important, the two countries favored very different approaches to the Arab-Israeli conflict.⁵ This issue hurt Iraq's relations with the Soviet Union as well, as the new Ba'th regime adopted an extreme anti-Israel policy at variance with the Soviet preference for a political solution. Indeed, Iraqi criticism of Nasser's acceptance of the ceasefire ending the War of Attrition reportedly produced a Soviet threat to cut off all aid if Iraq did not moderate its opposition.⁶

On the Arabian Peninsula, the Soviets both gained and lost an ally after the Six Day War. In Aden, the predominately Marxist National Liberation Front assumed power following the British withdrawal in 1967. A delegation from the PDRY visited Moscow in November 1967, and Soviet military advisers had arrived in Aden by the beginning of 1968. By 1970, Soviet advisers were widely involved in South Yemen's military affairs, and Soviet pilots were reportedly flying combat missions in the low-level border war with Saudi Arabia.⁷

In North Yemen, by contrast, the Soviet position was rapidly eroding. Soviet military assistance increased after Egypt's withdrawal from the

3. On relations with Syria, see Laqueur, *Struggle for the Middle East*, pp. 93-94; Petran, *Syria*, p. 202; and Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East*, p. 117.

4. On relations with Iraq, see Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 79-86, 124; Yodfat, *Arab Politics in the Soviet Mirror*, pp. 290-91; Francis Fukuyama, "The Soviet Union and Iraq," *Research Note 1524-AF* (Santa Monica, Calif., 1980); "Chronology," *MEI*, 23, no. 4 (1969): 513; and Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 427-28.

5. Soviet support for Jadid was based on his radical socialist beliefs and his support for a policy of close ties with Moscow. Assad criticized the quality of Soviet military aid in March and began exploring the possibility of obtaining arms from France. Soviet support apparently helped Jadid preserve his position until Assad ousted him for good in 1970. Soviet-Syrian differences on the Arab-Israeli conflict focused on U.N. Resolution 242, which the Soviets supported and the Syrians rejected. See *MER 1969-1970*, pp. 427-29.

6. *MER 1969-1970*, pp. 435-36.

7. On the establishment of Soviet military relations with South Yemen, see McLane, *Soviet-Middle East Relations*, p. 97; and Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 83-85 and passim.

Yemen civil war in September 1967 (and after a group of Yemeni military officers ousted the original revolutionary leadership). Soviet and Syrian pilots flew combat missions during a royalist siege of the capital in January 1968, and arms shipments from the Soviet Union played a major role in defeating this final effort by the royalist forces. Despite these efforts, however, a new mediation effort by Saudi Arabia (combined with generous financial subsidies) brought the lengthy civil war to an end in 1970 and supplanted Soviet influence in Sana. By 1970, Soviet priorities on the Arabian Peninsula had shifted decisively toward the radical regime in the south.⁸

In sum, if their clients' failure in June 1967 had damaged Soviet prestige, it had also forced several of the clients (especially Egypt) to rely more heavily on Soviet support. At the same time, however, this new dependence did not erase a variety of substantive disagreements, especially on how best to proceed against Israel.⁹

Interestingly, the United States reacted to Israel's demonstrated superiority by providing even greater support. Not only did the June War increase Israel's strategic value in the eyes of U.S. leaders, but France's decision to cease arms supplies to Israel and the Johnson administration's decision to encourage Israel's withdrawal only if the Arabs agreed to a peace settlement made closer cooperation necessary and feasible.¹⁰ The wartime embargo of weapons ended with the delivery of Skyhawk jets in December, and Johnson increased the original order during Israeli prime minister Eshkol's visit to Washington in January 1968. An informal agreement for the sale of Phantom jets was reached at this time, and Johnson agreed to sell additional HAWK anti-aircraft missiles in July 1968. Thus, in both the military and diplomatic realms, the United States and Israel were working in parallel.¹¹

8. *MER 1969-1970*, pp. 447-50; Bruce D. Porter, *The USSR and Third World Conflicts: Soviet Arms and Diplomacy in Local Wars, 1945-80* (Cambridge, England, 1984), pp. 79-85; Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 29-32; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 130-31.

9. Statements by the Soviets described their talks with Arab officials in 1967 and 1968 as "strong" and "frank," but their efforts to weaken the Arab policy of no concessions failed completely. The Syrians were even more recalcitrant than the Egyptians and refused to grant the Soviets base rights in Syria. They also put more stringent limits on the Soviet military advisers assigned to Syria. See George W. Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East: 1967-72," in *Managing U.S.-Soviet Rivalry: Problems of Crisis Prevention*, ed. Alexander L. George (Boulder, Colo., 1982), pp. 71-72; Laqueur, *Struggle for the Middle East*, pp. 93-94; Petran, *Syria*, p. 202; and Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East*, p. 117.

10. See Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 158-64; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 63-67.

11. The United States supported Israel's diplomatic position that withdrawal would require the Arabs both to recognize Israel's right to exist and to sign a formal peace treaty. Johnson's preoccupation with Vietnam, however, prevented a major U.S. campaign for a peace settlement at this time. A partial exception was U.S. sponsorship of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which passed in November 1967. On these points, see Quandt,

U.S. ties with Jordan and Saudi Arabia were not significantly affected by the war. The arms embargo to Jordan was lifted in February 1968 (after Hussein made a much-publicized visit to the Soviet Union), and military training and construction in Saudi Arabia continued without interruption.¹² Hussein's dissatisfaction with U.S. support for Israel and with U.S. reluctance to supply him with adequate levels of military aid produced a brief cooling in Jordanian-American relations, though not a real rift.¹³ Predictably, U.S. relations with Egypt, Syria, and Iraq were worse than ever and South Yemen broke diplomatic relations in October 1969, before ambassadors were even exchanged. Thus the Six Day War reinforced the division of the Middle East between the two superpowers.

The War of Attrition

This trend continued as the confrontation between Egypt and Israel escalated once again, in the War of Attrition. Arising from the continued diplomatic stalemate and Nasser's need—for both internal and external reasons—to take some form of positive action, the first phase began with a series of artillery exchanges along the Suez Canal in October 1968.¹⁴ The war began in earnest in March 1969. It was intended, in Nasser's words, to be "one long battle to exhaust the enemy." By inflicting a steady stream of casualties on Israel, the Egyptians hoped to exploit their far greater manpower to persuade Israel to withdraw from the Sinai on acceptable terms. At the same time, by creating the risk of further escalation, Nasser hoped to give the superpowers added incentive to compel an Israeli withdrawal, as the United States had done in

Decade of Decisions, p. 64; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 22, no. 4 (1968): 483-84; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 153-58.

12. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 22, no. 1 (1968): 65; and SIPRI, *Arms Trade with the Third World*, pp. 541-42.

13. Hussein hinted in early 1970 that if the United States were not more forthcoming, he might turn to "other sources" (i.e., the Soviet Union) to obtain additional weaponry. In addition, riots in Amman forced Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco to cancel a planned visit to Jordan in April 1970. See *MER 1969-1970*, pp. 475-78; and SIPRI, *Arms Trade with the Third World*, pp. 543-44.

14. Nasser faced student riots in November 1968, a failing economy, and the humiliation of his army sitting idle while the PLO gained growing attention and support for its terrorist exploits. On the domestic and international pressures that encouraged the resumption of fighting, see Stephens, *Nasser*, pp. 517-18, 532-38; and Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 71-73. For discussions of the diplomatic efforts preceding the War of Attrition, see Lawrence Whetten, *The Canal War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), pp. 55-59, 64-65, and chap. 4; Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 73-75; and Saadia Touval, *The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1979* (Princeton, N.J., 1982), chap. 6.

1957.¹⁵ Initial Israeli losses were severe, leading both the Soviet Union and Egypt to adopt a hard-line position in the continuing negotiations.¹⁶

Israel responded with intense and effective aerial attacks against Egyptian positions across the canal, which forced Egypt to rely even more heavily on the Soviet Union. In the fall of 1969, the Soviets made a decision in principle to supply combat personnel, in addition to the three thousand Soviet advisers already present in Egypt.¹⁷ When Israel increased the pressure by beginning deep penetration raids against Cairo in January 1970, Nasser made a secret visit to Moscow to plead for even greater assistance.¹⁸ By threatening to resign in favor of a pro-Western leader if they refused, Nasser persuaded his reluctant Soviet patrons to provide Egypt with a complete air defense system, to be manned by Soviet air defense troops and pilots. By the end of 1970, fifteen to twenty thousand Soviet troops were stationed in Egypt; they were accompanied by unprecedented levels of military equipment.¹⁹

Soviet intervention caused the Israelis to cease their attacks on Cairo in order to avoid confronting Soviet forces directly. When the air defense system was expanded toward the Canal Zone, however, the Israelis began attacking the missile sites and later ambushed four Soviet-piloted MIGs in July 1970.²⁰ Facing heavy Egyptian losses and apparently unlimited U.S. support for Israel, and recognizing that a pause in the fighting could be used to improve Egypt's military position, Nasser accepted a U.S. ceasefire proposal on August 7.²¹ Egypt and the Soviet Union then seized this opportunity to (illegally) extend the air defense umbrella over the Canal Zone, which brought the War of Attrition to a close.

It is important to recognize both the magnitude and the limitations of

15. On Egypt's strategy, see Ya'acov Bar-Siman-Tov, *The Israeli-Egyptian War of Attrition 1969-1970* (New York, 1980), chap. 3, especially pp. 47-59. See also Ahmed S. Khalidi, "The War of Attrition," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 3, no. 1 (1973): 61-63; and the thorough and insightful analysis in Shimshoni, "Conventional Deterrence," chap. 4.

16. Bar-Siman-Tov, *War of Attrition*, pp. 77-78; and Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 73-74.

17. Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," p. 76; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 100, 103, and passim; and Arnold Horelick, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East: Policy from 1955 to 1969," in Hammond and Alexander, *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, p. 596.

18. Israel's objective in these raids seems to have been to pressure Egypt into halting the War of Attrition, to discredit Nasser politically, and to provoke Nasser's ouster if possible. See Bar-Siman-Tov, *War of Attrition*, pp. 121-25.

19. See Bradford Dismukes, "Large Scale Intervention Ashore: Soviet Air Defense Forces in Egypt," in Dismukes and McConnell, *Soviet Naval Diplomacy*, chap. 6; Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, pp. 77-79; Mohamed Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan* (New York, 1975), pp. 83-90; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 107-10; and Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 90.

20. Dismukes, "Large Scale Intervention Ashore," p. 233.

21. For an analysis of Nasser's motives for accepting the ceasefire, see Bar-Siman-Tov, *War of Attrition*, pp. 179-81.

the Soviet-Egyptian relationship at this time. Although Egypt's precarious external situation forced Nasser to lean heavily on his Soviet patron, the alliance was still marred by serious policy disagreements.²² In particular, the Soviets consistently favored a political solution, and Nasser had launched the War of Attrition on his own. The Soviets reportedly begged him to end the war in May 1969, and Egyptian requests for advanced Soviet aircraft (to compete with Israel's Phantoms) were denied. Nasser's decision to end the War of Attrition, although made in consultation with Moscow, no doubt reflected his own perception that he had gained all he could by the summer of 1970. In short, despite the tremendous growth of the Soviet-Egyptian relationship after 1967, Egypt's dependence on the Soviet Union hardly made Nasser a reliable tool.²³

Similar tensions affected U.S. relations with Israel during the fighting. The Nixon administration—and especially the State Department—sought to end the fighting and begin movement toward an overall settlement, which in its view required an evenhanded approach and concessions by both sides. The Israelis, by contrast, sought to maintain their military edge (which required additional U.S. arms to counter Soviet arms shipments) while refusing any concessions that might prove dangerous in the long run. Thus, despite the growing level of U.S. aid, U.S.-Israeli relations were marred by a series of bitter disputes over the level of U.S. military support and Israel's reluctance to accept any of the peace proposals offered by the various mediators.²⁴ Efforts to force Israeli concessions by restricting arms generally failed; concessions (such as Israel's grudging acceptance of the July 1970 ceasefire) were usually won through pledges of additional support.²⁵ Like the Soviet Union, the

22. The relationship between Egypt's external situation and its ties with the Soviet Union was candidly revealed by Nasser in an interview with a U.S. journalist: "We cannot dispense with the Russian experts as long as we are at war with Israel and as long as there is no peace." Quoted in Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, p. 117.

23. See the analysis in Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 77-78; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 44-46, 60-63, 75-77, 79, 88; and Shimshoni, "Conventional Deterrence," pp. 318-19.

24. The post-1967 negotiations took place in a bewildering array of forums, including Two-Power (United States-Soviet Union) and Four-Power (the superpowers plus Britain and France) talks, U.N. mediation by Gunnar Jarring, and several independent initiatives by U.S. secretary of state William Rogers. For discussions of these various efforts, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, chap. 3; Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 181-96; Whetten, *Canal War*, chaps. 4-5; Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, chap. 8; and Touval, *Peace Brokers*, chaps. 6 and 7.

25. A deliberate delay in responding to an Israeli request for more advanced aircraft in March 1970 produced at most a modest change in Israel's position. The Israeli cabinet publicly accepted Resolution 242 (previously accepted only by Israel's U.N. ambassador), in part because Nixon offered private assurances that Israel would get the planes. Israel's acceptance of the July 1970 ceasefire was encouraged by U.S. pledges to "maintain the balance of power," to provide advanced electronic countermeasures, and to accelerate

United States was discovering that a client's dependence did not ensure its patron's control.

COOPERATION AND CONFLICT IN THE ARAB WORLD

The disaster of June 1967 also began a process of reconciliation in the Arab world, although it would require several years (and several other events) to develop completely. The first phase featured a gradual rapprochement between Egypt and the Arab monarchies that had long been the targets of Nasser's attacks. A summit meeting in Khartoum produced a near-unanimous statement of Arab policy toward Israel (only Syria failed to attend), and Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait agreed to provide Egypt and Jordan with a substantial subsidy to compensate for their war losses.²⁶ United by a common desire to recover their lost territory and to prevent the PLO from becoming too powerful, Egypt and Jordan were now especially close, with Hussein reporting that there was "no difference" between his position and Nasser's.²⁷

Saudi-Egyptian relations improved considerably as well. With Egypt now dependent on Saudi subsidies, Nasser was forced to halt the war in Yemen that had long poisoned relations with Riyadh. Feisal and Nasser signed an agreement on Yemen in October 1967, and Egyptian forces withdrew the following month.²⁸ Thus the rivalry between Egypt and Saudi Arabia was now muted. Their relationship was at most a *détente*, however, as the Saudis remained suspicious of Egypt's close ties with the Soviet Union, which the Saudis accused (with some validity) of supporting subversive activities on the Arabian Peninsula. Nor were the Saudis likely to forget their long rivalry with Nasser just because Egypt was vulnerable now.²⁹

aircraft deliveries. On these points, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 97-98, 100-102; David Pollock, *The Politics of Pressure: American Arms and Israeli Policy since the Six Day War* (Westport, Conn., 1982), pp. 74-77; Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, pp. 487-88, 493-96; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 190-91.

26. For accounts of the Khartoum summit, see Lenczowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*, p. 754; Khouri, *Arab-Israeli Dilemma*, p. 310 and *passim*; and MER 1967, pp. 139-40, 262-66. The total subsidy amounted to almost \$400 million annually. See Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, p. 139; MER 1968, p. 165.

27. See "Chronology," MEJ, 22, no. 1 (1968): 61; and the analysis in Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, pp. 129-33.

28. See MER 1967, pp. 140-41, 146; and Stookey, *Yemen*, pp. 248-53. For an Egyptian view of these events, see Rahmy, *Egyptian Policy in the Arab World*, pp. 228-40.

29. For a summary of Saudi security perceptions after the Six Day War, see Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 122-27 and *passim*. The growing Soviet role in South Yemen was especially worrisome to the Saudis, who were now engaged in a low-level (and ultimately unsuccessful) border war with the Marxist regime in the PDRY. Saudi fears of radical forces inspired a deliberate campaign to reduce Soviet influence in the Middle East. Indeed, Feisal report-

After 1967, Nasser's diplomatic efforts in the Arab world centered on establishing an Eastern Command of Jordan, Syria, and Iraq to increase the pressure on Israel. But this attempt to create an effective Arab alliance against Israel foundered on the rocks of Ba'th radicalism. Despite the Arabs' apparent interest in joining forces to confront Israel more effectively, the bitter ideological rivalry between the Syrian and Iraqi branches of the Ba'th precluded close cooperation, and Syria's refusal to deal directly with "reactionary" Jordan merely compounded this problem.³⁰ Syria's preference for revolutionary posturing while others fought its battles did not help, and the Jadid regime continued to attack the Arab monarchies even after Nasser had made his peace with them.

After a secret meeting in January 1969, however, a modest level of cooperation within the Eastern Command began to take shape. A contingent of six thousand Iraqi troops was moved to Syria in March, and a defense agreement between the two countries was ratified in July. Small contingents of Syrian troops were also reported in Jordan.³¹ Yet Syria refused to commit its air force to the command, and Iraq claimed that the threat from Iran and a continued insurgency among its Kurdish minority prevented greater effort on its part. For all practical purposes, the command collapsed when a group of Syrian sympathizers was arrested in Baghdad, and the two countries renewed their mutual recriminations later in the year. Formal dissolution, however, did not occur until September 1970.³²

The impotence of the Eastern Command is revealing. Although an effort was made to form a balancing alliance against Israel (largely by Egypt, which had the most to gain from Arab support during the War of Attrition), it failed to produce an effective coalition. This failure is easy to explain: Nasser's potential allies feared an Egyptian recovery as much as they feared Israel; the states of the Eastern Command had a lengthy history of enmity among themselves; and the weaker states of Syria, Jordan, and Iraq were all naturally inclined to pass the buck to Egypt rather than risk another round with Israel.

This combination of obstacles led Nasser to abandon his search for Arab cooperation, beginning at the Rabat summit in December 1969. When the other Arab leaders refused to provide additional support for Egypt in the War of Attrition, Nasser walked out of the meeting, claim-

edly warned Nasser about the dangers of close ties with Moscow. See "'Abd-al-Nasir's Secret Papers," in U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, *Translations on Near East and North Africa*, no. 1865, report 72223 (Washington, D.C., 1978), pp. 128-29. The secret papers are a series of articles by 'Abd-al-Majid Farad, published in the Arabic newspaper *al-Dustur* (London) in 1978. On the Saudi-PDRY conflict, see *MER* 1969-1970, pp. 616-19; Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 127-30; and Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 76-77.

30. *MER* 1968, pp. 162-65.

31. *MER* 1969-1970, p. 563-64.

32. See Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, pp. 55-56; and *MER* 1969-1970, pp. 569-71.

ing (correctly) that "the Conference has not accomplished anything at all."³³ Having demonstrated that the other Arabs were unwilling to make sacrifices, Nasser had cleared the way for Egypt to consider a political settlement, beginning with his acceptance of the Rogers ceasefire the following summer.³⁴

The Jordan Crisis

Ironically, the end of the War of Attrition provided the spark for a brief but bloody confrontation between King Hussein and the PLO. The PLO had been increasingly active in Jordan since 1967, and clashes between Jordanian troops and PLO militia continued despite Nasser's periodic attempts to mediate between Hussein and PLO chairman Yassar Arafat.³⁵ Fearing that the end of the War of Attrition heralded an Egyptian deal with Israel that would exclude the PLO, a radical PLO faction hijacked three airliners to Jordan and blew them up. This action was too much for Hussein, and his army began a thorough crackdown against the Palestinian forces in Jordan.

During the week of fighting that followed, Syrian armored units invaded Jordan while a hastily convened summit met in Cairo to fashion a settlement. Drawing upon U.S. and Israeli support—both the United States and Israel vastly preferred Hussein to either Syria or the PLO—the Jordanians defeated the Syrian forces on September 23.³⁶ Significantly, Soviet behavior was quite circumspect; the Soviets assured U.S. officials that they were trying to restrain the Syrians, and Soviet advisers did not accompany the Syrian units in Jordan. Given Nasser's support for Hussein and the obvious risks of escalation, Soviet caution is not surprising.³⁷

33. Walid Khalidi, ed., *International Documents on Palestine 1969* (Beirut, 1972), pp. 830-31.

34. This interpretation follows that of Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, pp. 145-46.

35. By the beginning of 1970, pressure from the PLO had forced Hussein to remove several cabinet ministers, and a number of truces between the government and the PLO had broken down. Hussein's options were limited by the fact that any action he took to control the PLO in Jordan exposed him to the charge that he was betraying the sacred cause of the Palestinian Arabs. See Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, p. 55; Sinai and Pollock, *Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, pp. 56-57; and Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, pp. 140-45.

36. For accounts of the Jordan crisis, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, chap. 4; Rabin, *Memoirs*, pp. 186-89; Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 600-631; Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 196-203; and Safran, *Israel*, pp. 451-56. According to most accounts, Israel agreed to a U.S. request to aid Hussein should the Syrian forces defeat his troops. This pledge encouraged Hussein to commit his entire air force against the Syrian forces in Jordan (while Hafez el-Assad kept the Syrian air force on the ground).

37. On Soviet behavior, see Abram N. Shulsky, "The Jordan Crisis of September 1970," in Dismukes and McConnell, *Soviet Naval Diplomacy*, pp. 168-75; Heikal, *Sphinx and Commissar*, p. 215; and William B. Quandt, "Lebanon, 1958, and Jordan, 1970," in Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C., 1978), pp. 279-81.

The Jordan crisis was significant for several other reasons. First, Israel's willingness to support Hussein transcended the usual divisions between Arabs and Israelis and greatly enhanced Israel's image as a valuable ally in the eyes of the United States.³⁸ Second, the crisis brought a renewed U.S. commitment to Hussein, whose struggle with the PLO left him isolated in the Arab world and thus in need of greater outside support.³⁹ Third, the Syrian defeat led to the ouster of Salah Jadid by Hafez el-Assad, a relatively pragmatic figure who favored cooperation with the other Arab states in the confrontation with Israel.⁴⁰ Finally, the Jordan crisis removed Gamal Abdel Nasser from the stage, the victim of a fatal heart attack the day after the Arab summit ended. Although his successor, Anwar Sadat, possessed abilities that few suspected at the time, his assets did not include the charisma that had made Nasser the preeminent pan-Arab figure.⁴¹ These changes would alter alliance relations in the Middle East substantially and would play a major role in causing the October War.

THE DIPLOMACY OF THE OCTOBER WAR

The October War of 1973 can be traced to three main developments: (1) the failure to reach a political solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute, (2) the ability of key Middle East states (especially Egypt and Israel) to obtain increased military support from their superpower patrons, and (3) the formation of the first effective anti-Israeli alliance by the Arab states. The result was a combined Arab attack against Israel's positions in the Sinai and the Golan Heights, which broke the negotiating deadlock and led to a new round of realignments.

The Diplomatic Stalemate

After 1970, several attempts were made to break the diplomatic deadlock between Israel and the Arabs. U.N. envoy Gunnar Jarring resumed his mediation efforts after the Jordan crisis, and President Sadat an-

38. See Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 122, 131; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 201-2. Spiegel notes that the White House was far more appreciative of Israel's response than was the State Department.

39. See SIPRI, *Arms Trade with the Third World*, p. 545; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 122-23.

40. See Itamar Rabinovich, "Continuity and Change in the Ba'th Regime in Syria," in Rabinovich and Shaked, *From June to October*, p. 226; Bar-Siman-Tov, *Linkage Politics in the Middle East*, pp. 164-65; and Van Dam, *Struggle for Power in Syria*, pp. 89-91.

41. On Sadat's undistinguished reputation, see Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, p. 131; and Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution*, pp. 122-24.

nounced that he would be willing to sign a formal peace treaty if Israel withdrew from all of the territory occupied in 1967. This effort collapsed when the Israeli cabinet refused to consider the new proposals.⁴² Sadat then revived an earlier proposal for a limited withdrawal along the Canal Zone, and Secretary of State Rogers undertook a lengthy campaign to promote this idea. Despite considerable U.S. pressure, the negotiations eventually foundered over the size of the proposed disengagement and the relationship between an interim agreement and an overall peace settlement.⁴³ Not only did this failure usher in a period of diplomatic stagnation (caused in part by the U.S. presidential campaign) but it left Sadat increasingly disillusioned about the willingness of the United States to force Israeli concessions.⁴⁴

A Growing Superpower Role

The pattern of expanding military cooperation and intensifying policy disputes between the superpowers and their regional allies continued between 1971 and 1973. Generous material support apparently afforded no guarantee of tranquil relations. If anything, the reverse seemed to be true.

Following the Jordan crisis, Soviet military aid to Egypt increased significantly. The air defense system was expanded, and Sadat was promised additional military supplies during his talks with Soviet officials in May, July, and October.⁴⁵ Even more interesting, in May 1971 Sadat signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, which appeared to reinforce the Soviet-Egyptian alliance.⁴⁶

42. Israel's rejection of the Jarring mission was due to (1) domestic splits within the cabinet, (2) the belief that Egypt had violated earlier agreements with impunity, and (3) Israel's insistence that the 1967 boundaries be modified to provide it with "defensible borders." See Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 144-49; Safran, *Israel*, pp. 457-59; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 130-36.

43. Israel sought to avoid any linkage between an interim agreement and a final settlement in order to avoid committing itself to future withdrawals under unspecified circumstances. Egypt wanted the interim withdrawal firmly tied to a later agreement in order to avoid any implication that Israeli forces might remain on Egyptian territory permanently. For details, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 140-43; Safran, *Israel*, p. 459; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 171-83, 190-92, 196-99; and Touval, *Peace Brokers*, pp. 177-94.

44. According to Egyptian chief of staff Saad el-Shazly, Sadat told U.S. representative Donald Bergus in November 1971 that "my experiences with you Americans makes it impossible for me to have any confidence in you." See Saad el-Shazly, *The Crossing of the Canal* (San Francisco, 1980), p. 115. See also Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 199. Sadat had repeatedly called 1971 the "Year of Decision," which made the continued stalemate a threat to his own position in Egypt. See Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 143.

45. The analysis in this section is based on Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 89-90. See also Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, pp. 83-87, 90; and Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 162-66, 188.

46. See Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 188-90; and Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 146-53.

These developments, however, obscured serious differences on several issues.

First, the Soviets were undoubtedly worried by Sadat's willingness to rely on U.S. mediation for his interim settlement proposal (though they were no doubt relieved when the talks broke down).⁴⁷ Second, they were alarmed by Sadat's ouster of the pro-Soviet "Ali Sabry group" in May and by his moves to relax Egypt's socialist economic policies.⁴⁸ Third, Sadat was annoyed by Soviet reluctance to provide the weapons he believed were necessary to retake the Sinai, a policy clearly designed to prevent Egypt from taking actions of which the Soviets disapproved. Additional requests in February and April 1972 brought no major change in Soviet support, adding to Sadat's growing frustration.⁴⁹ Fourth, Sadat was alarmed and incensed by the conduct of Soviet personnel in Egypt itself. Egyptian officials were prohibited entry to Soviet bases, Soviet intelligence officials reportedly assisted Sadat's domestic rivals, and the Soviet Union used Egyptian facilities to ferry arms to India during the Indo-Pakistani War, thereby using Egyptian territory to help defeat a Moslem country.⁵⁰

Finally, an unsuccessful Communist coup in the Sudan—and the enthusiasm with which Moscow greeted the attempt—apparently affected Sadat's views significantly. Sadat dispatched Egyptian troops to help defeat the rebellion, and he reports in his memoirs that these events "caused the gap between me and the Soviet leaders to widen."⁵¹ Thus the Soviet-Egyptian treaty should be seen as a Soviet attempt to preserve its endangered position in Cairo, not as a sign of enhanced commitment between Egypt and the Soviet Union.

The last straw was the Soviet-U.S. summit meeting in May 1972. Although Sadat had made several conciliatory gestures toward the Soviet Union earlier in the year, the final communiqué from Moscow referred to a "peaceful settlement" in the Middle East and spoke of the need for "military relaxation." This statement convinced Sadat that the

47. Soviet concerns were reflected in two articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestia* on June 2 that accused the United States of trying to "drive a wedge" between the Soviet Union and Egypt. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 25, no. 4 (1971): 506.

48. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 145-46; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 186-88; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 218, 222-26.

49. On the question of Soviet military support, see Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 90-91; Heikal, *Road to Ramadan*, pp. 112, 117; Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 154; Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, pp. 87-88, 92-94; Robert O. Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East since 1970* (New York, 1975), pp. 49, 68, 74-79; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 170-80; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 228-29 and app. A; and Oded Eran, "Soviet Policy between the 1967 and 1973 Wars," in Rabinovich and Shaked, *From June 10 October*, p. 40.

50. Remnek, "Politics of Soviet Access," p. 373; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 186-88; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 218, 222-26; and Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 145-46.

51. el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, p. 228.

Soviet Union would never provide the military equipment he sought voluntarily. To jar his patron into providing what he wanted, Sadat abruptly informed the Soviet ambassador that Egypt's Soviet advisers would no longer be needed. By the end of August, only a thousand of the more than fifteen thousand advisers once assigned to Egypt were left.⁵²

Sadat's sudden expulsion of his Soviet advisers apparently did the trick. After Sadat made additional conciliatory gestures later in the year (e.g., he renewed the agreement giving the Soviets access to Egyptian military facilities), Soviet military supplies to Egypt began to increase. In April 1973, Sadat announced that he was "completely satisfied" with the quantity and quality of Soviet support.⁵³

The turbulent state of Soviet-Egyptian relations encouraged Moscow to hedge its bets by improving ties with its other Arab allies. Both Syria and Iraq responded favorably. Despite earlier Soviet support for his domestic opponents, Assad reaffirmed a policy of close cooperation with the Soviet Union. Two new arms deals were reached in 1971 and 1972; the Soviets now received limited access to the Syrian port of Latakia, and additional Soviet air defense troops, pilots, and other military advisers were dispatched to Syria in late 1972. By the October War, the total number of Soviet personnel in Syria had reached approximately six thousand.⁵⁴

Soviet-Iraqi ties improved even more dramatically. Facing isolation in the Arab world, renewed conflicts with its Kurdish insurgency, and a growing threat from Iran, the Ba'th regime in Baghdad was in dire need of great power support. A Soviet loan worth \$224 million was negotiated in April 1971, and Iraqi Vice-President Saddam Hussein reportedly sought a formal Soviet-Iraqi alliance during a visit to Moscow in December.⁵⁵ The request was granted in April 1972, military aid was

52. See Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 95-96; Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 228; Heikal, *Sphinx and Commissar*, pp. 241-45; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 188-91, 202-11; and el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 228-31.

53. Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, p. 96; Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, p. 102; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 215-16, 228-29, and *passim*.

54. See Roger Pajak, "Soviet Arms Relations with Syria and Iraq," *Strategic Review*, 4, no. 1 (1976): 55-56; and "Soviet Arms Aid in the Middle East since the October War," in U.S. Joint Economic Committee, *The Political Economy of the Middle East: A Compendium of Papers*, 96th Cong., 2d sess., 1980, pp. 476-77; *Strategic Survey 1972*, p. 27. See also Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, pp. 96-97; and Galia Golan, *Yom Kippur and After: The Soviet Union and the Middle East Crisis* (Cambridge, England, 1977), pp. 29-30. Significantly, the Syrians apparently declined a Soviet offer for a treaty of friendship and cooperation similar to Egypt's at this time.

55. See Jaan Pennar, *The USSR and the Arabs: The Ideological Dimension* (New York, 1973), pp. 123-25; Robert O. Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East since 1970*, rev. ed. (New York, 1981), pp. 51, 76-77; Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, p. 145. The Soviets turned down the offer of alliance at this time, but Hussein's visit was quite successful in all other respects.

increased substantially, and the two countries signed an agreement to develop Iraq's Rumelia oil field, thereby facilitating Iraq's subsequent nationalization of the Iraqi Petroleum Company. President al-Bakr visited Moscow in September 1972, and the Ba'th agreed to form a Popular National Front, granting the Iraqi Communist Party a modest political role. Motivated by Moscow's troubles with Egypt and Iraq's internal and external difficulties, Soviet-Iraqi ties had thus reached their most significant level since 1959.⁵⁶

Finally, Soviet ties with South Yemen continued to flourish, although the Soviets carefully refrained from taking sides in the brief border war that broke out between the PDRY and the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) in February and July 1972. Various PDRY officials visited the Soviet Union during the early 1970s, and President Rubay 'Ali signed a major economic and technical agreement during his own trip to Moscow in November 1972. Although Soviet economic assistance was paltry, military aid grew from less than \$20 million between 1968 and 1970 to more than \$150 million between 1970 and 1974. Soviet naval vessels transported a contingent of PDRY troops sent to aid the Dhofar rebellion in Oman, and both Soviet and Cuban military advisers were present in increasing numbers.⁵⁷ With relations with Egypt undergoing obvious difficulties, Soviet ties elsewhere continued to expand.

Interestingly, the relations of the United States with its own regional allies mirrored the Soviet experience. Just as the Soviets clashed with their own allies over the merits of a political solution, the U.S. effort to promote a peace settlement led to another series of tense exchanges with Israel. In particular, Israel's sharp rejection of both the Jarring mission in February 1971 and Sadat's proposal for an interim settlement produced

56. Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, rev. ed., pp. 79-81; Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 145-47; and Robert O. Freedman, "Soviet Policy towards Ba'athist Iraq, 1968-1979," in *The Soviet Union in The Third World: Successes and Failures*, ed. Robert H. Donaldson (Boulder, Colo., 1981), pp. 169-72. The Popular Front was a purely symbolic organization, but its formation apparently helped convince the Soviets that the Ba'th was now worthy of greater support.

57. The 1972 border war was caused by the efforts both Yemens made to subvert each other, relying upon disaffected exiles, hostile tribal groups, and (in the case of the YAR) support from Saudi Arabia. Border clashes took place intermittently from February to May 1972 and escalated considerably in September. A ceasefire was then arranged under the auspices of the Arab League, and the two countries unexpectedly announced a decision to unite. This outcome reflected a tension that would persist throughout the 1970s; both governments publicly favored unification of the Yemeni peoples within a single state, but neither trusted the other or was willing to give up power. Although the Soviet Union provided military aid to South Yemen during the fighting, the Soviets consistently called for negotiations and publicly supported the ceasefire agreement. For details, see Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 32-35, 80-81, 84-85; Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 131-32; and M. S. El Azhary, "Aspects of North Yemen's Relations with Saudi Arabia," in Pridham, *Contemporary Yemen*, pp. 196-97.

considerable resentment in both Jerusalem and Washington.⁵⁸ At the same time, however, Israel was now receiving unprecedented levels of military and economic assistance, including additional F-4 aircraft and a \$500 million loan. Indeed, total U.S. aid for 1971 reached \$631.8 million, more than six times the previous high. Aid levels increased still further after Sadat's proposal for an interim settlement was rejected; a long-term supply of Phantoms was guaranteed, the United States agreed to supply engines for Israel's Kfir fighter, and Israel was promised additional Phantoms and Skyhawks in February 1972. Finally, the United States agreed to obtain Israel's approval before making any more peace initiatives. As one participant recalled, "In 1972, U.S. Middle East policy consisted of little more than open support for Israel."⁵⁹

This policy was the brainchild of Henry Kissinger, who had become increasingly involved in U.S. Middle East diplomacy. Kissinger was told to "prevent an explosion in the Middle East" that might threaten Nixon's chances for reelection in 1972. Moreover, Kissinger believed that Israel would make concessions only if it had complete confidence in U.S. support. And because he saw support for Israel as a way to "expel the Russians" (by demonstrating that Moscow could not provide its allies with the wherewithal necessary to reconquer the occupied territories), Kissinger sought to increase U.S. aid for Israel and to move slowly on negotiations.⁶⁰

While providing ever greater support to Israel, the United States continued to enjoy good relations with its traditional Arab allies. Jordan received a substantial increase in U.S. aid following the 1970 crisis as a reward for Hussein's moderation and to support his policy of controlling the PLO.⁶¹ Although King Feisal of Saudi Arabia was increasingly upset by U.S. support for Israel, this concern did not prevent the United States and Saudi Arabia from beginning negotiations for a major military mod-

58. On U.S.-Israeli relations during this period, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 132-33; Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, pp. 104-10, 121-24; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 203-9.

59. Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 147. Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban called this period the Golden Age of U.S. arms supplies. See Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, pp. 112-14, 124, 126-27; Rabin, *Memoirs*, pp. 193-209; and Safran, *Israel*, pp. 462-66.

60. For discussions of Kissinger's strategy, see his *White House Years*, pp. 1279, 1285, 1289, 1291, and chap. 10; and *Years of Upheaval* (Boston, 1981), pp. 196-202, 204-5. See also Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 144-45, 153-54; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 172-73, 175-76, 183-84, 211-12, 216. One defect of Kissinger's strategy was the fact that it ignored Sadat's repeated signals (e.g., the interim settlement proposal and the expulsion of the Soviet advisers) that he was willing to make a deal and that he was willing to reduce Egypt's ties with Moscow to get one.

61. U.S. assistance increased to \$115.6 million in 1972, and the United States agreed to supply twenty-four F-5 aircraft to modernize the Jordanian air force. See AID, *Overseas Loans and Grants*; Stookey, *America and the Arab States*, p. 233; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 122-23; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 26, no. 3 (1972): 297-98.

ernization program. As a result, Saudi imports of U.S. military equipment rose to \$100 million in 1972. Of even greater significance, of course, was the growing importance of Saudi Arabian oil in the world market. Although Feisal had been reluctant to use the "oil weapon" in the past, this policy was about to change.⁶²

The Arab Coalition Forms

The final factor leading to the October War was a continued process of reconciliation within the Arab world, which brought Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria into an effective strategic partnership. With Nasser's death and Assad's ascendance in Syria, the last obstacles to effective alignment were removed. Assad and Sadat began a series of consultations in early 1971, Syria accepted U.N. Resolution 242 in March 1972 (with qualifications), and the two countries announced plans for a Joint Action Program linking Egypt's Arab Socialist Union with the Syrian Ba'th.⁶³ In October 1972 Sadat told his General Staff that "Syria will play their part in the battle; and they agree that action on the two fronts should be coordinated from Cairo."⁶⁴

Cooperation with Saudi Arabia increased as well. Nasser's death considerably reduced Saudi suspicions about Egypt, a trend enhanced by Sadat's overt gestures of Islamic piety and his displays of respect for King Feisal.⁶⁵ The two leaders held several summit meetings in 1971 and 1972, and the Saudis apparently pressed Sadat to reduce Egypt's dependence on the Soviet Union. To encourage this step (and to provide Egypt with the forces needed to challenge Israel), the Saudis agreed to finance additional Egyptian arms purchases.⁶⁶ For his part, Sadat encouraged

62. See Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 204-5; Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 290-96, 360; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 25, no. 4 (1971): 517; ACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1971-1980* (Washington, D.C., n.d.), p. 107.

63. Assad's first cooperative gesture was the announcement in November 1970 that Syria would join the Federation of Arab Republics, the symbolic union of Egypt, Libya, and Sudan that had been established in 1970. Although the federation was a meaningless institution, this gesture demonstrated that Syria now sought to play a cooperative role in inter-Arab affairs. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 25, no. 3 (1971): 384; 26, no. 1 (1972): 40; Itamar Rabinovich, "Continuity and Change in the Ba'th Regime in Syria, 1967-1973," and Barda Ben-Zvi, "The Federation of Arab Republics," in Rabinovich and Shaked, *From June to October*, pp. 179-80, 226-27.

64. See el-Shazly, *Crossing of the Canal*, p. 177.

65. On Sadat's relations with Feisal, see Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, p. 289; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, p. 241; and Lacey, *The Kingdom*, pp. 392-93.

66. According to Adeen Dawisha, Saudi Arabia provided \$2.6 billion to Egypt between 1967 and 1973. Alvin Rubinstein reports that the Arab oil states gave between \$300 million and \$500 million for arms purchases at the beginning of 1973, plus an additional \$400 million to \$500 million in balance of payments support, above and beyond the annual subsidy they had provided since the 1967 Khartoum summit. See Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, p. 186; and Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 241-42.

Feisal to trust Assad, a step Assad facilitated by repairing the pipeline carrying Saudi crude oil across Syria to the Mediterranean. In response, the Saudis reportedly gave Syria a \$200 million grant in 1972, and the Syrian-Saudi rapprochement was solidified by an exchange of visits by the countries' foreign and defense ministers.⁶⁷

Relations among the other Arab states also improved slightly. Jordan had been ostracized following its campaign against the PLO, but Hussein did meet with Feisal and Sadat on several occasions during 1971. By the beginning of 1973 Syria and Jordan had reopened their border (closed since 1970) to "permit Jordan to participate in a new Eastern Front against Israel." Although Iraq remained isolated throughout this period, Saddam Hussein did visit Cairo and Damascus in 1972, and the Iraqis gave Egypt \$12 million for military preparations.⁶⁸

The final steps toward war began with Sadat's decision—apparently taken between November 1972 and January 1973—to prepare for military action as soon as possible.⁶⁹ When talks between Kissinger and Egyptian national security adviser Hafiz Ismail in February 1973 brought no progress and the United States announced that Israel would receive forty-eight more Phantoms, Sadat became convinced that a satisfactory settlement would first require a successful war. With an effective alliance now forged, with Soviet support available in sufficient quantities, and with the diplomatic front deadlocked, war was now Sadat's only real option.⁷⁰

The Arab alliance completed its preparations over the summer, concluding with a summit meeting between Assad, Sadat, and Hussein on September 10. Egypt and Syria chose a strategy of limited aims, and Hussein pledged to enter the war only if the Arabs were winning; specifically, he would attack Israel once Syria had regained the Golan

67. On Saudi-Egyptian-Syrian relations between 1970 and 1972, see Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 294-96, 298-99, 305-7; Heikal, *Road to Ramadan*, pp. 157-58; el-Shazly, *Crossing of the Canal*, pp. 147-49, 168-69; Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, p. 186; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 26, no. 1 (1972): 50; no. 2 (1972): 178; Lackner, *House Built on Sand*, pp. 118-19; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 144-48.

68. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 26, no. 3 (1972): 295-96; 27, no. 3 (1973): 361. For an account of Jordan's turbulent relations with the other Arab states between 1971 and 1973, see Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 219-21.

69. See el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 236-37; and el-Shazly, *Crossing of the Canal*, pp. 31-32.

70. Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 234-35; *New York Times*, March 13, 1973; el-Shazly, *Crossing of the Canal*, pp. 173-77; and Sunday Times Insight Team, *Insight on the Middle East War* (London, 1974), pp. 34-35. For Kissinger's account of his talks in February 1973 with Egyptian national security adviser Hafiz Ismail, see *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 210-16, 223-27. Not surprisingly, Kissinger denies any connection between these abortive talks and Sadat's decision, claiming that Sadat was already implacably resolved on war. For a different version, see Matti Golan, *The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger* (New York, 1976), pp. 144-46.

Heights.⁷¹ In addition to providing financial support to the Arab coalition, the Saudis had begun to hint that their alliance with the United States would not prevent them from using the oil weapon if necessary.⁷² For the first time, the Arabs would confront Israel in a coordinated attack that marshaled their full military, economic, and diplomatic resources.

The Conduct of the War

A detailed account of the October War is not necessary here, so this part of the chapter will concentrate on the alliance aspects of the conflict.⁷³ The fighting can be divided into three general phases.

In the first phase (October 6–10) the Arabs enjoyed both strategic and tactical surprise. The Egyptian army gained a substantial foothold across the Suez Canal while Syrian forces placed enormous pressure on the outnumbered Israeli units on the Golan Heights. Soviet efforts to obtain a ceasefire in place were rejected by the Soviet clients, and the United States rejected the Soviet request in the expectation that Israel would easily defeat its attackers once its mobilization was complete.⁷⁴

In the second phase (October 11–18) the superpowers took an increasingly active role as Israel gradually gained the upper hand. Both the United States and the Soviet Union began massive resupply operations to their respective allies, one indication of the extraordinary intensity of the fighting.⁷⁵ When a major Egyptian armored assault in the Sinai was decisively defeated on October 14, pressure for a ceasefire

71. On the concept of a limited aims strategy and the Arab decision, see John J. Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence* (Ithaca, 1982), pp. 53–56, 155–62. See also Sunday Times Insight Team, *Insight on the Middle East War*, pp. 39–40; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 235–38; el-Shazly, *Crossing of the Canal*, pp. 39, 203, 205; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, p. 242; and Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement* (Boston, 1975), pp. 25–31.

72. In the months preceding the war, King Feisal commented that "America's complete support for Zionism . . . makes it extremely difficult for us to supply the United States's petroleum needs"; Oil Minister Yamani hinted that the Saudis might be unwilling to expand production to meet demand if the United States continued its pro-Israeli policies; and Defense Minister Sultan stated that the Saudis would not buy arms with "strings attached." Sultan added that defense of the Arab countries was self-defense for Saudi Arabia, emphasizing the Saudi commitment to regaining the occupied territories. See Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 328, 331–32; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 1 (1974): 49; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 242–45.

73. For accounts of the fighting, see Herzog, *War of Atonement*; Dupuy, *Elusive Victory*, bk. 5; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, chap. 6; Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*, chap. 3; and Sunday Times Insight Team, *Insight on the Middle East War*.

74. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 471–73; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 172.

75. See Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, p. 130; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 285–86, 293; William Durch et al., "Other Soviet Interventionary Forces: Military Transport Aviation and Airborne Troops"; and Stephen S. Roberts, "Superpower Naval Confrontations," in Dismukes and McConnell, *Soviet Naval Diplomacy*, pp. 200, 340; William B. Quandt, "Soviet Policy in the October 1973 War," *Research Report R-1864-ISA* (Santa Monica, Calif., 1976), pp. 23–25; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 185–86, especially note 46.

increased still further. Soviet premier Kosygin arrived in Cairo for talks with Sadat while discreet negotiations between Egypt and the United States continued as well. Indeed, by October 15, Kissinger had been invited to visit Cairo "in appreciation for his efforts."⁷⁶ Here was the first clear indication of Sadat's political strategy: even while absorbing massive Soviet assistance, he was turning to the United States for diplomatic support.

In the third phase (October 19–27) the superpowers succeeded in imposing a ceasefire on their warring clients, albeit not without difficulty. By October 19 Israeli forces had routed the Syrians and were threatening to encircle the Egyptian Third Army on the west bank of the canal. Kissinger flew to Moscow and then Jerusalem to negotiate a ceasefire, but the resulting agreement broke down almost immediately. Brezhnev then sent Nixon a curt note threatening unilateral Soviet intervention if Israel did not halt its operations against the trapped Third Army. Nixon responded by ordering a worldwide military alert, and the United States pressured Israel into accepting a second ceasefire on the 27th, which brought the October War to a close.⁷⁷

Although Egypt and Syria bore the brunt of the fighting, their Arab allies contributed as well. Iraq sent two armored divisions and an armored brigade to Syria and reportedly sent five squadrons of aircraft to Syria and Egypt. The Saudis sent an infantry brigade to Syria, and King Hussein limited his own participation to a single armored brigade on the Syrian front.⁷⁸ Despite strong Soviet and Arab pressure to open a third front on the West Bank, Hussein did the absolute minimum necessary to show solidarity with the Arab cause. This decision was undoubtedly based on his respect for Israel's military power, as well as the fact that the United States encouraged him to stay out of the war and told Israel not to attack Jordan as long as he did.⁷⁹

Of far greater significance was the Saudi role in organizing and implementing an oil boycott and production decrease on October 20. Imposed in response to the U.S. decision to provide Israel with \$2.2 billion worth of emergency foreign assistance, the oil boycott was intended to remind Western consumers of their interest in a more active and impartial role in achieving a Middle East settlement.⁸⁰ The war and the embargo

76. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, p. 527.

77. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 554, 568–91, 597–611; Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 282–93; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 191–200.

78. Dupuy, *Elusive Victory*, pp. 467–68; Edward Luttwak and Daniel Horowitz, *The Israeli Army* (New York, 1975), pp. 390–91; Herzog, *War of Atonement*, pp. 137–38, 141–43; and Whetten, *Canal War*, pp. 271–72.

79. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 490, 494, 500, 506; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 177; and Dupuy, *Elusive Victory*, pp. 536–37.

80. On the implementation and effects of the oil weapon, see Quandt, *Decade of Deci-*

Table 6. Middle East alliances, 1968-1973

Alliance	Interpretation
Egypt-Jordan (1968-1970)	Nasser and Hussein coordinate diplomatic positions to maximize pressure on Israel and to prevent the PLO from dominating the diplomatic agenda.
Soviet Union-PDRY (1968-present)	The Soviet Union and the PDRY establish close security ties to weaken imperialism, and the PDRY obtains aid in its border war with Saudi Arabia.
Eastern Command (1969)	After heavy prodding by Nasser, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan join forces to aid Egypt during the War of Attrition. Some Iraqi troops are stationed in Jordan, but the overall level of cooperation is extremely limited.
Jordan-Israel (1970)	Syria invades Jordan during Hussein's campaign against the PLO. Israel agrees to provide air support for Jordan, but the Syrians are defeated by Jordan alone.
Soviet Union-Iraq (1971-1978)	Threatened by the rising power of Iran, the Ba'th regime actively seeks support from the Soviet Union. The Treaty of Friendship is signed in 1972, and security ties expand rapidly.
October War Coalition (1971-1974)	After Nasser's death, Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia establish close security and diplomatic ties to plan a successful war against Israel.

NOTE: Throughout this period, both superpowers provide increasing military aid to their clients (United States: Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan; Soviet Union: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and PDRY). Soviet-Egyptian ties are strained by the Soviet Union's reluctance to provide adequate military equipment and by its interference in Egyptian domestic politics.

served essentially the same purpose: to break the diplomatic stalemate that had arisen since 1967. Egypt and Syria had suffered a military defeat to gain a political victory; both the United States and Israel were now actively interested in making a deal.

The principal alliances between 1967 and 1973 are shown in Table 6.

STEP-BY-STEP DIPLOMACY AND REGIONAL REALIGNMENT

Once attention shifted from preparing for war to moving toward peace, a new set of alignments began to emerge. The coalition that

sions, p. 188; Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, pp. 128-29; Holden and Johns, *House of Saud: "Chronology," MEJ*, 28, no. 1 (1974): 39; and Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 523-24, 528-29, 534-35, 538, 872-74. For a report that the boycott was actually made for technical reasons related to production conditions, see Steven Emerson, *The American House of Saud: The Secret Petrodollar Connection* (New York, 1985), pp. 131-32.

fought the October War began to dissolve, as each member pursued its own interests. At the same time, Egypt gradually abandoned the Soviet Union for an alignment with the United States, which led the Soviet Union and its remaining clients to draw even closer together to preserve their own positions. The history of alliance formation in the Middle East from 1974 to 1979 is primarily the story of these two trends.

U.S. Ascendancy in the Middle East

The most significant development was Egypt's dramatic realignment toward the United States, an event closely tied to the dominant role of the United States in the postwar peace process. Kissinger visited Cairo immediately after the war, and he and Sadat agreed to separate the Egyptian and Israeli forces and restore diplomatic relations between the United States and Egypt. By January 1974, Sadat could state publicly that "the U.S. is following a new policy."⁸¹

Progress was steady after this initial step. Diplomatic relations were restored in February 1974, Sadat snubbed his Soviet patrons by accepting a U.S. offer to clear the Suez Canal, and in June 1974 Richard Nixon became the first U.S. president to visit Egypt. Sadat's "Open Door" economic policy began to attract Western investors, and U.S. aid for FY1975 climbed to \$408 million. Sadat and President Ford met for talks in Salzburg in June 1975, Sadat visited the United States in October, and the administration authorized the sale of C-130 aircraft to Egypt, ending the long-standing ban on weapons sales to Egypt.⁸² U.S. economic and military assistance to Egypt would grow to almost \$2 billion by 1977, effectively signaling Egypt's realignment from the Soviet Union to the United States.⁸³

81. For Kissinger's account of his first meeting with Sadat, see *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 635-45. See also Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 216-17; Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 296; and Safran, *Israel*, pp. 511-23. For Sadat's statement regarding the change in U.S. policy, see Raphael Israeli, ed., *The Public Diary of President Sadat* (Leiden, The Netherlands, 1978), 2: 448.

82. On these events, see Charles C. Peterson, "Soviet Mineclearing Operations in the Gulf of Suez," in *Soviet Naval Influence*, ed. Michael McGwire and John McDonnell (New York, 1977), pp. 540-45; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 246, 271, 280; Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 1125-1130; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 3 (1974): 289; no. 4 (1974): 426-27; AID, *Overseas Loans and Grants*; Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, rev. ed., p. 149; "U.S. Economic and Business Relations with the Middle East and North Africa," *Department of State Bulletin*, 74, no. 1429 (June 14, 1976); Edward R. F. Sheehan, *The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger* (Pleasantville, N.Y., 1976), p. 17; and Aronson, *Conflict and Bargaining*, p. 296.

83. See Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 280; AID, *Overseas Loans and Grants*; Shimon Shamir, "Egypt's Reorientation towards the U.S.—Factors and Conditions of Decision-making"; and John Waterbury, "The Implications of *Ijifitah* for U.S.-Egyptian Relations," in *The Middle East and the United States: Perceptions and Policies*, ed. Haim Shaked and Itamar Rabinovich (New Brunswick, N.J., 1980), pp. 285-86, 358-61, and *passim*.

Egypt's realignment brought diplomatic benefits as well. The October War had shown that the Arabs could not hope to defeat Israel militarily—they had had every advantage in 1973 and had still lost—but the costs and risks of another war now led the United States to take a more active role. Sadat was convinced that the United States held the key to Israeli concessions, and most important of all, that Kissinger was willing to use its leverage to get them.⁸⁴

Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy revealed that Sadat's assessment was correct. With both sides dependent on U.S. mediation, Kissinger was able to fashion three major agreements in 1974 and 1975. The first was a disengagement between the Egyptian and Israeli forces still frozen in the October 1973 ceasefire lines. A second, more difficult round of talks produced a similar disengagement between Syrian and Israeli forces in May 1974. The final step was the Sinai II agreement in September 1975, which combined a partial Israeli withdrawal from Sinai with an agreement for demilitarized zones and a multinational force to supervise the various provisions.⁸⁵

All three agreements required Kissinger to exert considerable pressure on Egypt, Syria, and especially Israel. Because Kissinger's tactics involved a combination of carrots and sticks (i.e., threats to withhold U.S. support matched by subsequent increases), U.S.-Israeli relations were marred by intense disputes throughout the negotiating process.⁸⁶ At the same time, U.S. aid to Israel rose even higher than in the years before the October War. Israeli attendance at the Geneva Peace Conference in December 1973 was compelled by a letter from Nixon to Meir hinting that continued U.S. support was contingent on Israel's compliance, and the disengagement agreement in January 1974 was facilitated by a U.S. pledge to waive \$1 billion of existing Israeli debts. An additional \$500 million was waived following the disengagement with Syria, and a major arms package was approved in November.⁸⁷

The failure to reach agreement for a second disengagement between Egypt and Israel created a similar rift. When the talks broke down in April 1975, Ford and Kissinger announced a reassessment of U.S. Mid-

84. As Sadat recounted his first meeting with Kissinger in his memoirs: "The first hour made me feel I was dealing with an entirely new mentality, a new political method." See el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, p. 291.

85. For accounts of the step-by-step process, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 224-29, 238-45; Aronson, *Conflict and Bargaining in the Middle East*, pp. 227-32, 239-43; Sheehan, *Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger*, pp. 109-12, 116-28; Safran, *Israel*, pp. 521-34; Touval, *Peace Brokers*, chap. 9; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 268-305. For Kissinger's own version, see Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, chaps. 18, 23.

86. See Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 619-23; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 215-16; Golan, *Secret Conversations*, pp. 105-11, 242, 246, 251; and especially Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, pp. 167-70, 179-96.

87. Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, pp. 180-82.

dle East policy. The key element of this reassessment was a brief suspension of U.S. aid to Israel. Pressured by Congress to lift the ban, Kissinger was able to obtain a second disengagement by pledging to increase aid to Israel still further. The United States also promised (1) to be fully responsive to Israel's defense requirements, (2) to guarantee Israel an adequate oil supply, (3) to provide Israel with the new F-16 fighter, and (4) to coordinate diplomatic positions—including a ban on negotiations with the PLO—regarding any future settlement. The step-by-step process did bring results, but they were bought with a price.⁸⁸

The ascendancy of the United States after the 1973 war was also signaled by the continued growth of its military relations with its traditional Arab allies. Saudi Arabia lifted its oil embargo in March 1974 (after the first Sinai disengagement agreement) and announced a 1 million barrel per day production increase intended for the U.S. market. A \$335 million military modernization program was announced the following month, and Nixon and Crown Prince Fahd exchanged visits in June. The U.S. Department of Defense began a long-range survey of Saudi military requirements at this time, and by the end of 1975 more than six thousand Americans were engaged in military-related activities in Saudi Arabia. Saudi arms purchases for the period 1974-1975 totaled over \$3.8 billion, and a bewildering array of training missions and construction projects worth over \$10 billion were now underway.⁸⁹ The Ford administration overcome congressional opposition to the sale of several advanced missile systems in 1976, and the Saudis were promised both F-15 and F-16 aircraft in the future.⁹⁰

As for Jordan, Hussein's restraint in the October War was also rewarded. The FY1975 aid package featured a 72 percent increase over the 1974 total, and additional military shipments were authorized as well. Efforts to bring Jordan into the peace process foundered, however, on

88. On the negotiations for Sinai II, see Pollock, *Politics of Pressure*, pp. 187-88; Sheehan, *Arabs, Israelis, and Kissinger*, pp. 164-67; and Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 264-76. For an Israeli perspective, see Aronson, *Conflict and Bargaining in the Middle East*, pp. 292-300. For the full text of the Sinai II agreement (including the secret annexes) see U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearings on Memoranda of Agreements between the Governments of Israel and the United States*, 94th Cong., 2d sess., 1975, pp. 249-53.

89. In the words of the director of the U.S. Defense Security Assistance Agency, these developments showed that the United States "viewed Saudi Arabia as a trusted friend." On these developments, see *New York Times*, March 18, 1974; Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 656-66, 774-77; Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, p. 359; U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf and Red Sea Areas: Past, Present, and Future*, 95th Cong., 1st sess., 1976, pp. 5, 12, 27, and passim; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 3 (1974): 296; Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, app. B; and U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *Military Sales to Saudi Arabia*, 1975, p. 2.

90. See Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, p. 118; U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *Military Sales to Saudi Arabia*, 1975; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 308-10.

the unwillingness of either Israel or Jordan to make significant concessions regarding the West Bank. Moreover, the Arab decision to designate the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians" at the 1974 Rabat summit effectively stripped Hussein of the authority to negotiate for this territory at all, because any agreement he might reach would have defied the Arab consensus. Under the circumstances, prospects for extending the step-by-step process to the West Bank were nil.⁹¹ U.S.-Jordanian relations were also disrupted by a dispute over Jordan's request to purchase I-HAWK anti-aircraft missiles. Although Ford approved the purchase in 1975, Congress repeatedly delayed or altered the terms of sale. The delay led Hussein to adopt his familiar tactic of threatening to obtain a similar system from the Soviet Union. This threat overcame congressional opposition, and the deal was completed in the summer of 1976. Thus Jordan's pro-Western posture was preserved throughout the disengagement process, despite the fact that step-by-step diplomacy brought Hussein no real benefits.⁹²

Finally, U.S. stewardship of the disengagement process led to a brief détente with Syria. The United States provided Damascus \$104 million in economic aid in 1975—the first U.S. aid offering since the early 1960s—and Nixon became the first U.S. president to visit Syria, in 1974. U.S. motives were hardly subtle; the aid was intended "as an incentive for Syria to adopt a moderate approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict."⁹³ Unfortunately, the Sinai II agreement—which Syrian President Assad called a "separate peace" between Egypt and Israel that threatened Syrian interests—brought this brief easing of tensions to a close.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, by the end of 1976, U.S. diplomacy had established or reinforced close security ties with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Jordan.

On the Outside Looking In: The Soviet Union after the October War

The dominant role of the United States in the peace process forced the Soviet Union to commit increasing resources to its remaining Middle

91. See Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 283–89.

92. On these points, see "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 2 (1974): 165; 29, no. 4 (1975): 443; 30, no. 1 (1976): 70; no. 4 (1976): 527–28; 31, no. 1 (1977): 54; Sinai and Pollock, *Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, p. 150; William Griffiths, "Soviet Influence in the Middle East," *Survival*, 18, no. 1 (1976): 5. For the aid figures, see AID, *Overseas Loans and Grants*.

93. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 29, no. 2 (1975): 184; AID, *Overseas Loans and Grants*; and Galia Golan and Itamar Rabinovich, "The Soviet Union and Syria: The Limits of Cooperation," in *The Limits to Power: Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, ed. Ya'acov Roi (London, 1979), p. 220.

94. Assad's statement is noted in Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 303. See also "Chronology," *MEJ*, 30, no. 1 (1976): 64.

East allies. Although its enormous prior investment in Egypt had come to nought, ties with its other allies were enhanced.

By 1975, the Soviet-Egyptian alliance was moribund. Sadat had abandoned the Soviet Union very gradually, as insurance should his pro-Western policy fail to bear fruit and as a further incentive for the United States to deliver Israeli concessions. Thus, even as he criticized past Soviet support, Sadat called for the Soviets "to remain active in the peace process," and he described the Soviet Union as "a mainstay for peace loving people" in May 1974. But when Sadat continued his flirtation with the United States and attacked Soviet attempts to use arms supplies "as an instrument of leverage," the Soviets canceled two scheduled visits by Brezhnev and began to limit their arms shipments even more. Sadat restricted Soviet access to Egyptian military facilities in May 1975, sharply criticized a Soviet refusal to extend Egypt's loans, announced that he would seek military equipment from alternative sources, and refused to sign a new Soviet-Egyptian trade agreement.⁹⁵ The end was not long in coming; Sadat used the Soviet refusal to supply spare parts for Egyptian aircraft as the pretext for abrogating the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in March 1976.⁹⁶

The collapse of the Soviet alliance with Egypt was balanced by a growing Soviet relationship with Syria. As Soviet arms shipments to Egypt declined, "arms shipments to Syria . . . reached staggering proportions."⁹⁷ The Soviet Union had replaced most of the military equipment Syria had lost in the October War by August 1974, extended Syria's war debts for an additional twelve years, and assigned Cuban and North Korean pilots to fly air defense missions in Syrian MIG-23s while Syrian pilots were being trained.⁹⁸ Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko visited Damascus repeatedly in 1974 and 1975—in effect imitating Kissinger's frequent Middle East visits—and Brezhnev denounced the step-by-step process as "ersatz diplomacy." The Syrians welcomed their heightened status, especially after the United States failed to bring them additional diplomatic benefits. Assad's visit to the Soviet Union in October 1975—immediately following the Sinai II agreement between Egypt and Israel—produced another major arms deal,

95. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 3 (1974): 289; no. 4 (1974): 426–27; 29, no. 1 (1975): 71; no. 2 (1975): 187–88; Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy towards Egypt*, pp. 73–74; Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 307–11; Amnon Sella, *Soviet Political and Military Conduct in the Middle East* (New York, 1981), pp. 132–36; and Remnek, "Politics of Soviet Access," pp. 376–77.

96. See Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 322–24. It is noteworthy that Sadat announced the abrogation of the treaty while on a U.S.-sponsored trip intended to attract economic assistance from Europe.

97. Sella, *Soviet Political and Military Conduct*, p. 138.

98. Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," p. 478; and Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*, p. 213.

and the Syrians now agreed to permit the Soviets to operate out of Syrian airfields on a regular basis. By the beginning of 1976 Syria had emerged as the Soviet Union's main ally in the Middle East.⁹⁹ This alliance, however, did not provide the Soviet Union with much control over Syrian behavior.

The effects of Egypt's realignment were also felt in Soviet relations with Iraq. The combination of external threats and internal challenges that had led Iraq to seek Soviet support in the early 1970s had declined, and the erosion of Soviet ties with Egypt made the Soviets especially eager to preserve their positions elsewhere. As a result, Iraq gradually acquired the upper hand in its dealings with Moscow. The Soviets continued to provide Iraq's armed forces with advanced equipment—including, for the first time, SCUD surface-to-surface missiles and MIG-23 aircraft—and they reversed their traditional pro-Kurdish policy by aiding the Iraqi government in a renewal of its intermittent war against the insurgents. Indeed, Soviet pilots reportedly flew combat missions in the government's latest campaign against the Kurds.¹⁰⁰ Iraq's increasingly independent stance was facilitated by the settlement of a border dispute with Iran in 1975 and the growing oil revenues that enabled Baghdad to expand its economic and military ties with the West.¹⁰¹ And when Soviet relations with Syria deteriorated briefly during Syria's intervention in Lebanon, the Soviets countered by leaning toward Iraq; an arms deal reportedly worth \$1 billion was arranged during Kosygin's visit in May 1976.¹⁰² Given the improvement in Iraq's regional position and the difficulties now confronting the Soviet Union, the shift in leverage from Moscow to Baghdad is not surprising.

Finally, the Soviets sought to counter the various U.S. initiatives by increasing their support for other radical forces in the region. Soviet ties

99. On these events, see Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*, pp. 183–85, 213–31; Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, rev. ed., pp. 163–67, 210–11; Golan and Rabinovich, "Soviet Union and Syria," pp. 216–19; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 30, no. 1 (1976): 65–66; and Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," p. 478.

100. See Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," p. 470; John C. Campbell, "The Soviet Union and the Middle East," in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Political Economy of the Middle East*, p. 361; Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*, pp. 242–43; Freedman, *Soviet Policy in the Middle East*, rev. ed., pp. 161–63; and Avigdor Haselkorn, *The Evolution of Soviet Security Strategy, 1965–1975* (New York, 1978), p. 79.

101. Iraq purchased approximately \$70 million worth of French arms in 1974, and Vice-President Hussein stated that "Iraq had a free hand in such matters." The Soviet share of Iraq's foreign trade dropped from 22 percent in 1973 to roughly 12 percent over the next two years. Trade with the United States, by contrast, rose from \$20 million in 1973 to over \$200 million in 1974 and 1975. See Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," pp. 47–71; and Orah Cooper, "Soviet–East European Economic Relations with the Middle East," in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *Political Economy of the Middle East*, p. 284. For the details of the settlement between Iran and Iraq, see Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 245–60.

102. See Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," pp. 471–72.

with Libya expanded steadily after the October War, inspired by the two countries' joint opposition to Sadat's moves toward peace.¹⁰³ The Soviet Union's earlier policy of restraint toward the PLO was abandoned as well, and military aid to South Yemen increased to nearly \$160 million between 1974 and 1977.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the Soviet Union's concerns over its position in the Middle East now led it to court King Hussein of Jordan; a Supreme Soviet delegation visited Jordan in 1975. Hussein made a much-publicized visit to Moscow in 1976, and the Soviets offered to provide the air defense systems that Hussein had been seeking from the United States.¹⁰⁵ Thus the Soviet Union sought to balance Egypt's defection by acquiring new allies or increasing its support for old ones.

Step-by-Step Diplomacy and Inter-Arab Relations

The need to confront Israel effectively had brought Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia together between 1970 and 1973, but the pressures of peace-making now drove them apart. The process was gradual because maintaining a common front increased their bargaining leverage and preserved the material benefits of Arab solidarity (e.g., financial assistance from the wealthy oil states). Nonetheless, the years following the October War witnessed the return of inter-Arab competition and a complicated series of maneuvers and realignments.

The problem was how to preserve Arab solidarity while Syria, Jordan, and especially Egypt independently sought the best deal with Israel. As early as January 1974, Syria's insistence that disengagement be simultaneous and linked to a "total Israeli withdrawal" revealed Assad's fear that Egypt would try to sign a separate peace.¹⁰⁶ This tension was an inevitable result of the step-by-step approach; it forced Syria, Egypt, and Jordan to pursue separate negotiations with Israel and the United States.

These inevitable conflicts of interest led the different Arab states to make several diplomatic adjustments. After the first disengagement agreements in 1974, efforts to bring Jordan into the peace process and to promote a further disengagement with Egypt met with strong opposition from Syria and the PLO. Sadat then broke his earlier pledge that Jordan would be next and voted to designate the PLO (not Hussein) as

103. See Freedman, *Soviet Policy towards the Middle East*, rev. ed., pp. 159–61, 200–201.

104. On Soviet support for the PLO, see Galia Golan, "The Soviet Union and the PLO," in *The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict*, ed. Gabriel Ben-Dor (Ramat Gan, Israel, 1979), pp. 230–33 and passim. On relations with the PDRY, see Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 84–85; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 29, no. 1 (1975): 67; and U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *U.S. Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf*, p. 75.

105. Golan, "Soviet Union and the PLO," p. 241.

106. "Chronology," *MEJ*, 28, no. 2 (1974): 160–61.

the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians" at Rabat in November.¹⁰⁷ Sadat's reversal sprang as much from Egypt's own interests as from any commitment to the PLO or to Arab solidarity. By thwarting Hussein's efforts to join the peace process, the Rabat decision inevitably forced the negotiations back toward a second Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement. Given Syrian-Israeli animosity and the strategic value of the Golan Heights, a second agreement on the Sinai would be far easier to achieve than further progress along the Syrian-Israeli border.

The Sinai II agreement brought this latent conflict out into the open. Syrian officials denounced the agreement as "strange and shameful" and vowed to reverse it "even if we have to shed blood for it." Open polemics erupted between Damascus and Cairo in 1976, and both countries withdrew their diplomatic personnel after their embassies were attacked by demonstrators in June. The result was an unexpected rapprochement between Syria and Jordan, belying the fact that they had fought each other just five years earlier. The two countries had already begun to coordinate their diplomatic positions while Sadat was negotiating over Sinai, and they agreed to establish joint military and economic commissions in June 1975. Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan conducted a series of joint military exercises shortly thereafter, and Jordan consistently backed Syria's policies during the Lebanese Civil War.¹⁰⁸

With no territory at stake and enjoying the luxury of distance, Iraq, Libya, and South Yemen took a consistently hard-line view. They refused to attend the Algiers summit in November 1973 and condemned the Rabat decisions for implying the possibility of negotiations with Israel. Together with several radical PLO factions, Iraq established the so-called Rejection Front in October 1974, based on uncompromising

107. Itamar Rabinovich, "The Challenge of Diversity: American Policy and the System of Inter-Arab Relations, 1973-1977," in Shaked and Rabinovich, *The Middle East and the United States*, pp. 186-88; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 233-35.

108. See Lenczowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*, p. 497; U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *Military Sales to Saudi Arabia, 1975*, pp. 18-19; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 30, no. 1 (1976): 64; no. 2 (1976): 201; no. 4 (1976): 525; Rabinovich, "Challenge of Diversity," pp. 188-89; Paul Juriedini and Ronald P. McLaurin, "The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan," in *Lebanon in Crisis: Participants and Issues*, ed. P. Edward Haley and Lewis Snider (Syracuse, N.Y., 1979), pp. 153-58; and MECS 1976-1977, pp. 154-55. Syrian and Jordanian opposition to Sinai II can be explained in two ways. The more common explanation is that a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace was viewed as a betrayal of the Arab cause that allowed Israel to refuse concessions elsewhere with impunity. An alternative is that Assad and Hussein secretly viewed Egypt's moves favorably—Assad because they left Egypt isolated and enhanced his position as the only significant confrontation state (given that other hard-line states such as Iraq and Libya could do little more than adopt bellicose resolutions) and Hussein because a successful Egyptian peace with Israel would legitimate his own efforts to reach an agreement and reduce the ability of the PLO to make any deals in his stead.

opposition to the step-by-step process in general and to Sinai II in particular.¹⁰⁹ This loose coalition (later joined by Libya and South Yemen and renamed the Steadfastness Front) sought to discredit its various Arab opponents by demonstrating greater fidelity to the Palestinian cause while simultaneously working to diminish the now-dominant role of the United States in Middle East diplomacy.¹¹⁰

At the same time, however, Iraqi relations with the moderate Arabs began to improve slightly. Sadat visited Baghdad in May 1976, and Saudi Crown Prince Fahd's own trip to Iraq in June marked the first visit by a member of the Saudi royal family in over fifteen years. These developments are not difficult to fathom either. Facing a flare-up in its traditional rivalry with Syria, Iraq now sought allies to counter the new alliance of Syria and Jordan. For Egypt and Saudi Arabia, in turn, a détente with Iraq prevented Sadat's moves toward peace (which the Saudis discreetly favored) from leading to complete isolation.¹¹¹

But just when two new coalitions seemed ready to divide the Arab world again, the Lebanese civil war produced a brief reconciliation between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. After the Lebanese government collapsed under pressure from the PLO and the various factions within Lebanon, Syria reversed its previous policy and sent twenty-five thousand of its own troops to suppress the PLO and support the beleaguered Lebanese government.¹¹² Significantly, Syria chose to intervene despite strong Soviet objections, which Assad termed "merely an expression of a point of view."¹¹³ Although Egypt and Iraq both opposed Syria's

109. See Alan R. Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1982), p. 55; "Chronology," *MEJ*, 29, no. 1 (1975): 67.

110. Libya was at odds with Egypt after Sadat abandoned a 1971 unity agreement. South Yemen and Saudi Arabia were still extremely suspicious, and Syria and Iraq had been bitter rivals since the early 1960s. Thus the Rejection Front reflected all its members' separate interests.

111. The intermittent feud between Syria and Iraq was intensified over (1) disputes over the division of water from the Euphrates River, (2) an attack on a Syrian official in Iraq, and (3) Syria's expulsion of several Iraqi diplomats. See "Chronology," *MEJ*, 29, no. 3 (1975): 336-37; no. 4 (1975): 441-42, 448.

112. Syria's intervention against the PLO resulted from (1) Syria's desire to keep control over the Palestinian national movement, (2) its fear that the fighting might provide a pretext for Israeli intervention, and (3) its own aim of reinforcing its claims to a Greater Syria, including large parts of Lebanon. On these events, see Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, pp. 84-85, 167; Adee Dawisha, *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis* (London, 1981), pp. 37-38, 72-74; Adee Dawisha, "Syria in Lebanon—Assad's Vietnam?" *Foreign Policy*, no. 33 (1978-1979): 136-40; and Itamar Rabinovich, "The Limits of Military Power: Syria's Role," in Haley and Snider, *Lebanon in Crisis*, pp. 59-64.

113. On the Soviet reaction to Syria's intervention, see Dawisha, *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis*, pp. 169-70; Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," pp. 479-81; and Freedman, *Soviet Policy*, rev. ed., pp. 242-52, 255-60. The Soviets briefly suspended arms shipments, and Assad reportedly expelled a number of Soviet advisers and reduced Soviet access to naval and air facilities in Syria.

action initially (indeed, Egypt sent supplies to several PLO factions and Iraq mobilized troops on the Syrian border), King Khaled of Saudi Arabia eventually persuaded Sadat and Assad to attend a summit meeting in Riyadh in October 1976. Khaled's efforts were aided by Syrian and Egyptian dependence on Saudi financial support and by the Saudis' unusual willingness to use this leverage to gain their compliance. The Riyadh summit produced an agreement to create a multilateral (albeit predominately Syrian) Arab Deterrent Force in Lebanon, thus implicitly endorsing Syria's action.¹¹⁴

Thus, by the end of 1976, the earlier alignment of Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia had been temporarily restored. By accepting the Riyadh agreement, Egypt had acknowledged Syrian predominance in Lebanon, and Syria had tacitly accepted Sinai II.¹¹⁵ Jordan now enjoyed good relations with the three leading Arab states, and Iraq was isolated once again (save for its rather inconsequential allies in the Rejection Front). Although the first steps toward peace had been divisive, a decisive rift had been avoided thus far. However, the reconciliation fashioned in Riyadh proved to be extremely short-lived. The next moves toward peace would bring renewed rivalry and further realignments.

TO CAMP DAVID AND BEYOND

The final phase examined in this study began with Anwar Sadat's unprecedented peace initiative in the fall of 1977 and the subsequent signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in March 1979. Although Sadat had already shown his willingness to take independent action by signing the 1975 Sinai II agreement, his explicit defiance of the Arab consensus regarding a separate peace with Israel brought about Egypt's near-total isolation in the Arab world.

Sadat's initiative emerged from his reservations about the Carter administration's campaign to convene a multilateral peace conference in Geneva.¹¹⁶ Rather than participate in a process he saw as doomed to

114. See Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 245-50; *Strategic Survey 1976*, pp. 84-88; Lenczowski, *Middle East in World Affairs*, pp. 381-86; MECS 1976-1977, pp. 147-50; Taylor, *Arab Balance of Power*, pp. 68-69; and Dawisha, *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis*, pp. 112-13.

115. This analysis follows that of Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, p. 251.

116. The administration's efforts were stymied by the formidable difficulties of getting all the necessary parties to agree on an appropriate forum and on the states that should be included. Sadat apparently believed that such a conference would accomplish little. In addition, he feared that this approach would allow the Soviets to regain a position of influence in the region while permitting Syria to exercise a veto on promising proposals. See Touval, *Peace Brokers*, pp. 288-89; Safran, *Israel*, p. 604 and passim; and especially William B. Quandt, *Camp David: Peacemaking and Politics* (Washington, D.C., 1986), chaps. 4-6.

fail, Sadat decided that a dramatic gesture was needed to "break the psychological and political barriers to peace." After a series of covert contacts with Israel (including a warning from Israeli intelligence that enabled Sadat to thwart a Libya-sponsored coup), Sadat announced that "he was ready . . . to go to the Knesset itself" in search of peace. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin soon issued an invitation, and Sadat arrived in Jerusalem on November 19, 1977, after trying unsuccessfully to obtain Assad's approval for his mission.¹¹⁷

Despite the excitement Sadat's visit produced, a series of Egyptian-Israeli meetings made little progress. Carter then invited Sadat and Begin to a joint summit at Camp David in September 1978. Through Carter's active mediation, the outlines of a peace agreement and a broader Framework for Peace in the Middle East were signed by the three leaders on September 18, 1978.¹¹⁸ After another six months of difficult negotiations, a formal peace treaty based on the Camp David Accords was signed. The treaty restored full diplomatic and economic relations between Egypt and Israel, established a timetable for Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai, and outlined a general framework for dealing with the West Bank and Palestinian Arabs. U.S. mediation and financial pledges played a key role in bridging the obstacles to agreement; Egypt was promised some \$2 billion in additional economic and military assistance, and Israel stood to receive over \$3 billion in additional aid. With this step Egypt's journey to a separate peace with Israel was completed.¹¹⁹

Arab Responses to the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty

Although Sadat tried to show Egypt's solidarity with the Palestinians by linking the peace treaty with Israel to a future agreement on the West

117. See Howard M. Sachar, *Egypt and Israel* (New York, 1981), pp. 260-61; Michael Handel, *The Diplomacy of Surprise: Hitler, Nixon, Sadat* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), pp. 303-5, especially note 19, 328-29, 337-38; Moshe Dayan, *Breakthrough: A Personal Account of the Egypt-Israel Peace Negotiations* (New York, 1981), pp. 38-52; and el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 308-9.

118. For accounts or analyses of the Camp David negotiations, see Quandt, *Camp David*; Sachar, *Egypt and Israel*, pp. 278-86; Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York, 1982), pp. 319-403; Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981* (New York, 1983), chap. 7; Safran, *Israel*, pp. 609-12; MECS 1977-1978, pp. 123-29; Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 353-61; and Touval, *Peace Brokers*, pp. 298-303 and passim. The Camp David Accords called for restoration of the Sinai to Egypt and a complete peace with full diplomatic relations between the two countries and stated several general principles for the establishment of a "self-governing authority" for the West Bank, with its final status to be determined in five years. The text of the Camp David Accords can be found in MECS 1977-1978, pp. 149-54.

119. The most complete account of the negotiations for the peace treaty is Quandt, *Camp David*, chaps. 10-11; on the aid figures, see pp. 302, 313-14. According to William Burns, Sadat hoped to obtain even more. See his *Economic Aid and American Policy*, pp. 192-93.

Bank and Gaza Strip, Arab responses to the Camp David Accords were almost entirely hostile. Syria denounced the trip to Jerusalem as treason, and the Syrian ambassador to the United Nations claimed that Sadat "had stabbed the Arabs in the back."¹²⁰ In response, Syria, Libya, South Yemen, Algeria, and the PLO established a Front of Steadfastness and Resistance at a conference in Tripoli in December 1977, united primarily by their opposition to Sadat's initiative. Iraq was equally opposed to Egypt's policies, but the Iraqis chose not to join the front because of their continuing hostility toward Syria. Accordingly, they condemned the Tripoli summit for not going far enough in its condemnation of Egypt.¹²¹ Criticism from Saudi Arabia and Jordan was more muted; both chided Sadat for not obtaining a "final acceptable formula for peace," but the Saudis continued to provide subsidies to Egypt until the signing of the formal peace treaty.¹²² Jordan's response was understandably ambivalent. Hussein could not endorse the peace process openly without strong Arab support, but he did not wish to reject Sadat's initiative prematurely in case it suddenly bore fruit for Jordan. Hussein's refusal to condemn Sadat outright and to join the Steadfastness Front had the immediate effect of undermining the close alignment between Syria and Jordan that had begun after Sinai II.¹²³

A more dramatic reversal was the sudden and short-lived rapprochement between Syria and Iraq, beginning in the fall of 1978. United by their opposition to Egypt's actions, alarmed by Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon in March 1978, and concerned by the rise of Shi'ite fundamentalism during the Iranian revolution, the two Ba'th states momentarily suspended their long-standing differences. Talks between Assad and President al-Bakr of Iraq led to the signing of a Charter of National Action in October, and the two leaders committed their countries—once again—to "seek arduously for the closest form of unity ties." A Joint Higher Political Committee met in December, and various subcommittees met periodically through January 1979. Although it was clear by then that the unity scheme was experiencing serious difficulties, it was a striking departure from the decade of hostility that preceded it.¹²⁴

Of equal importance (and far greater duration) was the emergence of a

120. Quoted in *MECS 1977-1978*, p. 217.

121. *MECS 1977-1978*, pp. 225-26.

122. Sadat reportedly refused a joint Arab offer of \$5 billion to abandon his peace initiative after Camp David. See *MECS 1977-1978*, pp. 228-29 and *passim*; and *MECS 1978-1979*, pp. 215-16. On the Saudis' ambivalent attitude toward the entire Camp David process, see Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 260-63. The Saudis had hoped that Sadat would obtain a deal that the rest of the Arabs would accept. This he clearly failed to do.

123. *MECS 1977-1978*, pp. 232-33.

124. See *MECS 1978-1979*, pp. 236-38.

tacit alliance between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, despite the traditional hostility and radically different domestic systems of the two states. For Iraq, the move provided insurance against revolutionary Iran, additional pressure on Sadat, and furtherance of its aim of supplanting Egypt as the leading Arab state. The Saudis responded favorably, in part to counter Iran and in part because they wanted to temper Arab condemnation of Sadat in the hope of leading Egypt back into the Arab fold. They were at least temporarily successful; an Arab summit in Baghdad in November 1978 called upon Egypt to abandon the Camp David Accords but did not impose sanctions at that time.¹²⁵

Moderation was abandoned, however, with the signing of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in March 1979. At a second Baghdad summit, Egypt was formally suspended from the Arab League. The participants (including Jordan and Saudi Arabia) broke diplomatic relations or withdrew their ambassadors, imposed a trade boycott, and cut off all economic aid to Egypt.¹²⁶ Thus Sadat's initiative—in essence the culmination of the policy he had followed at least since the October War—had left Egypt isolated in the Arab world.

For Iraq, Egypt's expulsion appeared to be a golden opportunity. Enriched by rising oil exports, strengthened by Soviet arms, and encouraged by the turmoil now consuming its traditional rival in Iran, Baghdad enjoyed a new ascendancy. The Iraqis took the lead in orchestrating the campaign against Sadat, and relations with both Saudi Arabia and Jordan continued to improve in 1979 and 1980. The Saudis agreed to coordinate internal security planning in February 1979 (a move inspired by the growing danger of subversion from revolutionary Iran), and the rapprochement with Baghdad was furthered by an exchange of high-level visits over the next two years.¹²⁷ United by their opposition to Iran and their concern over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, these unlikely allies formed a surprisingly solid alignment by 1980.¹²⁸

125. Taylor, *Arab Balance of Power*, pp. 77-80; *MECS 1978-1979*, pp. 214-17, 235-36, and *passim*; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 262-64, 275-76, and 279-81.

126. For the resolutions of the Second Baghdad Conference, see Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Daily Report for Middle East and North Africa," April 2, 1979, pp. A1-A5. See also Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, pp. 20-21.

127. See Taylor, *Arab Balance of Power*, p. 79; *MECS 1978-1979*, pp. 240-41; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, chap. 14.

128. As Safran makes clear, the Saudis had been engaged in a delicate balancing act between Iran and Iraq. They sought initially to appease Iran while reinforcing ties with Iraq, notwithstanding the contradictory nature of this policy. Despite Baghdad's newfound moderation, the Saudis were understandably worried about Iraq's long-term ambitions as well as the threat from Iran, and they therefore sought to exclude Baghdad from direct security arrangements with the smaller Gulf states. When Iran proved impossible to appease, however, the Saudis embraced the lesser of two threats and moved to overt support for Baghdad. See Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 361-62. See also Ispahani, "Alone Together," pp. 158-60.

Indeed, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein (who succeeded al-Bakr in July 1979) announced in March 1980 that despite Iraq's "friendly ties" with the Soviet Union, should the Soviets invade the Persian Gulf, "the Iraqi Army would fight them even before the Saudi Army did."¹²⁹

Jordan followed a similar path. As noted, King Hussein's ambivalent response to Camp David had weakened his link with Syria without winning him new allies elsewhere.¹³⁰ But with Syria opting for a more radical stance, with revolutionary Iran posing as an obvious threat to any pro-U.S. regime, and with Iraq moving to a more moderate position in concert with Saudi Arabia, Jordan's course was clear. After several preliminary exchanges, the two Husseins met in Baghdad in May 1980. Saddam Hussein declared that Iraq's relations with Jordan transcended "temporary, circumstantial factors," and the Jordanian monarch pledged that Jordan was "at Iraq's side with all its strength and all its resources." As he put it, Iraqi-Jordanian relations were now "a living model of what inter-Arab relations should be." Hussein then acknowledged the serious differences that had arisen between Jordan and Syria, an admission he had heretofore avoided.¹³¹ Thus, by 1980, Jordan had shifted completely from alignment with Syria to membership in the Saudi-Iraqi coalition.

Ironically, by the end of 1979, Syria was almost as isolated as Egypt. The unity agreement with Iraq collapsed completely by the summer of 1979, undermined by the burden of past hostility and each side's refusal to subordinate itself to the other. Indeed, by the end of the year, the familiar invective of inter-Ba'ath rivalry filled the Syrian and Iraqi media, along with the usual accusations (probably true) that each was trying to subvert the other.¹³² Assad's troops were mired in the Lebanese quagmire, his regime faced serious domestic disturbances, and he was the only Arab leader still actively threatened by Israeli military power. Accordingly, Assad now took whatever allies he could get. The Steadfastness Front (largely moribund in 1979) reconvened at Syria's initiative in January 1980, and the foreign ministers of the front met again in Tripoli in April.¹³³ The reconvening of the front was small compensa-

129. MECS 1979-1980, pp. 196-97.

130. Ever seeking to remain within the prevailing Arab consensus, Hussein had called for joint military planning by Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Jordan following the Baghdad II summit, in order to avoid having to choose between rival Arab camps should a rift widen. See Taylor, *Arab Balance of Power*, pp. 86-87; and MECS 1977-1978, pp. 232-33.

131. MECS 1979-1980, p. 198.

132. On the collapse of the Syrian-Iraqi unity agreement, see MECS 1978-1979, pp. 238-40.

133. The Steadfastness Front had languished in 1979 because Syria had opted to pursue unity with Iraq and cooperation with the moderate Arab states at the Baghdad summits in order to isolate Egypt. Once these arrangements deteriorated, Syria sought refuge with the

tion, however; symbolic support from Libya and South Yemen hardly equaled opposition from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Syria's vulnerability during this period also led the country to deepen its ties with the Soviet Union. Thus the Arab world was once again divided into a radical and a moderate camp, although ideology had little to do with it. Indeed, the novelty within this familiar pattern lay in the fact that Iraq was now among the moderates and Egypt was entirely excluded.

Superpower Commitments after Camp David

Soviet and U.S. responses to the Camp David process were predictable. The United States focused its attention on gaining additional support for the peace agreements—an effort that failed completely—while defending its traditional commitments in the face of several new challenges. The Soviet Union, in turn, opposed any developments that excluded it from the peace process. As a result, it welcomed the Arab effort to ostracize Egypt. In pursuing these basic objectives, both superpowers experienced successes and failures. The net result was to preserve the basic division of the Middle East alignments between the two superpowers.

For the United States, stewardship of the peace process created significant tensions with virtually all of its regional allies, even as U.S. involvement in their security planning grew. Following Sadat's initial trip to Jerusalem, the Carter administration announced that the United States would meet a Saudi request for F-15 aircraft and other advanced equipment, together with a major weapons package for Egypt and Israel. Aid to Jordan continued as well, with these various commitments justified as necessary to attract moderate Arab support for the peace process.¹³⁴

Despite heavy pressure, however, neither Jordan nor Saudi Arabia decided to support the Camp David process. Indeed, the U.S. assumption that their support would be easy to obtain exacerbated the resentment that both sides felt.¹³⁵ Furthermore, although the peace treaty was completed under U.S. auspices, both the drafting of the formal agree-

radical Arabs and Iran, in part to emphasize its status of the principal confrontation state sustaining the Palestinian cause against Israel. On these events, see MECS 1979-1980, pp. 178-86.

134. Jordan received over \$200 million annually in economic and military aid during these years. On the events described in this paragraph, see Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 485-87; Seth P. Tillman, *The United States in the Middle East* (Bloomington, Ind., 1982), pp. 98-106; MECS 1977-1978, pp. 686-88; Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 346-50; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 305-6.

135. On this point, see Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 363; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 304-5.

ment and the subsequent negotiations over Palestinian autonomy revealed that the United States, Egypt, and Israel had very different conceptions of what the Camp David Accords implied for the West Bank and Gaza. As a result, relations with both allies were often marred by significant discord during this period.¹³⁶

U.S. regional commitments were also affected by the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the two events that dominated the U.S. foreign policy agenda in 1979. Although U.S. fears may have been exaggerated, both Saudi Arabia and Jordan were worried by the rise in Soviet activity in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, by the collapse of the Shah's regime in Iran, and by what they saw as weak or vacillating U.S. responses.¹³⁷ To allay these concerns (and to enhance its own capabilities in the area), the United States reinforced its commitments to its remaining regional allies. A squadron of F-15 aircraft visited Riyadh in January 1979 (following the Shah's departure from Iran), although the gesture was weakened by the subsequent admission that the planes had in fact been unarmed. The United States also sent two AWACS early warning aircraft to Saudi Arabia in March and responded quickly to Saudi requests that military aid be sent to North Yemen during its brief war with its Marxist neighbor to the south.¹³⁸ Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter announced the formation of a Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) intended to enhance U.S. intervention capability in the Persian Gulf and Middle East areas, and he stated that "an attempt by any outside force . . . to gain control of the Persian Gulf . . . will be repelled by any means necessary."¹³⁹ Egypt and Israel quickly indicated their willingness to provide facilities for the RDJTF, but Saudi Arabia preferred an enhanced U.S. commitment that did not require active Saudi participation.¹⁴⁰ In short, the setbacks the United States endured in 1978 and 1979 once again inspired a renewed commitment to its various regional clients, even though its clients' responses were qualified in several important ways.

As for the Soviet Union and its regional allies, despite their obvious

136. See Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 373-77.

137. See Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 499-500.

138. On these measures, see MECS 1978-1979, p. 22; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 301-4.

139. See *New York Times*, January 24, 1980. On the roles and missions of the RDJTF, see Thomas L. McNaughter, *Arms and Oil* (Washington, D.C., 1985).

140. The Saudis clearly wanted U.S. backing against the Soviet and Iranian threats, but active participation in U.S. military arrangements would have left them vulnerable to accusations (by radical Arab states or Iran) that they were merely tools of "imperialist" forces allied with the "Zionist aggressor." On this point, see Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s*, pp. 55-57.

common interest in opposing the U.S.-sponsored peace agreements, relations were strained throughout 1978 and 1979. Soviet-Iraqi relations deteriorated steadily as Baghdad sought closer ties with Saudi Arabia and expanded its military and economic links with the West.¹⁴¹ A further source of tension was Hussein's discovery that members of the Iraqi Communist Party were forming cells in the armed forces, which led to the well-publicized execution of several dozen Iraqi Communists in 1978.¹⁴² Hussein told a Western interviewer that "the Soviet Union won't be satisfied until the whole world becomes Communist," and the Iraqis refused to permit Soviet planes to overfly Iraqi territory during Moscow's intervention in the Horn of Africa in 1978. The invasion of Afghanistan merely added to Iraqi suspicions and encouraged the non-aligned policy that Iraq was adopting by 1980.¹⁴³

Soviet relations with Syria had been somewhat tense since 1976, when Assad had defied Soviet pressure during the Syrian intervention in Lebanon. Although amity was restored in the months after Sadat's initiative—Assad paid a successful visit to the Soviet Union and Syria received new infusions of Soviet arms—differences persisted between Moscow and Damascus. Indeed, Assad's dissatisfaction with the level of Soviet arms aid and the conditions under which it was provided led him to recall the Syrian ambassador in December 1978 and to cancel his own plans to visit the Soviet Union at this time.¹⁴⁴

When the unity scheme with Iraq collapsed and the Saudi-Iraqi rapprochement took shape in 1979, however, Syria moved quickly to revive its ties with Moscow. By resurrecting the Steadfastness Front—which brought Moscow's main Arab clients together in one group—the Syrians managed to limit Arab criticism of the Soviet invasion of Moslem Afghanistan. Given Syria's isolation from the other Arab states and Egypt's decision to sign a separate peace, the Syrians were also convinced that Soviet support was essential to any future effort to challenge Israel over the remaining occupied territories (e.g., the Golan Heights).

141. Indeed, in 1980, Iraq purchased more arms from France than from the Soviet Union (measured in terms of dollar value of purchases). See MECS 1979-1980, p. 62.

142. See Fukuyama, "Soviet Union and Iraq," pp. 56-61.

143. Iraq did not become pro-Western or pro-United States. The Iraqis continued to purchase Soviet arms (no doubt because their troops were familiar with them and because they were relatively cheap) and remained hostile to the United States. Nonetheless, their policy was a striking change for a regime that had sought a formal treaty with Moscow in 1971.

144. During his visit in April, Assad stated publicly that there were still "differences in views" between the Soviet Union and Syria, but the overall tone of the visit was one of mutual support. On these various events, see Pajak, "Soviet Arms Aid," pp. 481-84; Morris Rothenberg, "Recent Soviet Relations with Syria," *Middle East Review*, 10, no. 4 (1978); and Rashid Khalidi, "Soviet Middle East Policy in the Wake of Camp David," *Institute for Palestine Studies Papers*, no. 3 (Beirut, 1979), pp. 23-25, 31-33.

This conviction overcame Assad's long-standing reluctance to sign a formal treaty with the Soviet Union, and the agreement was completed in May 1980. According to Brezhnev, the treaty raised Soviet relations with Syria "to a new, higher level."¹⁴⁵ All things considered, it was an understandable response to the setbacks both parties had endured over the previous several years.

From the Soviet perspective, events on the Arabian Peninsula were somewhat more encouraging, although there were disquieting elements there as well. In South Yemen, President Rubay 'Ali had begun a process of détente with Saudi Arabia and North Yemen in 1976, encouraged by Saudi offers of extensive economic assistance. Indeed, 'Ali indicated that restoring diplomatic relations with the United States was also a possibility, a development that would have threatened Moscow's position in the only Marxist country in the Arab world.¹⁴⁶ This restoration was not to be, however; the emerging détente was frozen during the Soviet intervention in the 1977 Somali-Ethiopian war, which the PDRY supported. The effort collapsed completely in 1978, when 'Ali was ousted and killed by a hard-line, pro-Soviet faction led by Abdel Fatah Ismail, then secretary-general of the South Yemeni National Liberation Front. Indeed, several accounts suggest that Warsaw Pact and Cuban advisers gave active support to Ismail during the coup.¹⁴⁷ Whether or not the Soviets helped arrange the coup, it did lead to a further expansion in the Soviet relationship with the PDRY; a fifteen-year agreement for naval access was soon announced, and a twenty-five-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed in October 1979. The durability of the Soviet-PDRY alliance was highlighted further in 1980, when Ismail was removed from power by his former ally, 'Ali Nasser Muhammed. Ismail went into exile in the Soviet Union, but Soviet relations with the new rulers were unaffected.¹⁴⁸

To the north, the Yemen Arab Republic continued the policy of non-alignment it had followed since the early 1970s while remaining dependent on Saudi financial assistance.¹⁴⁹ The United States began a modest military aid program in 1976 (financed by Saudi Arabia), and the YAR

145. See *MECS 1979-1980*, pp. 65-66.

146. See *MECS 1977-1978*, p. 667; Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 91-92; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 285-88.

147. See J. B. Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf, and the West* (New York, 1980), pp. 470-73; and *MECS 1977-1978*, pp. 655-66. Mark N. Katz concludes that the evidence regarding a possible Warsaw Pact role in the coup is insufficient. See his *Russia and Arabia*, p. 92.

148. See Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 93-94.

149. According to Christopher Van Hollen, the Saudis were providing North Yemen with roughly \$400 million annually in direct budgetary support, plus a variety of other funds for economic development and arms purchases. See his "North Yemen: A Dangerous Pentagon Game," *Washington Quarterly*, 5, no. 3 (1982): 139.

continued to balance uneasily between the two superpowers, the PDRY, and Saudi Arabia itself. The situation deteriorated rapidly in 1978; the assassination of President al-Ghashmi by a South Yemeni envoy in 1978 (a plot apparently linked to the struggle for power between 'Ali and Ismail in the PDRY) led to a renewal of fighting between the YAR, the PDRY, and the PDRY-backed National Democratic Front.

Eager to restore its credibility in the region, the United States responded to Saudi requests by sending an aircraft carrier to the Gulf of Aden and by agreeing to supply roughly \$350 million worth of arms to Sana via Saudi Arabia. The Saudis backpedaled at this point, partly because a ceasefire was negotiated quickly and partly because they feared that large U.S. arms shipments to North Yemen would reduce their own leverage over the government of the YAR. Thus the promised arms arrived either slowly or not at all, forcing North Yemen to turn back to Moscow for military aid. A deal worth several hundred million dollars was reached at the end of 1979, and deliveries were reportedly completed early in 1980. Despite this predictable response to their inability to obtain U.S. arms, the YAR continued to proclaim a policy of nonalignment. According to President Ghashmi's successor, 'Ali Abdallah Salih, North Yemen would "be a tool in neither U.S. hands nor in those of the Soviet Union."¹⁵⁰

Summary

Sadat's decision to sign a separate peace with Israel triggered a series of events that left the Arab world polarized once again, amid the usual calls for Arab solidarity. In contrast to the 1960s, however, the issue was primarily one of conflicting interests, not ideology. For the moderate camp (now including Iraq) the Arab-Israeli conflict had become a relatively minor issue, either because the moderates had no tangible interests at stake (e.g., Iraq) or because Egypt's defection had made direct action even more impractical than before (e.g., Jordan). Moreover, the perception of a growing threat from the Soviet Union and Iran gave the moderates a powerful incentive to cooperate together while preserving discreet ties with the West. Given the close relationship of the United States and Israel, the moderate Arab states had an additional reason to downplay the Palestinian question. Condemnation of Egypt was still necessary, but it was largely pro forma. Indeed, both Saudi Arabia and

150. Quoted in *MECS 1978-1979*, p. 63. See also Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 46-47; U.S. House Committee on International Relations, *U.S. Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf*, pp. 73-82; and Yodfat, *Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula*, pp. 105-8.

Iraq may have welcomed the opportunity to keep Egypt somewhat isolated.¹⁵¹

For Syria and the radical states of the Steadfastness Front, the Palestinian question remained the dominant issue, at least in their public posturing. First, Syria had a material interest in the conflict (e.g., the Golan Heights). Second, the Palestinian question remained the best way for the entire Steadfastness Front to demonstrate its commitment to defend the Arab national cause against the forces of "imperialism and Zionism." Neither the Soviet Union nor Iran seemed especially threatening; indeed, both were obvious allies given the radicals' overall objectives. Thus it was not surprising that the Arab world remained divided; each group's objectives tended to undermine those of the other, even in the absence of any specific bilateral antagonisms. And there was no shortage of those either.

The positions of the superpowers, by contrast, were surprisingly unaffected by the peace treaty. Although Iraq moved away from the Soviet Union after 1977, this decision had little to do with Egypt's decision to make peace. The Soviet Union continued its military, economic, and diplomatic support for Syria, South Yemen, the PLO, and Libya, and the United States reinforced its long-standing commitments to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Egypt was now as dependent on the United States as it had once been on the Soviet Union. Iraq and North Yemen were following policies of nonalignment, although both maintained more extensive contacts with the Soviet Union than with the United States.

The final set of alignments, occurring between 1974 and 1979, is summarized in Table 7.

CONCLUSION

Three general observations can be made from this overview. First, throughout the period 1955-1979, the emergence of a dominant regional actor has led others to seek both regional and great power allies to defend their interests. Before 1967, this process centered on thwarting Nasser's aspirations in the Arab world, on preventing attempts by the West to enhance its influence at the expense of nationalist forces and the Soviet Union, and on preserving Western interests against a perceived

151. The ostracism of Egypt had cleared the way for Iraq's bid for dominance in the Arab world and had reduced the danger a resurgent Egypt could pose to Saudi Arabia. It should not be forgotten that Egypt had threatened the Saudis and stifled Iraq's ambitions on numerous occasions in the past and that Egypt's size, military strength, and intellectual prominence in the Arab world made it an important latent power in the region, despite its liabilities.

Table 7. Middle East alliances, 1974-1979

Alliance	Interpretation
United States-Egypt (1975-present)	Convinced that the United States holds "95 percent of the cards," Sadat abandons reliance on the Soviet Union and bandwagons with the United States to gain peace and economic aid. The United States continues to oversee the peace process.
Syria-Jordan (1975-1978)	Syria and Jordan overcome mutual hostility to isolate Egypt, as Egypt moves toward a separate peace by signing the Sinai II agreement.
Steadfastness Front (1978-1979)	Syria, South Yemen, Algeria, and Libya ally to pressure Sadat to abandon the Camp David process. Saudi Arabia and Jordan go along reluctantly after the peace treaty with Israel.
Saudi Arabia-Jordan-Iraq (1979-present)	Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iraq join forces to balance Syria and the growing threat from Khomeini's Iran.

Soviet challenge. The focus shifted after the Six Day War: Israel's military superiority forced the Arabs to join forces more effectively than ever before while relying even more heavily on Soviet support.

After 1974, the Arabs shifted from cooperating in war to quarreling over peace. Moreover, no single state seemed to attract the same concerns that Egypt and Israel had inspired in earlier periods. The result was a series of ad hoc adjustments as the different regional powers responded to these new circumstances without being sure which states posed the greatest danger or could deliver the largest rewards.¹⁵²

Second, the period 1955-1979 witnessed a steady increase in superpower involvement in the Middle East. As mutual rivals, each sought to enhance its position vis-à-vis the other by exploiting regional conflicts. Setbacks inspired renewed commitments and were usually temporary. This situation is not surprising; as long as regional rivalries persist, it would be unlikely that either superpower could be entirely excluded as long as it was willing to support one side or the other.

Third, the role of ideology declined significantly over time, and especially after 1967. After the Six Day War, attention shifted from preventing Nasser's pan-Arab aspirations to denying Israel permanent con-

152. For example, the Saudis vacillated between support for and opposition to both Yemens, first appeased and then opposed Iran, and gave financial aid to Syria while forming a close alignment with its archenemy, Iraq. The Syrians, in turn, switched from cooperation with Egypt to alignment with the Steadfastness Front, to a unity agreement with Iraq, and back into the Front again.

trol of Arab territory. With pan-Arabism in decline, inter-Arab politics after 1967 were driven more by material interests (e.g., regaining the occupied territories) than by the endless wrangling over which regime had the best plan for reuniting the "one Arab nation with its historic mission." Although the question of Palestine remained a touchstone of Arab nationalist ideology, increased cooperation among some otherwise unlikely partners (e.g., Syria and Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia) was the most important result of the gradual decline in pan-Arab ideology.

[5]

Balancing and Bandwagoning

Chapters 5 through 7 evaluate the propositions developed in chapter 2 in light of the events described in chapters 3 and 4. Specifically, chapter 5 examines the competing hypotheses on balancing and bandwagoning, chapter 6 explores the relationship between ideology and alignment, and chapter 7 assesses the impact of foreign aid and penetration.

This chapter considers first the overwhelming tendency for states to prefer balancing and then the rare cases of bandwagoning that do occur. The analysis addresses four broad questions. First, which of the two—balancing or bandwagoning—is more common? Second, do the responses of the superpowers differ from those of the regional states? Third, if balancing is the prevalent response, what is the relative importance of the different sources of threat (aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions) in producing balancing behavior? Finally, are the relatively rare examples of bandwagoning adequately explained by the hypotheses outlined earlier? In answering these questions, I am in effect testing the propositions on balancing and bandwagoning advanced in chapter 2. Before I undertake these tasks, however, I will briefly discuss hypothesis testing.

Three strategies are available to test the different hypotheses developed in chapter 2. The first strategy is to measure covariance. Does the dependent variable (in this case, international alignments) co-vary with the independent variables (level of threat, ideological agreement, etc.) specified in each hypothesis? We can also test the hypotheses indirectly by deducing other predictions (for which evidence may be more readily available) and testing them. The second strategy is to rely on direct evidence (such as the memoirs of a knowledgeable participant) for testimony as to why a particular alliance choice was made. The third strategy is to ask the experts—to compare the judgments of regional specialists with the predictions of each hypothesis, using the expertise of others to