The United Arab Republic's Relation with the U.S.S.R between the Suez, 1956, and the June, 1967, Wars

Habter

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THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC'S RELATION
WITH THE U.S.S.R. BETWEEN

by

Helwan M. Nasser

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
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PREFACE

The Soviet Union's political strategy has undergone far-reaching changes toward the non-aligned nations since the twentieth Russian Communist Party Congress of 1956. In this thesis, I will examine this strategy and the changes it has undergone with respect to one of these countries, viz., the United Arab Republic (UAR).

Various questions arise concerning the relationships between the U.A.R. and the Soviet Union during the critical period. Did a basic ideological unity provide the foundation for the relationship? Was it a pragmatic one in which each tried to use the other to its own national interest advantage? What specific points of common interest and what common policies evolved out of this relationship? What the relationships of this 1956-1967 period give us any indication of what the future may hold in terms of U.A.R.-Soviet policies?

In this thesis I will attempt to answer these and related questions within the framework of my general thesis. My hypothesis is that the joint policies developed during this period constituted a "marriage of convenience" for both powers, and that, for the U.A.R., the acceptance of depending upon Soviet economic and military aid to withstand Western pressures and Israeli threat, constituted a Hobson's choice.
The reasons for choosing the U.A.R. to represent this case are: first, because the U.A.R. is economically underdeveloped and politically non-aligned in the ideological conflict between the East and the West; second, because all the techniques for expanding its influence used by the Soviet Union, including trade, aid, propaganda, and exchange programs, have been used in this case; and third, the Middle East provides an excellent laboratory for analyzing such a great power confrontation. In addition, there is a personal reason. I lived in the area during this period and have developed some understanding as to what was happening, especially in the five years during which I attended Cairo University from 1961 to 1966.
HABTER, Helwan Mohamed


Western Michigan University, M.A., 1970
Political Science, international law and relations

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND: FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN 1943 UNTIL 1955</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Ideological Milieu: Nationalist Movements and the Soviet Foreign Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Leninism and the Nationalist Movements</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stalin's Orthodox Policy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nasser's Philosophy of the Revolution</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Nasser's Domestic and Arab Policies</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Continuing Good Relations with the West</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TURNING POINT: A NEW APPROACH TO SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The 20th Communist Party Congress Revises Its Policies Toward Nationalist Movements</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Egyptian Czech Arms Deal of 1955</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Egypt's Hostility Towards Western Imperialism, Colonialism, and Foreign Bases in the Arab World</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. The Aswan Dam Negotiations</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Emerging Soviet Support of Egyptian Foreign Policy</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SUEZ CRISIS OF 1956</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The Conflict with the West Over The Canal</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. The British-French-Israeli Attack on Egypt ........................................ 65


D. Withdrawal of the Invaders ......................................................... 94

IV SOVIET-UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC RELATIONS AFTER THE SUEZ WAR .... 102

A. Economic and Cultural Aid Program ......................................... 102

B. The Aswan Dam Agreement and Its Implications .......................... 109

C. Military Aid Programs ............................................................... 118

D. Growing Strains in the Relationship ......................................... 122

E. A New Soviet Diplomatic Offensive and Rapprochement ............... 130

F. The June War ............................................................................... 151

V FINAL ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS ........................................... 161

BIBLIOGRAPHY .............................................................................. 161

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND: FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN 1943 UNTIL 1955

A. Ideological milieu: Nationalist movements and the Soviet Foreign Policy

In order to understand the development in the 1950's and 1960's of the special political and economic relationship between Egypt and the U.S.S.R., it is necessary to know something of the ideological and political points of view which the Soviets took in their general policies toward emerging nationalist movements in the underdeveloped world. During the period from Lenin to Khrushchev, Soviet foreign policy underwent three distinct shifts in its approach to emerging nations. The first, or Leninist approach toward nationalist movements, depended upon the conception that such movements had their roots in the masses, and were therefore called "popular fronts." In the interest of building and expanding world Communism, Lenin believed that such "popular fronts" should be supported and subsequently taken over by the Communists in their efforts to further the aims of Communism by fostering revolution and the establishment of a Soviet-styled Socialism.

With the succession of Stalin in the late 1920's, a new "Orthodox Policy" was established which replaced the Leninist
approach with one that favored the strengthening of local Communist organizations rather than the process of building and taking over "popular fronts."

The third basic shift in Soviet foreign policy toward the underdeveloped societies came with the denunciation of Stalinism in the late 1950's and early 1960's and a return to the policy of encouraging the "national fronts" and of giving aid and encouragement to underdeveloped nations in an effort to win their friendship for the Soviets.

The first two stages of Soviet foreign policy (i.e., the Leninist approach and the Stalinist Orthodoxy) will be discussed in this chapter. The third phase, the post-Stalin shift adopted in the 20th Communist Party Congress in February, 1956, will be discussed in the following chapter.

In addition in this background chapter, Gamal Abdul Nasser's Philosophy of the Revolution will be examined. Included will be his domestic and Arab policies, and the continuing good relations between Egypt and the West up to the Egypt-Czech Arms Deal in 1955. Nasser's basic approach will be analyzed within the framework of the Soviet approach of the period.

During the period following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1943 between Egypt and the Soviet Union—an event which went largely unnoticed—there were tensions and incompatibilities which kept relations between the two countries at an extremely low level of activity. In fact,
some observers have noted that, prior to the Anglo-Egyptian agreement concerning evacuation of the Suez in 1954, the foreign policy of Egypt was almost non-existent.\(^1\) Egyptian foreign policy did not exist as an independent element, and consequently it reflected the great power interest of Britain vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

It was not until the Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal, and especially after the 20th Party Congress with its adoption of a new policy toward nationalist movements, that there were some common points in the foreign policy frameworks of the two countries. These were primarily based on a mutual hostility toward Western imperialism and colonialism and a new Soviet awareness of and support for rising nationalist movements.

1. Leninism and the Nationalist Movements

Our discussion of the prologue to the present-day U.A.R.-Soviet relations begins with the Leninist approach to nationalist movements. The ideology of the Communist regime in Russia concerning the nationalist movements has its roots in the discussion of nationalities problems in the Empire of Russia before the 1917 revolution. In the Russian Empire, where in 1897 the minority groups consisted

of 55.7% of the total population, the problem of nationalities was considered of great importance by the political parties of that time. Different solutions for this problem were offered, most based on some form of cultural autonomy. Among the several which considered the problem one of importance was the Social Democratic Party, but this view was taken only by its Menshevik faction. Its Bolshevik faction, on the other hand, was concerned solely with the Marxist theory of creating the perfect socialist prototype for the world. When the Socialist Revolutionary Party, for instance, advocated an unconditional right to self-determination for all nationalities, the Social Democrats, as well as the rightists in the First Duma, rejected this proposal. The reason for this rejection by the Socialists was the fear of overriding the principle of class revolution which might result from recognizing even implicitly the principle of nationalism.

In his approach to the problem of nationalities in Russia, V. I. Lenin had laid the foundation for dealing with other nationalities abroad. During the years from 1913 through 1917 he developed a plan for utilizing the national minority movements in Russia as well as abroad in the service of the revolution. In this respect he looked upon the nationalist movements mainly as a force suitable for exploitation in the

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3 ibid., p. 21.
struggle for power between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. His views were different from either the extreme leftists, led by Plekhanov, who considered nationalism an obstacle to the Socialist movement and argued that it ought to be fought directly, or the majority of Mensheviks who thought that nationalism should be neutralized by channeling it through cultural autonomy.  

In the Socialist debates over the role of nationalism, Lenin took a middle position between that taken by Rosa Luxemburg of Poland, who advocated the theory of Marxism in its first look, "abolition of nations," and that of Bauer and Rener of Austria, who demanded national culture autonomy. Lenin's position was characterized mainly by a realistic appraisal of the force of modern nationalism. His attitude, however, was negative toward embracing the national principle as a basic Socialist objective, although he realized that the rising of national revolts would strengthen the movement of the Western proletariat by weakening the Western bourgeoisie. In short, he viewed nationalism and self-determination as a means for achieving Communism but not as ends or objectives.

After the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917, the world

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⁴Ibid., p. 35.

socialist revolution was considered the first duty of those responsible for Soviet foreign policy. At that time a few nationalist movements in Asia and Africa had already started their struggle for independence; this fact necessitated a practical appraisal by the new Soviet regime of the nationalist movements in order to find a middle ground for dealing with them while the revolution was consolidated in Russia. The suggested middle ground, however, was characterized by Lenin's ideas of exploitation of, but eventual denial of the national principle. This policy approach suggested that the most appropriate way of dealing with the nationalist movements was merely to use them as a means for creating new proletarian parties. This view was expounded by the Second Congress of the Communist International on 26 July 1920 in its resolution concerning the national and colonial questions:

"Furthermore, it is necessary to take a decisive stand against the attempt to conceal a revolutionary liberation movement that is not truly Communist-oriented under a false guise of Communism. It is the duty of the Communist International to support the revolutionary movements in the colonies and backward countries solely for the purpose of collecting the constituent elements of future proletarian parties.... The Communist International is to establish temporary union, even an alliance, with the revolutionary movements in the colonies and backward countries but must not, however, amalgamate with it."6

Even this suggested platform for working with the nationalist movements doesn't imply a realistic estimation of the potential power of nationalism that would in time be unleashed in Asia and Africa. On the other hand, it was considered at that time to be a successful step towards influencing and activating these movements.

Lenin's views about the nationalist movements could be summarized by stating that he looked upon them as a critical means to be utilized for the benefit of Communist-inspired social revolution. The lack of precise estimation or greater Communist enthusiasm for using nationalism can be attributed to the shortage of experience. The emergence of nationalism as a powerful indigenous force in the third world as a fact rather than a theory was a post-Lenin development. With Lenin's flexibility, however, it is likely that had he survived through the Stalin period, the Soviets would have developed a more accurate evaluation of the power of nationalism and would have used it more effectively to pursue Soviet goals in Asia and Africa. The ultimate adoption of Leninist policies toward nationalist movements during the Khrushchev era lends some credence to the view that Stalin's narrow policies in this area weakened Soviet foreign policy in a critical way.

2. Stalin's Orthodox Policy

Before discussing the Stalinist policy toward the
nationalist movements abroad, it is appropriate to compare his stand concerning the nationality question in Russia with that of Lenin. Although a non-Russian himself, Stalin was against any kind of political independence for Russian nationalities. His interpretation of Lenin's doctrine of self-determination was that this right was only for the proletariat. The nationalities in Russia were denied the right because in Stalin's view, they did not represent the working class. Moreover, even his stand concerning those republics and countries which had their own Proletarian parties was negative on the issue of self-determination.

In the struggle for power that ensued in the late 1920's following Lenin's death, the advocate of building the revolution in one country through highly centralized power—Josef Stalin—became the leader of Russia. He was preoccupied first with the elimination of his rivals and then with the construction of the new regime, especially in its form and capacity for dealing with economic matter. For these reasons, the aim of fostering world revolution receded but was never completely abandoned. Stalin himself maintained that "the complete victory of socialism" in the Soviet Union was possible only when the "capitalist encirclement" had been ended by socialist revolution in the most powerful industrial countries. The theory of working with

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the nationalist movements at that time was based mainly on supporting them in the hope of progressively weakening the advanced capitalist states and of assuming leadership later. In addition, there was a trend of Communist thought that implied that the Communists must assume the leadership in the first phase of the revolution to prevent the national bourgeoisie from capturing the movement. This latter view, which was against Lenin's former view, was advocated by the Indian Communist M. N. Roy at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920.  

Stalin, however, seemed to forget Lenin's compromise which was adopted as Soviet policy in dealing with the nationalist movements. The League Against Imperialism and Colonial Rule, formed in 1927 at Brussels, was the last great success in influencing the nationalist leaders of Asia and North Africa during the Stalinist era.

From the outset Stalin was inclined to take a tough line in dealing with the nationalist movements. In 1924, for instance, he stated that:

"support must be given to such national movements as tend to weaken, to overthrow imperialism.... Cases occur when the national movements in certain oppressed countries come into conflict with the interest of the development of the proletarian movement. In such cases support is, of course, entirely out of the question."  

8 Muller, op. cit., p. 9.

At that time, the Chinese Nationalist Movement was the sole experiment extant of applying Lenin’s policy towards the nationalist movements. Stalin, seeking to prove himself to be Lenin’s rightful heir, followed Lenin’s policy by supporting the Chinese Kuomintang or National People’s Party headed by Chiang Kai Chek. This policy was later to be applied to other independence movements but, for some inexplicable reason, was not applied to the Gandhi movement in India at that time. After assuming leadership of the Chinese Communist party in 1935, Mao tze-tung, reflecting on his own experience with Chiang Kai Chek, criticized the Soviet policy of supporting the national bourgeoisie. As a result, he was expelled from the Comintern and criticized for deviating from the Soviet model in building his socialism.

The Chinese case, combined with Stalin’s economic victory in 1930, led the Russian dictator to believe that all socialist revolutions must adopt the system designed by the Soviet Union. From that time until the end of World War II this dogma served as the basis for Stalin’s foreign policy. It would be misleading, however, to describe Stalin’s foreign policy as consistent. It was, indeed, affected by emerging factors which led to responses that were determined largely by Stalin’s personal dogmatism and egomania.

Three important phases of Stalin’s policy toward nationalism should be clarified. The first, which was an extension of Lenin’s ideology, was characterized by so-called “popular
fronts, which implied the cooperation of the proletariat with the national bourgeoisie of the third world. This approach was not practiced—with the exception of Soviet policy toward China—before the Second World War. The famous nationalist movement, with which Stalin had to deal at that time, was in India under the leadership of Gandhi.

The Stalinist policy toward the nationalist movements, and the criticism of Gandhi, had its outlines at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1925. A resolution adopted by that congress stated that the bourgeoisie is unable to liberate a colonial or semi-colonial nation, that it betrays its people and allies itself with imperialism, and that, therefore, liberation can be achieved only under the leadership of the working class. Under this policy, the Soviets experienced a complete failure to influence the national liberation movements during the Stalin era. This unfruitful Soviet policy was not surprisingly continued for two years following Stalin's death as Soviet leaders were absorbed in the internal struggle to fill the power vacuum at the top of the Soviet hierarchy.

It was during the first three years following the Second World War when the second phase of Stalin's policy was put into practice. This phase was characterized by extensive Soviet encouragement of the nationalist movements.

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and liberation fronts which were expanding in Asia and Africa at that time. A complete shift from cooperation with the national bourgeoisie to the more orthodox Communist policy of encouraging revolution was made.

The shift which symbolized the third phase of Stalin's policy may be attributed largely to what happened in Yugoslavia in 1948. Here, Stalin recognized that Titoism, or national communism, would weaken the Soviet position in socialist countries just as national bourgeoisie movements had in those potentially socialist countries of the third world.

If the case of Soviet policy toward the Indian nationalist movement is an example of the traditional Stalinist foreign policy in its early years, the Yugoslav and Arab nationalists' cases would be examples of Soviet policy pursued during the last years of Stalin's life. In the case of Yugoslavia, Soviet policy was faced with the defection of a socialist state, a situation which created much bitterness and hostility toward the renegade state. This passage of Stalinist propaganda against Yugoslavia illustrates this:

"Never before Yugoslavia have there been so many beggars, ragged, barefoot and homeless people. Unemployment is increasing steadily. The first to be thrown out are the physically weak, invalids, and women, especially pregnant women and those with many children. . . . Toiling people are deprived of medical care, since at the end of last year prices of medicines and
medical treatment in the hospitals were increased several times. 

Such propaganda seems to be a bitter attack by Stalinist Orthodoxy against the run-away Socialist state. Stalin could not accept defections from the ranks of the Soviet bloc, since such acts would weaken the bloc. Tito's brand of national Communism separated Yugoslavia from the Soviet bloc and made his policies more acceptable to the West. This led the Soviets to declare bitterly that the new Yugoslavian constitution, which made Tito a dictator, had been drafted by the U.S. ambassador.

The last example of Stalinist policy could be illustrated by reviewing the Soviet reaction toward the Arab nationalists before 1955. The Arab nationalist movements were treated similarly to those of India and Yugoslavia. In describing the 1952 revolution in Egypt, Soviet propaganda noted that:

"at the end of January 1952, the American-British imperialists staged a coup d'etat and appointed their men.... On the night of July 23, 1952, power in Cairo was seized by a group of reactionary officers connected with the United States, with General Naguib at the head." \[12\]

In Moscow on January 7, 1953, New Times was stressing the role and influence of "Hitlerites" in Egypt and Syria.

\[11\] Ibid., p. 32.
\[12\] Ibid., p. 293.
while a national round-up of Communists of "plotters" was carried out in Egypt at that time by Naguib and Nasser. In addition, at the time of the creation of the State of Israel, the Soviet Union was the first country to grant de jure recognition, a move designed to antagonize the British and at the same time perhaps influence the new nation and satisfy the Soviet Jews. However, the feelings of the Arabs concerning the Jewish state were not taken into consideration. It might be argued that Stalin realized his mistake in treating the Palestinian problem when the deterioration of Soviet relations with Israel took place in the early fifties. But this would appear not to be the case. The dispute was mainly a result of the course of Soviet internal affairs. A large majority of Russian Jews, after the creation of Israel, showed pro-Western sentiments; the reaction of the Soviet government was to undertake a campaign of anti-Semitic repression and persecution. As a result of this anti-Semitic attitude, violent anti-Soviet feeling was aroused in Israel. This was followed by the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Israel on the initiative of the Soviet Union in 1953.

In conclusion, Stalinist foreign policy, especially with reference to the nationalist movements, stemmed largely from the warped personal attitudes of the Soviet leader. Stalin viewed the world scene from the Marxist perspective.

13 Ibid., p. 111.
of the dialectic. For him, it was a conflict between two, and only two, basic forces, which he translated into the practical aphorism of "he who is not with us is against us." There could be no position of neutrality. This policy was the main cause of Soviet isolation from the nationalist movements, and it took the new Soviet leadership after Stalin about two years to begin to revise the Stalinist legacy.

3. Nasser's Philosophy of the Revolution

To understand the nature and causes for Soviet-Egyptian relations during the 1943-1955 period, it is essential to describe and analyze the new nationalist-socialist ideology that emerged in Egypt and has since come to be described as "Nasserism." Its main fundamentals are found in Gamal Abdel Nasser's Philosophy of the Revolution, which was not so much a philosophy, as much as it was a description of the path he foresaw that revolutionary Egypt must follow. His analysis led him to conclude that the future of Egypt, and indeed the future of the Arab countries, lay in the pursuit of a nationalistic policy. The first part of the book describes his search for the roots of the revolution, the second part lists the various courses of action which were

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15 Ibid., p. 17.
considered, and the third part examines the "place" or stage upon which Egypt was to act out the role which destiny had provided.

In the first section of his Philosophy, Nasser discusses the beginnings of the revolution in the hearts and minds of himself and his generation. He searches for the roots of his dawning nationalism and concludes that he was born with the seeds of nationalism already in him. He traces the history of revolution back to the unsuccessful revolution of 1919, and concludes that Egypt must go through two revolutions at the same time: a political revolution and a social revolution.

The second part devotes itself to the course of action which Nasser considers essential to realize the objectives of the revolution. Nasser has come to the realization that the Army must be the instrument of revolution, but how? He turns away from political assassination, preferring to "bring forward those who can build.... We dream of the glory of our nation; it is necessary to build that glory." To begin, Egypt must achieve freedom. How? It is necessary to overthrow the existing regime. This is his justification for revolution against the old order.

The final section examines the stage upon which Egypt

17 ibid., p. 56. The italics are Nasser's.
must act. Nasser sees Egypt at the center of three circles. The first circle is an Arab one. Egypt is part of the Arab world and it is part of Egypt, bound by ties of common history and experience. An African circle comes next to the Arab circle. Egypt is a part of Africa and shares the destiny of the Dark Continent. It must play a part in the struggle between the inhabitants and the white colonizers. The last circle is that of Islam. Egypt is a part of the world of Islam, sharing its history and its future. Nasser notes their pervasiveness: "All these are fundamental realities with deep roots in our lives which we cannot— even if we try—escape or forget." 18

The Arab circle takes the place of primary importance. Nasser poetically sees with the circle a "role, wandering aimlessly in search of a hero." He doesn't know why this role has settled on the borders of Egypt, but he believes it is waiting for Egypt to assume the role. It is not one of leadership, but:

"a role of interaction with, and responsibility to, all the above-mentioned factors. It is a role such as to spark this tremendous power latent in the area surrounding us; a role tantamount to an experiment, with the aim of creating a great strength which will then undertake a positive part in the building of the future of mankind." 19

18 Nasser, op. cit., pp. 81-114.
19 Ibid., p. 88.
His philosophy outlines a nationalistic ideology in which he sees Egypt as waiting for a vanguard to break the path to freedom, after which the orderly ranks would form to carry on the goals of the Revolution. This conception was not only idealistic, but politically naive. The hoped-for leaders did not materialize; instead of order there was chaos, instead of unity, dissension. Nasser describes this as the "greatest shock of my life." It was, therefore, necessary for Nasser and the junta to remain in power and guide Egypt's political future.

The aims of the Egyptian Revolution, as Nasser wrote them in his Philosophy, were: to end exploitation of the people, to realize national aspirations, and to develop the mature political consciousness that is an indispensable preliminary for a sound democracy. The Revolution also sought to bridge the gulf between social classes and to foster the spirit of altruism which marks a cultivated individual and a cohesive group.

In order to achieve these aims it was necessary to clean Egypt from the corrupt past, especially from the subversive and reactionary groups which had spread their tentacles wide in the land. Nasser believed the greatest internal enemies of the people to be the Communists who serve

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20 ibid., p. 60.

foreign rulers, the Moslem Brotherhood which still seeks rule by assassination in an era that has outlived such practices, and finally, the old-time politicians who would like to reestablish exploitation of the masses.  

Nasser points out that having rid themselves of corrupt politicians, a corrupt king, and an outmoded monarchy without loss of life, it became necessary to impose restrictions "to prevent enemies of the people. (here he hints at Communists and reactionaries) from exploiting the people and poisoning their minds." "But," he says, "if we have had to exercise our authority, it has been in order to pave the way for a better life for the men and women of our country." He adds: "We want to lift these restrictions as soon as we feel the people are no longer in danger from such groups, and the sooner that time comes, the better, so far as we are concerned."

Nasser says in The Egyptian Revolution, "our ultimate aim is to provide Egypt with a truly democratic and representative government, not the type of parliamentary dictatorship which the palace and a corrupt 'Pasheh' class imposed on the people. In the past, Parliament was a body for blocking social improvement. We want to make sure that in the future the senators and deputies will serve all the

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22 ibid., p. 209

Here, Nasser is speaking clearly about his aims for future Egypt. He indicated in his *Philosophy of the Revolution* that he wants to build a sound democracy for the whole Egyptian people as a cohesive group. He wants to insure that "in the future the senators and deputies will serve all the Egyptians rather than a few," and we can see here that his thinking was different from that of the Soviets. While they put their emphasis on the necessity and the inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he emphasizes a system of "sound democracy" for all Egyptians.

He also proclaims in the document his belief in social reform which would abolish exploitation in all its forms, especially in the agrarian sector. He thinks that exploitation should be abolished by the Agrarian Reform Law, which was issued immediately after the Revolution of July 23, 1952. This law made a maximum of 200 feddan the limit of land ownership. The excess lands were to be distributed among the poor peasants in plots of 5 feddan each. The peasants were to pay the price of these lands to the Egyptian treasury over a period of thirty years. The treasury in turn was to pay the old landlords with bonds on the treasury paying 1-1/2% interest per year for thirty years.

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This approach to solving the "land for the peasants" problem is different from that advocated and practiced by the Communists. These and similar solutions to basic problems advocated by Nasser led the Soviets to conclude that the Egyptian Free Officers were reactionary. The Egyptian Revolution was described in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia as the action of a "reactionary officer's group linked with the United States," and it described the United States as having embarked on a "savage repression of the worker's movements." The Soviets thought that the revolution had resulted in more persecutions of Communists and they called it demagogic. They described the revolution as a "fascist military dictatorship to stifle the growing anti-imperialist movement in Egypt."²⁵

There has been talk, Nasser noted in an obvious message to the West, of "Communist infiltration" in the various Arab and African nationalist movements. He warned that, "It would be unwise for the United States to take such a view of nationalist activities. Such activities are led by sincere patriots whose only desire is to see their nations free from foreign domination." "Americans," he says, "recognize this to be the inalienable right of every man, yet balk at supporting these nationalists for fear of annoying

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some colonial power that has refused to move with the times. It is this procrastination that gives the Communists the chance to take over what usually starts as a genuinely patriotic movement." He cites Indo-China as an appropriate example.26

If the United States were able to "develop a courageous policy—and the only morally correct one—of supporting those who are anxious to be rid of foreign domination and exploitation, there would be no Communist infiltration of Africa and the Arab countries." "Real independence," Nasser says, "would be the greatest defense against Communist or any other type of infiltration or aggression." "Free men are the most fanatical defenders of their liberty, nor do they lightly forget those who have championed their struggle for independence."27

The roots of Arab nationalism are also to be found in his Philosophy. In the same way that he was able to see that Egypt's future must be built on the base of nationalism, he also saw that a powerful base could be fashioned from a greater unity among Arab countries. One possible instrument to greater unity Nasser saw was the Arab League.

When Nasser wrote his Philosophy, he thought of the Arab League as a reality. He envisioned it as "an effective force

27 Ibid., p. 211.
for the defense of this area." Nasser believes that the defense of the Middle East "must rest primarily with the inhabitants of the area. No outside forces can defend this soil as effectively as the people who live here." In addition, he says, "That is why Egypt has made every effort to strengthen the Arab League's Collective Security Pact." He thought that it was the best possible system to defend that part of the world against any possible aggression. Egypt is assuming the role, in his mind, which Nasser saw "wandering in search of a hero."

B. Nasser's Domestic and Arab Policies

In order to understand the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic in the period following the 1952 revolution, it is necessary to examine the implementation of Nasser's philosophy and to understand his domestic and Arab Policies. It will be shown that Nasser followed a path independent of the wishes of the Soviet government; he distinguished between Egyptian Communists on the one hand, whom he considered enemies of Egypt, and the Soviet government on the other hand, from whom he continued to receive economic aid.

The events which took place in the Spring of 1954

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29 Ibid.
conspired to curb the conservative forces who were fighting for the old order and the secular pro-Communist wing of the radical movement. But the Moslem Brotherhood was still powerful. The Movement wanted to use the military movement and the Free Officers for its own purposes to gain and capture power. They had suggested to Lieutenant-Colonel Nasser (who had been a member of the Brotherhood Movement) that the regime should retain power for ten years in cooperation with the Moslem Brotherhood and under its supervision. The Supreme Guide Council for the Moslem Brotherhood proposed to Nasser in 1953 that the Moslem Brotherhood should inspect all laws drafted by the government. They also suggested the establishment of a committee for this purpose. Nasser refused the suggestion, and subsequently, Hassan el-Hudeiby, the Guide General of the Movement, ordered his followers in and outside Egypt to oppose the Revolutionary Command Council.30

The crisis between the new regime and the Communists and Brotherhood Movement was brought to a head by Nasser's determination to secure an agreement with the British over the evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal bases. These two groups, the Communists and the Brotherhood, and especially the Young Bretheren (as the Brotherhood called the resistance groups in the Canal Zone) had been conducting

commando raids on the British bases around the canal. Nasser had secured resumption of the negotiations in the Spring of 1954, and any major outrage by these groups in the Canal Zone could have halted the negotiations between the two parties. Nasser guaranteed the security of the Canal Zone and insured that neither the Communists nor the Brotherhood Movement's members would disturb the negotiations. In turn, the Communists and the Brotherhood attacked the regime and branded Nasser a "traitor." 31

In the face of this opposition, Nasser struck back strongly, striking first at the Communists. By May 31, 1954, he had arrested and jailed about 252 of them. He accused the Communists of trying to place the country in chaos, and further accused them of having the support of the Zionists in these attempts. In addition, he accused them of being agents of a foreign power seeking to control Egypt. On the other hand, he accused the leaders of the Moslem Brotherhood of seeking to seize power through such defiant means as assassination, and of leading the Movement into alliance with the Communists in the campaign of destruction and subversion. 32

The Brotherhood Movement's response was to plot the assassination of Nasser. The attempt was made October 26, 1954, 31

31 ibid., p. 148-49.

32 Little, op. cit., p. 149.
while Nasser was addressing a Liberation Rally in Alexandria. The assassin, however, failed to kill Nasser, and this reckless action by the Brotherhood Movement brought its legal existence to an end. The police took to the streets to arrest most of its important leaders and members. As the purge was completed, about four thousand were arrested and put in jail. At this stage, President Naquib, who was not in harmony with the young officers, was overthrown and placed under house arrest allegedly on the basis of evidence of his involvement in or encouragement of the plot by the Brotherhood Movement. 33

Having gained control of the domestic political crisis, Nasser now faced the twofold problem of economic and social needs. To meet these problems, which Nasser knew could not be solved immediately, Egypt needed industrialization and capital investment. Thus, Nasser sought the long-range goal and directed the nation outward in the development of a foreign policy, which he hoped would help the nations inwardly to grow and develop. He stressed Arab unity and Egypt's common ties with the Arab circle. He attacked the creation of the State of Israel in the heart of Arab lands, and he pounded away at Western Imperialism.

For Nasser as for any Arab Nationalist, the bonds which tie Egypt to the rest of the Arab countries also link the people of Egypt to the other Arab peoples. First, he points

33 Little, op. cit., p.p. 149-50.
out, Arab peoples are bound together in this circle by a common religion. The center of Islamic learning has always moved within the orbit of its several capital cities—first Mecca, then shifting to Kufa, then to Damascus, next to Baghdad, and finally, to Cairo. Finally, he points out: "The fact that the Arab States are contiguous has joined them together in a geographical framework made solid by all these historical, material, and spiritual factors."\(^{34}\)

It would be Nasser's Arab policy, at this early stage, to foster Arab unity by means of the Arab League. In his Philosophy of the Revolution, he says that "despite all reports to the contrary by enemies of the Arab World, the Arab League is a reality." However, the Soviets noted that the Arab League wasn't a revolutionary organization; it included traditional reactionary political regimes, such as Iraq and Yemen. "There are social and economic differences," Nasser says, "between one Arab (nation) and another."\(^ {35}\) "The (nations) of the Arab League believe that they can unite in a force that contributes to the cause of world peace."\(^ {36}\)

\(^{34}\) Nasser, op. cit., Egypt's Liberation, p. 89.

\(^{35}\) At the first stage of the development of Arab Nationalism, it is interesting to note that he was talking here about Arab nations and not about Arab peoples or regions. But now it becomes the belief of the Arabs that the Arab peoples constitute one Arab Nation, although there are several political institutions within the one Arab Nation.

Dynastic rivalries, local differences, and to a greater extent, interference by "outside forces conspiring against us (the Arabs)" have blocked all efforts to unite the Arab countries. But the Arab League, Nasser thought (at the time of his writing the Philosophy of the Revolution in 1955) "can be made the instrument through which a greater unity can be achieved among the Arab nations in every field of activity." 37

On the question of defense, Nasser thought that the member states of the Arab League could form an effective force for a common defense of the area. To answer or refute the claim that the evacuation of the British troops from the Suez Canal area would create a military vacuum, Nasser said that "throughout the negotiations for the evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal, the government of Egypt has pointed out that this evacuation will not create a military vacuum in the Middle East, but will pave the way for strengthening the area's defenses." 38

The British government (Conservatives) had clearly explained its policy regarding the Canal Zone bases. Sir Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, had stated in 1953:

"We do not wish to keep indefinitely 80,000 men, at a cost of perhaps 50 million pounds

($140,000,000) a year, discharging a duty which has largely fallen on us, and us alone, safeguarding the interests of free nations in the Middle East and preserving the International Waterway, the Suez Canal.... We remain convinced that it is in our interest, military and financial, to secure the redeployment of our forces in North Africa and the Middle East. 39

He also declared that the solution to the canal controversy will "not be dictated either by the violence of our foreign enemies (referring here probably to the Egyptian Fedayeen) or the pressure of some of our best friends." 40

The creation of the state of Israel in the heart of the Arab lands brought diplomatic relations full circle. The West favored the establishment of the State of Israel which it was believed would help their interests in the Arab world, but by supporting Israel, the West seriously weakened its position in the area. Support for Israel, in fact, had the opposite effect from what had been intended in that it helped to awaken the dormant forces of Arab nationalism which have proved to be basically anti-Western Imperialism in nature.

Britain serves as an example of how the Western powers lost and are still losing their prestige and privileged position in the Arab world. It had been its interest in the Suez Canal which had partially motivated the British government

40 Ibid.
to make the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The presence in a nearby territory of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, friendly to the British, was regarded by the War Cabinet of Lloyd George as a security measure for the Suez. The Balfour Declaration served as a legitimating and rallying force for Zionists and ultimately led to the formation of the State of Israel thirty years later. Thus, instead of solidifying control over the Canal, British policy toward Palestine contributed to the pressure forcing the British to evacuate their Suez bases.\footnote{Ibid.}

It appeared, at the end of 1954, that the new regime under Nasser was stabilized and that the Egyptian economy, which had initially suffered severe shocks from the impact of the Revolution, was no longer threatened with collapse. There was some Egyptian-West German economic cooperation with West Germany promising to build Nasser's dream, the Aswan High Dam.\footnote{Little, op. cit., p. 157.} Relations with the West were cordial and appeared to promise a future of harmony and cooperation with the British who were involved in evacuation of the Nile river starting from Port Said on the Mediterranean south to the interior of the Dark Continent.

However, with the introduction of the Baghdad Pact and the American efforts to enlist the Arab states' cooperation in subscribing to a pact or pacts against Soviet Russia,
the Arab-West relations took a turn for the worse. By the conclusion of this pact in 1955, goodwill between Egypt and Britain was brought to an end, and the page that had just been opened to establish good faith was quickly closed.

C. Continuing Good Relations With the West

The Communists take-over in Czechoslovakia in 1948 and in China in 1949, the Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948-49, the Soviet test of its first atomic bomb in 1949, and the attack by North Korea against South Korea in 1950, were evidences of Communist probes and successes in the Cold War which the West attempted to curtail or contain. All had some impact on the Middle East situation and on the evolving Soviet-Egyptian relations.

The Middle East was a particularly delicate consideration for both East and West because of the oil. Without Arab oil, the Western powers would find themselves in a dangerous economic situation. Oil production outside the Middle East constituted only one-third of the world's output and cost up to eight times as much to produce. In 1955 the Middle East countries were producing up to four thousand barrels of oil per well a day. Nasser pointed out in his Philosophy of the Revolution that the average daily production of oil per well in the United States, in contrast to the Middle East, was only about eleven barrels, and the cost of producing a barrel of oil in the United States at that time was
about 75 cents as compared to 10 cents in the Middle East.43

In addition to the precious oil, one must consider the strategic location of the Middle Eastern countries and the immense importance economically and militarily of the Suez Canal, and the significant role of the British bases in the Arab countries which hold a strategic military position. All of these political, economic, and military factors added up to a policy of the West to defend the area for Europe's security and prosperity. In the early fifties, growing nationalism threatened the oil as well as the bases in Iran, Iraq, and Egypt. American policymakers believed that it was in the national interest of the United States to support its main allies--Britain in the Middle East and France in North Africa--by helping them to maintain their positions of strength. The United States urged the formation of a defense system linking the Arab states with the United States, Britain, France, and Turkey oriented around the Suez Canal bases. Under this proposal, the Western powers were to command and the Arab states were to furnish the facilities. The sensitivity of the Arabs to any alliance with the colonial West cast doubts on the feasibility of the plan, and even the pro-West, pre-revolutionary Egyptian government couldn't accept the idea for fear that the people would rise up against it. All Arab governments, even those who owed their position

to the West's support rejected the idea, not only because the United States, which advocated a **Middle East Defense Command**, was in full league with the European imperialists whom the Arab nationalists had reason to distrust, but also because the United States championed the creation of the state of Israel.

The Egyptian Free Officers' revolution, which took place the night of July 23, 1952, opened a new phase in American-Egyptian diplomatic relations. The pragmatic policies of the Free Officers and their concern with reform in Egypt met with approval from the Americans. Diplomatic support from the United States gave the new regime some assistance to overcome difficulties and to achieve political objectives.

Good relations between Egypt and the West were further insured by the Agreement made by Britain in 1953 to withdraw from the Sudan and to evacuate the Suez Canal Base in 1954. The agreement concerning the withdrawal of the British from the Canal zone was reached with some support from the United States.

The American Point Four Program also served to cement ties between Egypt and the United States. Under this program, the United States gave forty million dollars in economic assistance to Egypt and promised to give military aid, a promise which was never fulfilled.

The Point Four Program indirectly fostered American
security by giving economic and technical assistance to the
developing nations as a means to combat Communism. The
advocates of the Point Four Program believed that by help­
ing the new nations to raise the standard of living of
their peoples they would help provide jobs and give the
people an interest in preserving the status quo, stabiliz­
ing the political situation in each country, and thus dis­
pose these countries to be friendly toward the United States.
Such a program theoretically would diminish Communist threats
to American security.

In March, 1953, President Eisenhower asked his Secre­
tary of State, John Foster Dulles, to visit the Middle East
for the purpose of demonstrating American friendship to the
governments and peoples of the area. It was Dulles' inten­
tion to take some measures in order to remedy the deteriorat­
ing Western and American influence in the Middle East.
Dulles was accompanied by the Mutual Security Director,
Harold Stassen, who previously had urged that Egypt should
get special help. 44

During the long meeting between the President of the
Council of Ministers, General Naguib, and the Secretary of
State, John Foster Dulles, an excerpt of a speech which was
made by Sir Winston Churchill in the House of Commons about
Egypt was handed by the newspapermen to General Naguib. In

44 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 63.
this statement Churchill declared that he was "a supporter of the Zionist Cause." He also "gave renewed assurance of British support for Israel" saying, "It is very unfortunate that there is no peace between Israel and the Arab states." "But," he adds, "fortunately for Israel, they have the best army in the Levant." These uncalled for remarks by Churchill inflamed the Arab press and angered the Arab public opinion. When pressed to give his view on the Churchillian statements, Mr. Dulles "referred to the full agreement reached by the Truman Administration with the British government on policy regarding the Canal and the defense of the Middle East." A solution reconciling Egyptian sovereignty with the need of maintaining the bases for future eventualities was defined by Mr. Dulles as "an Anglo-American aim." With this statement by Dulles, "all chances of building American goodwill (with the Arabs) had now been inadvertently destroyed." Mr. Dulles was accused by the Arab press of coming "not to listen, but to inform the Arabs of solutions previously reached."

The British-Egyptian negotiations on the Suez Canal bases reopened on April 27, 1954, after having been postponed several times. There is reason to believe that the

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45 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 67.
46 ibid., p. 68.
47 ibid.
48 ibid., p. 69.
Dulles visit to Cairo, during his mission in the Middle East, had enhanced the resumption of the negotiations.

Eventually, after the revolution of July 23, 1952, Egyptian foreign policy objectives were directed toward expanding her strategic, economic, and diplomatic independence. Egypt's leaders pursued two courses in order to achieve these aims: first, they pursued a policy of neutrality and non-alignment in their relations with the Great Powers, and second, they began to spread Egyptian influence in the area around, particularly the Arab circle.

A foreign policy pattern was evolving inside Egypt which characterized Soviet-Egyptian relations throughout the period of domestic consolidation. On the international level, relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt were growing and improving while at the same time Communists were being imprisoned in Egypt by the Nasser regime. The new government had banned all political parties from the beginning of its take-over, and on January 17, 1953, Nasser announced his intent to arrest every known Communist in Egypt. He had already shut down six newspapers with Communist leanings. From the time of the announcement, periodic purges of Egyptian Communists were carried on.

Nasser continued in the ensuing years to distinguish between the Soviet Union on the one hand the Egyptian Communists on the other. Soviet shipments of equipment arrived
in Egyptian ports and Soviet dignitaries visited Egypt in
the midst of the trials of local Communists.

The Soviets continued to grant aid in spite of the
arrests and imprisonment of local Communists by the new
Egyptian regime. This is one of the most conspicuous ex-
amples of the policy of Soviet national interest taking
precedence over regard for local Communist parties if the
existence of such parties constituted a conflict of the
national interest of the Soviet union.

At the end of 1954, the initial steps can be seen to
extend Soviet influence in Egypt and the Middle East. The
change in attitude toward more cooperation with the under-
developed nations was delineated in a program calling for
expansion of trade, granting of credits for purchase of
industrial equipment, and giving of technical aid and
assistance.
CHAPTER II

THE TURNING POINT: A NEW APPROACH TO SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

A. The 20th Communist Party Congress Revises Its Policies Toward Nationalist Movements

In the previous chapter we pointed out that Soviet-U.A.R. relations during the period 1943-1955 had little or nothing in common. After Stalin's death, and especially after the Czech Arms Deal, Egypt was drawn into closer ties with the Soviet bloc. Having denounced Stalin and his approach to nationalist movements, the 20th Communist Party Congress decided to return to the Leninist policy of support of national fronts, and at that time affirmed the new pattern in Soviet-U.A.R. relations which had been developing since the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal.

As previously mentioned, the new Soviet authorities were unable to revise the Stalinist traditions immediately after Stalin's death. When they were faced with the Iranian national revolution, for instance, which was headed by Mossadeq and supported by Tudeh, the Iranian Communist Party, the Soviets reacted in the traditional Stalinist manner and belligerently announced that "the present political bases (in Iran) are hindering the national-liberation

1 See Chapter II B for a discussion of the Arms Deal.
The first two years of the new leadership passed as an extension of Stalin's policy with the exception that the Cominform's economic blockade of Yugoslavia was ended in late 1954. The year 1954, however, witnessed the beginning of the new turn in foreign policy. It was in that year, in addition to the rapprochement with Yugoslavia, that the Soviet Union began its economic aid to the third world (i.e., the non-Communist non-Western countries). The only exception to this policy was a loan of $30 million to Argentina made in 1953.\(^2\)

The new turn in Soviet policy is characterized by encouraging and coping with the nationalist movements in the third world. The new leadership started practicing the more pragmatic approach in 1955 but announced it at the 20th Communist Party Congress in February, 1956. The signs which preceded the official adoption of this policy can be seen in the economic aid to the third world countries, such as, Afghanistan in 1954, and India in 1955. Moreover, the case of Yugoslavia was of great importance in this respect. The Khrushchev-Bulgainin-Mikoyan visit to Belgrade in May, 1955, and their efforts to normalize relations were the first steps which were followed, after Tito's

\(^2\)Daniel, op. cit., Soviet Foreign Policy. After Stalin, p. 274.

\(^3\)Muller, op. cit., p. 219.
visit to the Soviet Union in June, 1956, by Moscow's acceptance of the concept that there are "many roads to socialism."

The new Soviet leadership realized how the Stalinist policy had contributed to their country's isolation. They realized that some or most of the non-Communist countries were influenced by the West, and they understood that it was Stalin's belligerency which caused their country's isolation. The new leadership, by adopting this new policy, hoped to demonstrate its reasonableness and flexibility. They strengthened their relations with Yugoslavia to encourage neutrality in the non-committed world and to demonstrate that the U.S.S.R. was not a threat against which an un-aligned country needed to seek protection by joining the other bloc.

In order to demonstrate the Soviet's good will, two important events should be mentioned. The first one is the enthusiastic support given by the Soviet Union to the Bandung Conference of Afro-Asian States held in April, 1955. The second is Khurshchev's and Bulganin's visit to India, Burma, and Afghanistan in November and December of 1955. This visit, especially to India, was preceded by the Communist party of India giving its support to the foreign policy of the Indian Government. In August, 1955, Moscow reported that the central committee of India's Communist Party, as well as that of Indonesia, had resolved to support their respective
governments in foreign affairs.\textsuperscript{4}

The signs of Soviet good will and unselfish friendliness were shown in 1955 even to Egypt whose policy was seriously criticized in 1954 upon the British-Egyptian Agreement to withdraw British troops from the Suez. The agreement implied complete withdrawal, but granted certain privileges to Britain in case of war. The reaction of Nasser to the Soviet criticisms was to persecute the Egyptian Communists. This delicate situation did not prevent the Soviets from going ahead with their new policy. At the beginning of 1955, the Soviet Union looked to the Arabs as a potential ally. The Arabs were in conflict with the West over its support for Israel and over the activities of Western oil companies, and support by the Soviet Union of anti-Western imperialism Arab policies could be regarded as mutually beneficial. On this assumption, and after the Bandung Conference, the Soviet Union hoped to establish friendly relations with Egypt and in late 1955, the Soviets decided to supply Egypt with weapons after the West refused to sell badly needed arms to that country.

At the end of 1955, the new policy was in complete application. But between this policy and the Stalinist Communist literature, an undeniable gap had to be bridged. The Communist literature had to be rewritten to match the

\textsuperscript{4}Daniel, op. cit., p. 295.
new policy. It was at the 20th Communist Party Congress in February, 1956, that Khrushchev denounced Stalin, declaring the adoption of the new policy. At the same Party Congress, the veteran Communist, Otto Kussainin, admitted that the tenets of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 and the criticism of Gandhi had been a mistake.5

It is clear that the new policy, which implied dealing with the nationalist movements, implied also the belief in peaceful co-existence. Nehru's five principles of peaceful co-existence were not only accepted by the Soviet Union, but were made part of the resolutions of the famous 20th Party Congress. And in 1957, Khrushchev reported to the Supreme Soviet on the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution:

"We Communists have never sought and will never seek to achieve our aims by such (violence) terrible means; this is immoral and contradictory to our communist world view. We work from the premise that wars are not necessary to advance Socialism."6

The rejection of the necessity of war between capitalism and socialism was preceded by dissolving the Cominform in April, 1956; but this was only justified by the possibility of atomic war which would destroy both blocs.

5 Muller, op. cit., p. 25.
6 Rubenstien, op. cit., p. 32.
The only alternative to win over capitalism is by peaceful means. On this premise, the Communist parties in the underdeveloped countries were encouraged to seek power through the existing systems by peaceful ways. Even when the existing system did not allow Communists to work, that was not reason for fighting. Messer's well-known attack on Communism in 1950 was a good example of this. Reacting to Messer's attack, Arvanichev said:

"...but on question of the struggle against imperialism, the consolidation of political and economic independence of countries newly liberated from colonialism, and the fight against war, there is an agreement among us (the U.S.S.R. and the U.A.R.). Ideological differences must not impede the development of friendly relations between our countries, nor our common battle against imperialism."

dut such a case like Messer's would be treated differently if it were in a satellite state, as, for example, what happened in Hungary in 1956.

The justification of the new policy was not exclusive of the danger of atomic war. It was also based on reestimation of the power of the nationalist movements and their role against imperialism. One of the Soviet economists reported in 1957 the role of the nationalist movements as follows:

"...as a role, the national bourgeoisie leads the battle against the imperialism but is, under certain conditions, ready to

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7 Müller, op. cit., p. 38.
compromise. Yet the experience of recent years has been that such compromising is of temporary nature, and after certain intervals the struggle for freedom is resumed, to be carried on until full political sovereignty is achieved...

To sum up the post-Stalin foreign policy, one should consider three significant doctrinal shifts. First, the war between capitalism and communism is not inevitable although the reconcilability of the two systems is impossible. Second, accepting the Titoist contention that there are several roads to socialism is a significant shift. This implied recognition of the national principle and, more importantly, it was hoped that better relations with the nationalist movements of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East could be cultivated. Third, Communists were encouraged to seek power where and when possible, through peaceful, parliamentary means in democratic countries. The three shifts made possible the return of the "popular front" which was neglected by Stalin during his last years.

B. The Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal of 1955

As pointed out previously, after Stalin's death the Soviets became more and more anxious to find ways to overcome the isolation imposed by the Stalinist legacy. Having returned to a policy of support for nationalist movements, the Soviets searched for ways to make their support palpable,

8 ibid., p. 28.
especially to the underdeveloped and nonaligned nations of the third world. Obviously, economic and technical assistance could be a valuable method to demonstrate support for those who would shake off the imperialists. The Egyptian-Czech Arms Deal was one high-impact way the Soviets saw to extend their influence in the Middle East, demonstrate their support for nationalist movements, and at the same time, confront the West with an alarming and embarrassing situation.

On February 28, 1955, the Israeli armed forces launched an attack on the Gaza strip, a part of Palestine which had been under Egyptian control since the 1948 war. The raid killed 38 persons and wounded 51 more. This raid on the Gaza was not the first such attack by Israel against Arab territory; Israel had begun a series of "reprisal" raids with an attack on the Jordanian village of Kioya in October, 1953. However, the Gaza raid was the first such venture to be launched against Egyptian-held territory since the 1948 war.

The Gaza raid produced several far-reaching effects. It had a very important effect on Nasser and his associates in that the raid exposed the weakness of the Egyptian army and showed its lack of effective modern weapons. This Israeli raid was considered by the Free Officers as a blow

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to Egyptian prestige. After all, it had been the army and its Free Officers, led by Nasser, who had made the revolution, and the Egyptians couldn't bear to see their army receiving the Israeli blows without being able to defend either themselves or their frontier positions.

The army officers had accepted the priority given to economic and social reforms which the regime had emphasized since coming to power in 1952, but now, with the Israeli challenge, the army demanded new and modern weapons, and "it was doubtful whether the Army's loyalty could be counted upon if it did not receive more and better weapons." \(^{10}\)

The Israeli challenge coincided with the challenge of the Baghdad Pact to Egypt's leadership in the Arab world. \(^{11}\) The West attempted, by means of this Pact, to support Iraq's Nuri Essaid, leader of the traditional forces which opposed Nasser's progressives, as a rival leader of the Arab world to encourage Arab participation in an alliance against the Russians. Egypt stood firmly against any alliances with the West which would reestablish Western forces on Arab soil and indirectly exert control over the Arab countries.

It would, therefore, be wrong to assume that the Gaza

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\(^{10}\) Ibid.

\(^{11}\) The Baghdad Pact was a collective defense treaty which was signed on February 24, 1955 between Iraq and Turkey, joined shortly after by Britain, Pakistan and Iran. The United States was a sponsor, too, although she did not directly join the Pact. The declared purpose of the treaty is to defend the Middle East against possible Communist aggression.
raid was solely responsible for the Egyptian decision to seek arms from the Soviets. In addition, the Haqqadad Pact was an important factor, as well as the Egyptian unwillingness to participate in the American Mutual Security Program. The high cost of American arms and the requirement of dollar payments must also be considered. Finally, the desire of the new regime to follow a policy of non-alignment was a contributing factor.12

The policy of non-alignment which Nasser espoused later became known as "positive neutralism." The outlines of this foreign policy emerged during the period after the Gaza raid and before Nasser approached the United States for arms. Nasser's primary concern was that small nations should "keep themselves free from domination by great powers and the necessity of avoiding alignments with them."13 The struggle between the two great power blocs and their approximate military equality could be an advantage for the small nations, especially the Arab states, which could deal with both sides for their own benefit. Nasser recognized that the traditional dependence of Egypt upon the West for markets and assistance was in reality of no benefit since it kept Egypt in economic bondage. There was much to be gained by dealing with the Soviet bloc, both in markets and in

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12 Cremens, op. cit., p. 143.
13 ibid., p. 144.
commodities such as weapons, which Egypt strongly desired, but which the West was unwilling to supply either in the desired amounts or at terms Egypt could afford. Therefore, Nasser concluded, "The way was clear for Egypt to balance its economic relations between the West and Soviet bloc."

When the Egyptians failed to get the needed arms from their traditional sources in the West, they approached the Soviets, who welcomed the move and quickly responded. In an interview in April, 1956, Gamal Abdel Nasser stated:

"We asked the Soviet Union for help. For years we had asked everyone else, we turned to the Soviet bloc knowing that the Western powers had no intention of dealing with us as independent equals. Help came from the Soviet bloc almost as quickly as the inquiries on our requests."

In just four days, Nasser received an answer from the Soviets.

The arrangement for the purchase of arms by Egypt was made with Czechoslovakia, rather than with the Soviet Union. Such a deal gave the appearance of a "simple commercial agreement" between two small nations and strengthened the concept of non-alignment.

The formal announcement of the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal was made during the last week of September, 1955, by President

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14 ibid., p. 145.


Nasser. The deal was estimated to be valued at about $250,000,000, although there has never been any formal statement to that effect. Egypt received jet fighters and bombers, surface-to-air-missiles, tanks, submarines, troop carriers, and a variety of small arms and artillery. Although the exact price has never been revealed, some observers think that the arms were purchased at a low figure. It is also believed that Nasser negotiated a further reduction of 20% to 30% of the original purchase price when he visited the Soviet Union in 1958.

An important part of the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal was the method by which Egypt would pay for the purchases. The Czechs agreed to accept payments in Egyptian currency and commodities; they did not require payments in dollars or gold as did the United States. Communist purchases of Egyptian cotton were at prices well above the prevailing world market price which served to bolster Egypt's economy and at the same time, eliminated the competition from Western

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20 ibid., p. 652.
buyers. This led to a reduction of the United Arab Republic's trade with the West and a simultaneous increase in the volume of trade with the Soviet bloc.\(^22\)

Wilton Wynn states in his book, *Nasser of Egypt*,\(^23\) that the West suffered a political defeat in diplomacy concerning the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal when the Soviet Union returned Ambassador Soloa to Moscow with a promotion for his aid in the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal, to the Middle East desk in the foreign office. In short, the Soviets had gained a valuable propaganda victory by showing a strong indication to the Arab world that they were ready to listen, as well as respond to their needs.

The years following the Arms Deal brought an expansion of cooperation and friendship between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic.

There was a favorable response throughout the Arab world. By making the Arms Deal, Nasser's prestige was enhanced by his success in breaking the monopoly of the West in supplying arms in the Middle East and in ending Arab dependence on the West for equipment and arms. This meant that the Arabs, at last, had a place to appeal the West's decisions, and the Soviets stood ready to discredit the West at every


opportunity in order to enhance its own position in the Middle East. The Arms Deal was the first in a series of steps in the deterioration of relations between Egypt and the Western powers, while it paved the way for further cooperation between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union.

As a result of the arms agreement, the United States withdrew its offer of assistance in the construction of the Aswan High Dam, and pressured the International Bank also to retract its offer of financial aid. Britain followed suit in this course of action, which led Nasser to retaliate by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company, which, in turn, precipitated the Israeli French-British invasion of Egypt in October and November, 1956. Such bold action by the two European powers and Israel served to widen the breach between the United Arab Republic and the West and increase the feelings of distrust which the Soviets encouraged and, to some extent, exploited.

Israel's response to Egypt's acquisition of Soviet arms was to make an arms deal with France in November, 1955, which supplied Israel with ultra-modern Mystere jets and other types of weapons. Other countries, such as Canada, also supplied arms to Israel. These new arms arrived in Israel in April, 1956, while Monsieur Christian Pineau, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, was visiting the Egyptian capital. 24-25

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24 Wynn, op. cit., p. 144.
25 Ibid.
The completion of the evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone, which was begun after the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement in 1954, was celebrated in June, 1956, with a parade of Egyptian troops displaying their new Soviet-made weapons. Nominal units from the armies of several Arab countries shared in the celebration. The Egyptians marched proudly, for this was a great moment of victory. Since 1882 "the Egyptian army—not British forces—was the final source of authority and power in Egypt."26

The parade was seen differently from three points of view. Dmitiri Shepilov, the new Soviet foreign minister, who attended the parade as guest of honor, saw in it a decline in Western influence and closer relations between the Soviet Union and the Arab world. The Western diplomats attending the parade saw in it the possibility that Egypt was exchanging the old British relationship for a new dependence on the Soviet Union. But for Nasser, now confident of his ability to stand behind his policy of "positive neutralism," the ceremony was a testimony to the efficacy of his neutralist policy for he had freed Egypt from its past bonds by providing it "with the strength to run its own show in its own way."27

26 Creameans, op. cit., p. 147.
27 Ibid., p. 148.
C. Egypt's Hostility Towards Western Imperialism, Colonialism, and Foreign Interests in the Arab World

The United Arab Republic's hostility toward Western imperialism was the basis of the revolution's foreign policy. But to what extent was this policy revolutionary, and on what basis was it predicated?

Malcolm Kerr, in his article, "Egyptian Foreign Policy and the Revolution," projects a three-level scale of what is revolutionary in order to determine to what extent a policy is revolutionary or conventional. On his first level, he sees a policy as revolutionary if it is based on explicit ideological foundations; on the middle level, a policy might qualify as "revolutionary" if it aims at a significant diplomatic breakthrough in pursuit of objectives beyond the traditional views of the nation's interest; at the third level, if the style and tactics of a policy are enhanced by new boldness and concerted effort to achieve limited and traditional goals, it might be said to be "revolutionary." Mr. Kerr places Egyptian foreign policy at the middle level since it presents a diplomatic breakthrough in pursuit of new objectives. 28

Nasser's policies in the foreign arena are based on the sensitivity of the Arabs on the question of independence.

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This sensitivity produced strong feelings of anti-imperialism. The Arabs had endured exploitation by the Western powers for a long time and, having thrown off the yoke of colonialism, they wished to take their place in the community of nations as full and equal partners. With independence came a desire for total independence, economic and social, as well as political. Therefore, it did not require any particular ideology beyond that of national independence to cause the United Arab Republic to adopt a general position of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism.

In order to achieve independence, the Free Officers under Lieutenant-Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser overthrew King Farouk and his dynasty which had enslaved the Egyptian people for more than a century while benefiting greatly from the West's desire to economically subjugate his country. The Free Officers also intended to eliminate the corruption in Farouk's regime which sold Egypt to the whims of the West for the price of personal wealth, and to liquidate the reactionary elements in Egyptian society who also benefited from the status quo at the expense of the mass of Egyptians, and the elements of imperialism which exploited the people.

Independence, therefore, constituted the immediate aim of Arab nationalism. It had deep psychological significance which, over the years, has broadened the meaning of the word, "independence," for the Arab peoples. The experience of the interim between the two world wars convinced
nationalists that anything less than complete sovereignty was not sovereignty at all.

The reason the nationalists sought total sovereignty was because they had seen the effects of "de facto" independence.

For example, in some northern African and some other Arab states, so-called sovereign, the nationalists had seen how foreign capital and large capital investments from foreign countries had retained control over policies and decisions, causing these so-called freed states to continue carrying unfair obligations.

Further, foreign currency was held in foreign banks on the independent country soil. These banks "which held the keys of industry, often remain totally under the control of foreign capital."\(^29\)

Consequently, the search for complete independence from the West has made nationalists suspicious of foreign investments and economic interests. Minorities with special connections outside the Arab world, and alliances and other special relationships with the great powers were also suspect.\(^30\)

From its inception, the United Arab Republic refused to join in Facts or Agreements which would enable any foreign


\(^30\)Cremeans, op. cit., p. 58.
power or outside interests to interfere in the affairs of the country or violate its sovereignty in any way. When the Baghdad Pact was introduced, the United Arab Republic refused to participate and also conducted an intensive campaign of propaganda against the Pact. In addition, the United Arab Republic used its influence with the other Arab states to convince them not to join in what Egypt considered was a bloc-versus-bloc alignment against Russia. Egypt preferred to stay aloof from such entanglements and pursue a policy of non-alignment or "positive neutralism" which would leave Egypt freer to make its own way in the area of foreign diplomacy.

Arab neutralism has its roots in the period after the Palestinian War when Egypt, in response to the Hashemite scheme to enlarge its influence by means of a military pact, proposed an Arab Defense Pact in which every Arab state felt obligated to join. The Americans viewed this Arab Defense Pact as a blueprint for a defense organization in the Middle East patterned after NATO.

The American plan for a Middle East Defense (MEDO), however, was based on improper understanding of the situation in the Middle East. For example, in the face of overt action against Britain by nationalist forces in Iraq and the Suez Canal Zone, the United States still hoped for way to build a strategic alliance. In spite of the previous
rejection by the Arabs of the Tri-Partite Declaration on the grounds that it implied recognition of Israel, the Americans invited the members of the Arab League and Israel to join in the MEDO, a venture not sure to succeed if Arab feelings concerning Israel were not dealt with. Thus, the Arabs continued to reject anything which would imply recognition of Israel and any plan which would strengthen the hand of the West and Israel in the Arab world.

Therefore, the Arabs proclaimed the doctrine of Arab neutralism which the West could not understand, for to receive aid from the Soviets is not neutralism in the eyes of the West. The Arabs were concerned with freeing themselves from foreign control; hence, they turned a deaf ear to the

31 The Tri-Partite Declaration, issued May 25, 1950, was an attempt by the Western powers; Britain, France, and the United States of America, to try to limit the chaos in the Middle East. To this end, they declared, "The three governments recognize that the Arab states and Israel all need to maintain a certain level of armed forces for the purpose of ensuring their internal security and their legitimate self-defense and to permit them to play their part in the defense of the area as a whole. All applications for arms or war material from these countries will be considered in the light of these principles." It should be noted, however, that such a declaration by the three powers would not be accepted by the Arabs for it implies a balance of arms, between Israel, a nation of one million, at the time, and about eighty millions of Arabs. This the Arabs deny, especially with Israel occupying their land, denying the Palestinians their right to return to their homes and farms in Palestine while importing Polish and Hungarian Jews to settle in the confiscated properties of the Palestinian Arabs. This Western Declaration was refused by the Arabs especially when it came from the very states that championed the creation of the alien state on Arab soil.
anti-Soviet propaganda from the West and did not seem interested in the East-West conflict. To the Arabs, the only threat was the Israeli threat. For the Arabs, Israeli unprovoked attacks were an undeniable fact, whereas Soviet aggression was remote and uncertain. The Arabs preferred to end dependence on the West and defend themselves and their rights against continuing Israeli attacks and threats.

Egypt's firm stand against imperialism, its opposition to foreign pacts, and its campaign against the Baghdad Pact and later against the Eisenhower Doctrine, which Egypt saw as "imperialism in disguise," all these positions served to place Egypt in a "tactical" alliance with the Soviet Union against Western-Imperialism. Naturally, the Soviets used every advantage to be gained by this "tactical" alliance in order to confront the West in the Cold War and extend its influence in the Middle East.

In order to win acceptance for his regime, Nasser had to formulate policies which capitalized on the Egyptian's desire for independence and economic and social reform. Nasser has often been called a "pragmatist" since his policies are not guided by a rigid, doctrinaire philosophy. The reason for this is seen in his two-fold approach in foreign affairs: (1) The pursuit of Egypt's influence in the Arab world; (2) Non-alignment emphasizing anti-imperialism. Thus, Nasser recognizes and deals with long-standing Egyptian national interests, such as the removal of foreign troops from Egyptian...
soil, and the creation of a free state, even in the face of considerable danger, such as retaliations from colonial powers.

In one of his first actions, Nasser succeeded in creating a climate of internal political stability by securing a settlement of the Suez question with Britain on terms favorable to Egypt. This settlement demonstrated to Egyptians and to other Arab peoples that Egyptian policies were no longer subject to pressures from Britain. In addition to securing British withdrawal, Arab nationalist sensitivity demanded that Egypt resist British and American proposals for a Middle East Defense Organization.

Having achieved the 1954 treaty with Britain, Egypt desired to consolidate her independence, which led to the adoption of certain corollaries, the first of which was the idea of non-alignment. Non-alignment with the great powers would perhaps enable Egypt to obtain support from each against the pressures of the other. In fact, Nasser had won some support from the United States during his negotiations with Britain over Suez.

In 1954 Nasser was responding to the Egyptian's desire not allow a continued British military presence in Egypt. Critics feared Egypt might be siding with the Soviets, but the Soviets at that time had little to offer Egypt, while the West had a great deal. Staying out of anti-Soviet alliances was just as sensible to Nasser as joining them, it
really didn't matter. What was important was not the principle of non-alignment itself, but the end of the "special and unequal" relationship with Britain, whether in the context of the Cold War or any other context. Nasser's non-alignment policy was begun as a tactical matter.32

When the Soviet Union became a source of aid and assistance, neutralism as a tactical matter changed. In 1955 the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal was made; in 1956 Egypt recognized Red China; and in 1958, Nasser obtained extensive Soviet aid for industry and the Aswan Dam. By 1958 neutralism was an established policy by which Nasser used the opportunities available to play off both sides for the benefit of Egypt.

That Egypt should expand her influence in the Arab world was the second corollary of independence. Egypt had a larger population, a more modern economic sector, and a bigger army than the other Arab countries, and until the oil boom in the 1950's, Egypt also possessed greater financial resources. Such advantages made Egypt a natural leader in the Arab world.

The success of Nasser's revolution coupled with the decline of British power and prestige in the Middle East were valuable opportunities which Nasser utilized to make himself a symbol to Arabs both in and outside Egypt of their

32 Kerr, op. cit., p. 120.
hopes and dreams, a symbol of revolution which would free them, politically, economically and socially.\textsuperscript{33}

More practical considerations for an enhanced Egyptian influence in the Arab world was the view of the neighboring Arab states as a first line of defense against pressures from the West which might undermine Egypt's independent foreign policy. Egypt's attack on the Baghdad Pact and the MEDO were calculated not only to prevent Western control of the area, but also to inspire the Arab peoples favorably toward Egypt. In the case of the Baghdad Pact, Egypt challenged the vested interests of the great powers, particularly the British who had just conceded the evacuation of the Suez. But if Egypt hadn't become involved, Nasser could foresee that without his opposition, other Arab states, notably Lebanon and Jordan, might not stay out of the Pact, thereby isolating Egypt and reducing her to a state without influence in the world community.\textsuperscript{34}

Another fact of life which faced Nasser was Egypt's need for economic assistance in the programs of development of heavy industry and large-scale projects, such as the Aswan Dam. An intensive governmental program to improve the Egyptian standard of living in the face of a bourgeoning population was, and still is today, urgently necessary. Egypt,

\textsuperscript{33}ibid., p. 121.
\textsuperscript{34}ibid., p. 122.
however, lacked the resources that were necessary to cope with the problem, and had to seek help elsewhere.

The West had been Egypt's traditional source of such assistance, but in light of Egypt's policy of non-alignment and jealously guarded sovereignty, little could be expected from these countries. Had not the Soviet Union entered the picture, Egyptian foreign policy might have taken a different turn. The pursuit of foreign capital, however, eventually led Egypt in the same direction as had her struggle for independence, viz, a policy of non-alignment, and the cultivation of influence in the Arab world.

Nasser's non-alignment policy enabled him to develop an alternative to complete dependence upon Western capital. By pursuing such a policy, he managed to get aid from both blocs, especially in the late fifties and early sixties. He also cultivated his influence among the Arab masses on whom he counted to pressure their governments to come to Nasser's aid if such assistance were necessary. This policy has been successful in that since the Suez Crisis of 1956, Egypt has received economic help from the oil-producing Arab states.

Until the Suez Crisis, the United States was the only major aid supplier, and Egypt had taken advantage of several

35 This economic help from the oil-producing countries comes only (or mostly) in time of crisis, such as the Suez in 1956 and the Jun, 1967, crisis and after.
technical assistance grants and loans. When the West refused to sell much needed arms to Egypt, Nasser, waving the banner of Arab neutralism, turned to the Soviets. The latter saw the advantages to be gained from such a policy and agreed to provide the needed weapons. The impact of the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal made the negotiations for Anglo-American aid for the Aswan Dam a "diplomatic tug-of-war" which resulted in the West withdrawing its promises of assistance. Egypt retaliated by increasing its already growing trade with the Eastern bloc, and the Soviets came through with the necessary capital and technical assistance for the building of the Aswan Dam.36

As Nasser skillfully maneuvered between the two blocs, first placating one, then seeming to turn toward the other, Egypt reaped the benefits in aid of various kinds. By 1960 it could be said that "positive neutralism" was financially profitable, and that Nasser was not one to discourage the Soviets and Americans from competing for the privilege of giving Egypt "unconditional aid."37

D. The Aswan Dam Negotiations

The plan for the building of the Aswan High Dam across the Nile River was one of the main objectives of the reform

36 Kerr, op. cit., p. 123.
37 Ibid., p. 124.
program which had been announced by the Revolutionary Command Council. The Free Officers, under the leadership of Gamal Abdul Nasser, rested their hopes for the achievement of social democracy, which they had promised the Egyptian people, on this gigantic scheme to harness the powers and resources of the Nile. They also hoped that the building of the High Dam would help to solve the problem of the poverty of the Egyptian peasant by the addition of two million feddans of land suitable for farming and by the ten-fold increase of hydro-electric power.

In December, 1955, the United States and the United Kingdom had offered grants-in-aid to Egypt for the purpose of assisting in the construction of the High Dam and also to counter the recent Soviet "penetration" into Egypt via the Czech Arms Deal. In addition, the World Bank offered to lend Egypt the amount of $200 million dollars which, when added to the American and British grants-in-aid, was supposed to equal one quarter of the total costs of building the Dam. 39

The Egyptian government delayed acceptance of the West's offer of assistance for many reasons. One reason for this delay was that the Egyptians desired to receive a guarantee of continued financial support from the West

38 A feddan is nearly equal to one acre.
39 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 176.
so that the project would not be halted for lack of money before it was completed, which was supposed to take between 15 and 20 years to accomplish. Another reason for the delay was that the Egyptian government needed some time to reach an agreement with the government of the Sudan over distribution of the water of the Nile and compensation for any flooding of lands in the Nubah Region between Egypt and Sudan. A third reason for Egypt's delay was alleged by the West to be a part of Nasser's game of playing off the West against the East in order to win the best bargain for Egypt.

The Egyptian government, however, decided to accept the offer from the West in July, 1956. Mr. Ahmed Hussein, the United Arab Republic Ambassador to the United States, who had been in Cairo for consultations, arrived in Washington in mid-July, 1956, with his government's acceptance of the international Bank American-British offer of participation in the financing of the project.

The Aswan Dam negotiations constituted a crisis in diplomacy between Egypt and the West which precipitated a chain of events that served to draw the Soviet Union and Egypt closer together. The United States' response to

40 Soviet and Arab engineers, however, made some changes on the original plan whereby the construction of the Dam would be completed in ten years, starting in 1960 and ending in July, 1970.

41 See Chapter IV B for discussion of that agreement.
Nasser's friendly approach to the West following negotiations with Britain over the Suez was met with the announcement of the withdrawal of the U.S. share of the financing for the Aswan Dam. The other parties, Britain and the World Bank, soon followed suit and withdrew their offers also.

Nasser's response to such obvious economic coercion was to announce the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. This bold action by the Egyptian leader triggered the 1956 Suez War which saw Israeli troops invade Egypt on the 29th of October, followed the next day by British and French forces sent, ostensibly, to restore the peace in such a vital area. Pressures by the Soviet Union and the United States, coupled with a condemnation of the attack by world public opinion, led to the withdrawal of the invaders.

The reaction of the Arab world to the West's withdrawal of support for the Dam was one of anger and explosive violence. The Arabs found the alleged reasons for the West's retraction of its offer unacceptable, and a cream of abuse was directed against the United States which had initiated the offer of assistance and now initiated the withdrawal of that offer.

Among the reasons offered by the United States to justify its withdrawal of assistance for the High Dam project was the desire on the part of the Americans to bring to a halt Nasser's playing off East against West and force a commitment from Egypt to the West. Another reason given by the
Americans was the alleged changed character of the Egyptian economy which they claimed had resulted from the "mortgaging" of a portion of the Egyptian cotton crop for the purchase of Red arms. In addition, Egypt's failure, at that time, to reach an agreement with the other users of the Nile River was considered justification for the retraction of the West's offer of aid for the Dam. 42

To counter the American claims, it was pointed out in the Arab press that the United States' offer of participation in the Aswan Dam had been made in December, 1955, while the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal had been made three months earlier in September, 1955. The Egyptians argued that as late as July 9th, Mr. Eugene Black, President of the World Bank, had reiterated in a letter to the Egyptian Minister of Finance the assurance that "the World Bank will finance the High Dam scheme." 43 Mr. Black also urged Nasser to accept the offer of the World Bank. The Egyptians also argued rightly that Egypt was a good financial risk at that time, as the very practical-minded World Bank Governors and its President, Mr. Black, certified. 44

Arab leaders and newspapers began to ask many questions, such as: "Why doesn't Egypt deserve to get $400 million

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42 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 178.
43 ibid.
44 ibid.
dollars, which Israel had been granted by the United States at that time) against the $900 million dollars which Egypt undertook to pay for the building of the greatest dam in the world?" They further argued that the Dam, when completed, would help combat poverty and stand as a dam in the face of Communism in Egypt. They also asked: "Aren't these the declared aims of the United States?" 45

The Egyptians viewed the withdrawal of the United States as further evidence of Anglo-French pressure and of Zionist influence. For the United States to play "uncle" to the entire world and then become economy-minded toward Egypt appeared to them to be an unfriendly gesture. They knew that the $56 million dollars which had been promised to them was a small portion of the American foreign aid program that year which totaled $4.5 billion dollars. 46

The letter from the President of the World Bank to the Minister of Finance, Abdel Moneim Kaissuny, which was dated ten days before the United States withdrew its offer, invalidated the argument of the United States' government, the Egyptians said. The Egyptian government argued that if Egypt was a good risk to the President of the World Bank on the 9th of July, how could she not be a good risk for the American government on the 19th of July? They argued further

45 ibid., p. 179.
46 ibid.
that Communist interests and goals were quietly served if the Dam was not built, since the masses would tend to become more radical as their economic situation became increasingly hopeless.

There remained the unanswered question of what had altered the attitude of Mr. Dulles toward the Dam. The fact that the American Secretary of State did not like the idea of being put on the spot by the Egyptian acceptance of the American offer at the same time that the Congress was indicating its opposition to the idea of American involvement in the financing and construction of the Aswan Dam was alleged to be a factor.

The former U.S. Ambassador to Egypt, Mr. Byroade, testifying before the Senate Joint Committee hearings on the Eisenhower Doctrine, admitted that he had first learned about the cancellation of the American assistance for the Dam, not from the State Department in Washington, but from the Egyptian press in Cairo. He states, "There may have been many reasons unknown to me why we could or should not go ahead on the Aswan Dam." Mr. Byroade added that the withdrawal by the American government of aid for the Dam was "a mistake." He said further, "A project such as this could be the difference as to whether there can be stability

\[47\] _ibid., p. 180._
in Egypt no matter who is running the country twenty years from now. 48

The Arabs further regarded the withdrawal of the West from participation in the financial arrangements for the High Dam as an attempt to overthrow President Gamal Abdul Nasser, who was pursuing a policy of neutralism which displeased the West. It didn't take long for Nasser, angered by the West's action which weakened the financial position of the Egyptian government, to strike back. He attacked the United States government in a fiery speech which he gave on July 24, 1956, on the occasion of the inauguration of a new oil refinery in one of the suburbs of the Egyptian capital. The big strike, however, came on July 26, 1956, when President Nasser announced to chanting crowds in Alexandria the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company, and declared that the money which previously had gone to London, Paris, and Brussels, would now be used in the building of the Aswan Dam.

E. Emerging Soviet Support of Egyptian Foreign Policy

During the two years following the 1952 revolution, the Free Officers were busy seeking allies as well as a philosophy to support the revolution. The philosophy was found in

48 Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, 85th Congress, 1st session, on S.C. Res. 19 and H.C. Res. 117 Part II, pp. 708-717.
Nasser's book entitled *Egypt's Liberation*. The Free Officers believed that allies were to be found in the new era of good and constructive relations with Britain and the West, based on mutual understanding and free of domination, which began with the signing of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954.

The Free Officers were to find, however, that the West would not support two concepts that they, the Free Officers, believed in. The first of these concepts was the contemplation of closer collaboration with the Soviet bloc. The second dealt with support of national liberation movements.

Immediately following the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement came the Baghdad Pact. This pact was to challenge these concepts of collaboration with the Soviets and support for national liberation movements and confused the Free Officers about the motives of the West. Nasser realized that conflict with Britain and the West was inevitable if Arab countries were to see freedom from foreign domination or influence. The evidence suggested to the Arabs that, under such agreements as the Baghdad Pact, Arab countries would fall under Western influence and perhaps under direct command if they joined. From that time on, Nasser was to follow a policy he called "reaction to events."\(^\text{50}\) As a result of Egypt's

\(^{49}\) Little, op. cit., p. 217.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.
denunciation of the Baghdad Pact, and in spite of Egypt's persecution of Communists and pursuing a conservative economic policy, the door to cooperation between the Soviet Union and Egypt was opened.

By using the "reaction to events" policy, Nasser sought neutrality. After the British troops were evacuated from their positions in the Canal Zone, with the resultant loss of strategic bases to the West, the hopes for the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement were not pursued, and hopes for the success of the Baghdad Pact were slim.

In 1955 the Soviets sought entrance into the Arab World. At that time, the situation was as follows: first, the Israeli threat became a reality when the West failed to honor its pledge to guarantee the frontiers between Israel and the neighboring Arab states; second, there was growing fear in the Arab world of Western neo-colonialism in the guise of the Baghdad Pact; and third, there was a pressing need to develop the Egyptian economy. The time was ripe, and the Soviets responded by supporting the Arab position against the Baghdad Pact. The sincerity of the Russians was taken for granted because the pact was an alignment against them. In addition, their sincerity was not questioned because the Soviet Union offered to arm the Arab countries that opposed the Baghdad Pact.

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\footnote{\textit{ibid.}, p. 218.}
In truth, the Soviets had nothing to lose and everything to gain. If the West resisted Arab nationalism, the situation became doubly favorable. The dominant influence of Egypt in the Arab world placed her in the position of primary importance to the Soviet Union. By aligning themselves with the Arab nationalists, the Soviets hoped to gain a diplomatic victory over the West.

Israeli raid in the Gaza Strip in 1955 created circumstances which favored the Soviets. The raid pointed out the weakness of the Egyptian Army and its lack of enough modern weapons. The Egyptian leaders were determined to arm their forces, but because of the West's position on the Palestine question and their unreasonable terms, Egypt's traditional source of supply was sealed off.

Frustrated in his attempts to secure arms from the West, Nasser turned to the Eastern bloc for the needed arms. Since the Soviets had previously offered in January, 1955, to arm any Arab country that opposed the Baghdad Pact, coupled with the Soviet desire to establish a good relationship with Egypt in order to win a psychological victory over the West and extend Soviet influence in the Middle East, the Soviets were willing to arrange the sale of arms to Egypt on terms which were acceptable to both countries.

The Czech–Egyptian Arms Deal of September, 1955, provided

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52 Ibid.
Egypt with the allies it sought, with the needed modern weapons with which to resist the Israeli threat, and with enough leverage to pursue a policy of non-alignment. The Arms Deal also aided the development of the Egyptian economy.

The terms of the Arms Deal provided the sale of Egyptian cotton for repayment of the loan at prices higher than the West would pay. In this way, the Soviets tied a good portion of the Egyptian economy to the Eastern bloc. They were aided by the greatly reduced purchases of Egyptian cotton by Britain, who was developing a synthetic substitute for cotton.

Nasser was delighted to have a new market for Egyptian cotton. The monies received would help to fill the void created by the West's withdrawal from the Aswan Dam project. Soon the Soviets figured large in the Egyptian balance of trade. While in 1954 the Soviet Union had only a small fraction of Egyptian trade, by 1957 that share was to increase about eleven times to where the Soviet Union alone purchased one fourth of the Egyptian crop.53

Surveying the situation which existed during this period, one can see the growing Soviet involvement in the Middle East. This involvement was made possible by many contributing factors. First, the Soviets came to the Middle East with clean

53 ibid., p. 219.
hands in comparison with the European powers with their his-
tory of domination, exploitation, and colonization, which
made Western motives suspect to the Arabs. Second, there
was the list of American offers of aid with political or
military strings attached, which tended to confirm pre-
existing nationalist suspicions that the United States
was nothing better than a replacement for the recently
ousted European imperialists.\textsuperscript{54}

If we add to this the factors which caused the rise
of Arab nationalism, one can see that the goals of the
nationalists coincided with those of the Soviets (i.e.,
the elimination of Western influence and dominant position
in the area). Such a coincident goal reinforced the es-
tablishment of strong relations between the United Arab
Republic and the Soviet Union.

This coincidence of the goals of the two parties of
the relationship and their determination to dismantle Wes-
tern influence from the Middle East made the "marriage"
both possible and convenient.

\textsuperscript{54} Fisher, Carol A. and Krinsky, Fred, \textit{Middle East in
CHAPTER III

THE SUEZ CRISIS OF 1956

A. The Conflict With The West Over The Canal

Egypt and Britain made a real effort to open a new page of good will and bury the grievances of the past soon after the seizure of power by the Free Officers on the 23rd of July, 1952. Britain agreed to leave the Sudan in 1953 and to evacuate the Suez Canal Zone, according to the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954. Britain, however, sought to retain other strategic positions, the most important of which was in Aden, located at the southern entrance of the Red Sea.

Soon after the reestablishment of good relations between Britain and Egypt, things began to go wrong, which caused the newly opened page of good relations, based on the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement, to be closed.

Arab politics were complicated by two forces: anti-British feeling which later crystallized into anti-Israeli and anti-Western imperialism sentiment, and the division of the Arab world into conservative kingdoms and progressive republics. The progressive regimes, (i.e., republics,) regarded Britain as the friend and protector of the traditional regimes with which they were competing for the leadership of the Arab world. New men such as the Free Officers
in Egypt and other nationalists in the Arab countries thought that Britain was siding with the reactionaries in the Arab world to suppress the progressive forces in order to keep her influence and interests in the area.

The Western powers, out of their desire to maintain their oil interests and strategic positions in the Middle East, attempted to create an alliance that would bring at least some of the countries of the Middle East into a Western-controlled defense pact.

The Suez Canal was inseparably linked with the supply of oil for Western Europe and North America. Oil was a matter of critical significance for Britain and France. In 1955, Continental Europe obtained 17 percent of her total energy requirements from the Middle Eastern oil concessions, and Britain obtained 15 percent of her petroleum needs from the Middle East. More importantly, oil was used as a fuel for machinery and processes that only petroleum could serve. The need for oil was increasing rapidly, year after year. Western Europe and Britain required 67 million metric tons of oil in 1955, and it was estimated that by 1975, they would need 310 million metric tons.\(^1\) Included in the amounts mentioned above (67 million metric tons), were 27 million metric tons of oil for Britain alone, and in addition to those figures were 40 million metric tons for North America, all

of which came through the Suez Canal.  

One-half of the 75 percent of Europe's oil passed through the Suez waterway, while the other 25 percent reached the Mediterranean ports via the pipelines which brought the oil from Iraq and Saudi Arabia. If the tankers were forced to travel from the oil fields to Europe around the Cape of Good Hope, it would add a distance about five times as great as the route through the Suez Canal. Prior to the Suez Crisis about a quarter of all British imports and exports passed through the Suez Canal. Every day from forty to fifty ships crossed the waterway carrying one-sixth of the cargoes of the entire world.

The proposed pact was denounced by Nasser, who successfully prevented any other Arab country from joining the pact. Radio Cairo launched an extensive attack against the West-sponsored pact, warning the Arab peoples from the "neo-colonialism" and urging the Arab states to stay out of the pact. In the case of Jordan, which the British Prime Minister, Mr. Anthony Eden, tried to persuade to join the new pact, Nasser did not only succeed in preventing her from joining the pact, but also pressured King Hussein to dismiss and send home General Glubb, the British Officer who had been the commander-in-chief of the Arab

\[\text{ibid.}\]

\[\text{ibid.}\]
Legion since the establishment of the Jordanian Army. The
good will that followed the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954
had vanished.

The West wanted to wrap up the entire Middle East in
a defense alliance, but they were particularly interested
in enrolling Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan, because of their
strategic locations on the southern frontiers of the Soviet
Union. The British government urged her friend, Iraq, under
the leadership of Nuri Assaid, to join the pact. This made
Nasser very angry because Nuri Assaid was the leader of the
Arab reactionary forces which opposed Nasser and all that
he stood for. On February 24, 1954, Iraq joined the alliance,
which became known as the Baghdad Pact. With Turkey and Iraq
in the Baghdad Pact, Nasser became concerned that there might
be a conspiracy between the Arab reactionary forces and
Britain against the progressive Arab forces. The Arabs
saw Britain as wanting to come in through the window after
having been kicked out of the door.

The Baghdad Pact destroyed the new spirit of good will
which Egypt had felt toward the west with the signing of the
Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1954. The Arab nationalists,
represented by Nasser, were determined that they wanted no
Arab country dragged into any pact other than the Arab
Collective Security Pact, which was drawn up by the Council
of the Arab League in 1950 and became effective in 1953, when
Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Iraq rati-
fied it.
Nasser's offer of friendship to the West by his acceptance of Western financial assistance for the Aswan Dam was soon met with a reply when Mr. Anthony Eden, Prime Minister of Britain, described Nasser as "a man who cannot be trusted to keep an agreement..." Mr. Eden remarked in addition, "We all know this is how fascist governments behave, and we all remember, only too well, what the cost can be in giving in to fascism."

The retraction on the part of the United States and the United Kingdom of their offers to share in the financing of the Aswan Dam project precipitated the nationalization of the Suez Canal. The Aswan Dam constituted a large part of the program of the new regime to raise the Egyptian standard of living, and was considered to be one of the main projects of the social reform program which was one of the aims of the Egyptian revolution. The World Bank had also announced its readiness to lend Egypt $200 million which, when combined with the Anglo-American offer, would make up one quarter of the cost of the project. However, when the Anglo-American offer was withdrawn, the World Bank retracted its offer also.

The Arabs felt that the reasons given to justify the retraction of financial assistance by the West were invalid. The United States justified its withdrawal by saying that

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developments in the Egyptian economy since the offer was made "have not been favorable to the success of the project." They added, "The ability of Egypt to devote adequate resources to assure the project's success has become more uncertain than at the time the offer was made." The Arabs countered this argument by pointing out that the World Bank considered the Egyptian economy sound enough to offer $200 million and had reiterated its support in a letter to the Egyptian Minister of Finance ten days before the cancellation of the offer.

President Nasser was in Brioni, Yugoslavia, meeting with the other two leaders of the non-aligned nations, Mr. Nehru and Marshall Tito, at the time of the West's withdrawal of assistance. When he received the news of the retraction, he returned home immediately. On the 26th of July, 1956, Nasser struck back at the West in his historic speech before a huge audience in Alexandria in which he attacked imperialism and announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company.

In that speech, Nasser reminded his audience of the long-term domination of the Arabs by the Western powers.

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6See Chapter II D for further discussion of the Aswan Dam Negotiations.

7Until it was nationalized, the Suez Canal Company had been an Egyptian Company with headquarters in Paris and 44% of its stock owned by the British Government. The 99 year lease expired in 1968.
But, he added:

"Today--since our political freedom has been achieved after the announcement of our principles, after our cooperation, and after the establishment of a united national front of all the sons of this people against imperialism, against despotism, against domination and against foreign interference--they take us into account. And they know that we are a nation with self-esteem which can do what it pleases. Today the importance of Egypt in the international field has grown and the importance of the Arab nation in the international field has grown and become great."

Gamal Abdul Nasser reviewed recent Western-Egyptian relations and pointed out that the West still sought the opportunity to bring the Arab world and Egypt into a defense alliance in which Egypt would be "an appendage and subordinate." He added that the Western powers, who had exploited the Middle East for its oil, had provided Israel, "a nation of one million," (at that time), with greater amounts of arms and economic assistance than it had to all the Arab states combined. Nasser also denounced the attempts by the United States, Britain, and the World Bank to attach conditions to their offer which would make Egypt again dependent on Western bankers. "History will never repeat itself," Nasser declared.

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8 Lilienthal, op cit., p. 80-81.
9 He is referring here to the Baghdad Pact.
10 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 181.
After reviewing all these events and denouncing the West's withdrawal of the assistance they had voluntarily offered to Egypt, Nasser announced that the Suez Canal Company, "a state within a state" was to be nationalized, and that Egypt was to take control of the canal, which is the "property of the Egyptian people." A compensation of $210 million was to be paid to the company's shareholders.

Looking at the relations between Egypt and the West which had been developing since the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal of 1955, it is easy to understand the West's withdrawal of assistance for the Aswan High Dam, and the reaction of President Nasser in nationalizing the Suez Canal.

Many attempts were made to find a compromise between the position of the Anglo-French demands for complete international control over the canal and the Egyptian insistence on its right to control the waterway which runs through her territory. The first London Suez Conference in August, 1956, was attended by 22 nations which constituted the main users of the Canal. Only Greece and Egypt refused to attend the conference.

The conference produced two plans. One, submitted by the head of the Indian delegation, Mr. Krishna Menon, called for the establishment of an international advisory board with

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
the actual operation of the canal remaining in Egyptian hands. The second plan was submitted by U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, the head of the American delegation. The Dulles plan provided for operation of the Suez Canal by an international board.

The Dulles plan won the majority of the votes, and a five-man committee, headed by Robert Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia, was sent to meet President Nasser and discuss the plan with him. Nasser rejected the plan for international control over the canal because the Arabs did not want to replace the British control of the canal with "collective" domination by the Users Association. The mission returned with nothing accomplished.

France and Britain agreed on a plan of stern economic measures against Egypt. Non-Egyptian canal pilots were called upon to quit their jobs, and Mr. Georges Picot, the director of the Suez Canal Company, "sent a message to 59 pilots offering them two year's salary for not returning to work." 13

There was an attempt to form a Suez Canal Users Association, SCUA, which would control pilots and collect tolls, but this attempt also failed. Nasser thought that the establishment of a SCUA was aimed at the domination of Egypt by a group of nations and this, to him, was not any different

13 ibid., p. 185.
from domination by one power.

B. The British-French-Israeli Attack On Egypt

Nasser's foreign policy during the years following the seizure of power by the free Officers until the Suez Crisis appears to have been mainly concerned with trying to find arms for the poorly equipped Egyptian Army. An arms deal between Israel and France had been concluded in 1954 which made the Egyptians particularly anxious about the defense of their country against the Israeli threat. In addition, Israel had launched an attack against the Egyptians in the Gaza strip, and the Egyptians had suffered heavy casualties. These incidents, particularly the Gaza raid, caused the Egyptian leader to be determined to equip his army with modern weapons; the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal was reached in 1955.

Antagonized by Nasser's purchase of arms from the Communist bloc and his recognition of the People's Republic of China in May, 1956, John Foster Dulles, in the name of the United States, withdrew the American offer of financial assistance for the construction of the Aswan High Dam. Nasser, angered by this act, which led to the withdrawal of the British and World Bank offers, struck back at the West by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company on July 26, 1956. This series of incidents led to a premeditated and massive military strike by Britain, France, and Israel against
Egypt in October and November, 1956. Britain and France were determined not to let Nasser "get away with" nationalizing the Suez Canal.

France during this period was arming Israel with the most modern and sophisticated weapons in her arsenal, including Mystere II jet aircraft. On the other hand, Egypt was regarded by France as one of the main supporters of the liberation forces in Algeria, fighting against the French forces of occupation. Nasser, in fact, made no secret of Egyptian support for the Algerian revolution. In an interview with Erskine Childers, Nasser was asked if it was true that he was helping the Algerian rebels. He answered, "Yes. Yes. From the beginning (in 1954) to the end of the revolution (in 1962)."

The campaign by the Western maritime powers against the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company was focused against Nasser himself. That view was expressed by Mr. Anthony Eden, then Prime Minister of Britain, when he argued that "a facility of such vital interest to so many nations...could not be left to the responsibility of a single state, certainly not to a state run by a man like Nasser." The West was unwilling to trust Egypt because it was Egypt headed by a strong man ruler who was anti-Western imperialism in his view and

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15 Calvocoressi, op. cit., p. 37.
16 Cremeans, op. cit., p. 152.

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policies. There was almost no objection to Egypt's right as a sovereign state under international law, to nationalize the company, especially when one considers that Egypt intended to compensate the shareholders of the company in the amount of $210 million dollars, the value of the shares on the international stock market on that day.

When Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company, he was not driven by motives of socialist ideology, nor did he do it just for the sake of nationalizing the company, but he did it for two important reasons: first, he wanted the Egyptian government to collect the revenues in order to use them in helping to finance the High Dam; and, second, he sought to arouse Arab nationalism against Western imperialism. He and his advisors knew full well that their act would arouse Western hostility. They were almost sure that France and Britain would use force to retain control over the canal, but they were mildly optimistic about the role of the United States. They regarded the latter as less imperialist than the European powers, they estimated that American leaders were unconvinced that using force would solve the problem. Most importantly, they reasoned, the United States was not ready or willing to risk war with the Soviet Union.

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17 The 99 Year concession would have expired in 1968, and Egypt would have been able to nationalize the Suez Canal Company without payment.

18 Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 181.
For these reasons, the Egyptians felt that they might receive some measure of support from the United States.

Frustrated by their failure to sabotage the functioning of the canal and the failure of their attempts to regain control of the canal from Egypt, France and Britain decided on a path of direct military action. With the cooperation of Israel, the European powers planned the invasion and began building up their military forces in the Mediterranean, using Malta and Cyprus as their bases.

On October 29, 1956, Israel, as part of a long-standing dispute and series of raids, launched a two-pronged attack against Egypt. The British Mediterranean fleet was moved quickly from Malta toward Cyprus in order to be near the battle field in the Suez. The Israeli armored and paratroops backed by French air cover thrust deep into the Sinai Peninsula toward the Suez. The announced objective of this invasion of Egyptian territory was to crush the nests of "feydayeen" or Palestinian commandos who were "harrassing" Israeli border positions near the Gaza strip. There had been comparative quiet on this front for some weeks, so that the Israeli attack came as a surprise. It was later understood that this was the "preventive war" that Ben-Gurion had been talking about for some time, and now events had brought him two strong allies who could help him destroy his enemy.

The day following the attack, France and Britain issued an ultimatum to the two active belligerents to withdraw their
troops ten miles back from the Canal Zone so that the Anglo-French troops could occupy Port Said, Ismailya, and other key positions in the Suez Canal Zone. The fact that the Israeli forces were still far away from the Suez indicated that the Anglo-French ultimatum was in effect a demand for Egypt to withdraw more than a hundred miles, while allowing Israeli forces to make further advances into the Sinai Peninsula. Egypt was given twelve hours to accept the ultimatum. Gamal Abdel Nasser rejected the ultimatum in the name of Egypt and with the backing of Arab peoples. The Arab rejection of the British-French ultimatum was expected but it seems that the two European powers were looking for an excuse to invade the Suez Canal Zone. When their terms were rejected, the British and French announced that they were entering the Suez Canal Zone to "safeguard" passage through the waterway and to "separate" the two fighting armies.

Eden and Mollet sent their British and French jet bombers to bomb Cairo and Port Said in order to pave the way for their invasion, which was made by the paratroopers and Marines who occupied Port Said and Ismailya. This last desperate attempt by the two European powers, aided by Israel, failed to achieve its objectives, and one British observer subsequently termed it "one of the most colossal blunders ever committed in the history of the British nation."19

19 Wynn, op. cit., p. 184.
The reasons for that failure will be analyzed in the following section.


The attack by Britain, France and Israel against Egypt, which came to be known as the Suez Campaign, contributed to the trend that was developing in Egypt's foreign policy. This invasion of Egypt and the subsequent drastic economic pressures, in which the United States participated, proved to be the last desperate attempt to bring revolutionary Egypt to accept the west's terms. The invasion and the economic pressures served to drive Egypt closer to the Soviet Union, which had supported the Arabs against the invaders. It also served to inflame Arab nationalism, and this growing Arab identification with his revolution gave Gamal Abdul Nasser a great political victory despite the military reverses.

Throughout the entire Suez Crisis, from the time President Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Company until the Canal was reopened again in 1957 under complete Egyptian control, the Soviet Union was the only one of the great powers that gave unwavering support to the Egyptian position. The United States, in an attempt to force Egypt to relinquish control of the Suez, had opposed the nationalization; and following the Suez War, had joined Britain and France in exerting economic pressure on Egypt. However, the United
States had helped to bring about the withdrawal of the invading forces from Egypt.

The day preceding the Anglo-French ultimatum to Egypt and Israel, President Dwight D. Eisenhower announced that the American government would stand by its repeated pledges to assist the victims of any aggression in the troubled area. He also announced that his government would bring the Suez Crisis to the Security Council of the United Nations. The two European allies ignored the United States' announcement, issued their ultimatum, and when it was rejected by the Egyptian government, went on with the invasion of Egypt by their fleets, and the bombing of the main cities, such as, Cairo and Port Said. The American Ambassadors in Paris and London and Tel-Aviv were instructed to confirm the statement of the United States opposing the use of force "as an instrument for the settlement of international disputes."  

In the United Nations, the American Ambassador, Henry Cabot Lodge, sought a resolution, S/3710, October 30, 1956, which called for a ceasefire and withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Sinai peninsula and urged members of the world organization not to give any kind of assistance to Israel. But the British and French delegations, as permanent members of the Security Council, applied their respective countries' vetoes to the resolution and to a variation of

\[20\] Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 190.
the resolution proposed by the Soviet Delegation.21

After the veto by Britain and France rendered the Security Council ineffective in dealing with the Suez Crisis, Yugoslavia proposed that an emergency session of the United Nations General Assembly be called under the provisions of the "Uniting for Peace" Resolution of 1950. The American government sent John Foster Dulles himself to address the emergency session. Dulles spoke on behalf of an American draft resolution in which he noted the many violations of the Arab-Israeli Armistice Agreements, and observed that Israel again had disregarded them by invading Egyptian territory, and that France and Britain were conducting military operations against Egypt, and that traffic through the Suez Canal had been interrupted.

The resolution called for a ceasefire by all parties involved and a halt to the movement of arms and military forces into the troubled area. It also urged the parties to recall the armistice agreements and promptly withdraw all forces behind the armistice lines, cease from raids across them, and scrupulously observe the agreements.

In addition, the resolution recommended that all parties refrain from bringing military equipment into the area and refrain from acts which would prevent or delay implementation of this resolution. Finally, it asked the Secretary

21 ibid., p. 191.
General to observe and report compliance with the resolution to the Security Council and the General Assembly for such further appropriate actions as might be necessary.\textsuperscript{22} This resolution was adopted by the General Assembly by vote of 64 to 5 with 6 abstentions. The nations which voted against the resolution were: Britain, France, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand. The six abstaining were: Portugal, South Africa, Belgium, Canada, Laos, and the Netherlands.

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly was supplemented by a resolution moved by the Canadian delegation headed by Lester Pearson. This resolution aimed at preserving the "prestige" of the British, which he and his government still respected. The Canadian resolution established the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) as follows:\textsuperscript{23}

"The General Assembly, bearing in mind the urgent necessity of facilitating compliance with the ceasefire resolution adopted by the Assembly on 2 November 1956, requests, as a matter of priority, the Secretary General to submit to it within forty-eight hours a plan for the setting up, with the consent of the nations concerned, of an emergency international United Nations force to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities in accordance with all the terms of the aforementioned resolution."

\textsuperscript{23}ibid.
This resolution was adopted by a vote of 57 to 0, with the abstention of the Soviet Bloc, Egypt, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and France. On November 4, the Secretary General issued a final report for the suggested UNEF, which was adopted by the General Assembly.

Britain ignored the pressure from the United Nations because it felt that the "United Nations" was not a world government "and was subject to questions concerning its authority." The war continued as the invading three nations refused to comply with the U.N. resolutions.

D. Withdrawal of the invaders

On November 5th, however, when Britain and France rejected the United Nations' request for a ceasefire, a Soviet note, signed by Presmier Bulgain, was delivered to the two governments. The note sent to the French Premier read as follows:

"The Soviet government considers it necessary to draw your attention to the aggressive war being waged by Britain and France against Egypt, which has the most dangerous consequences for the cause of peace....In what position would France have found herself if she herself had been attacked by more powerful states possessing every kind of modern

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25 Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates (Commons), cols. 1449-51.
26 Pravda, November 6, 1956 (as quoted in Current Digest of Soviet Press.)
destructive weapons? And there are countries which now... could have used other means, such as rockets.... We are fully determined to crush the aggressors and restore peace in the Middle East through the use of force. We hope at this critical moment you will display due prudence and draw the corresponding conclusions from this."

Five days following the threat to bombard the two aggressor countries with long-range missiles, the Soviet Union threatened to send Soviet volunteers to the war zone to help the Egyptian people defend their country. The statement in Pravda, November 11, 1956, stated: "The Soviet authorities will not hinder Soviet citizen volunteers who wished to depart for Egypt to fight in her defense."27

There can be no doubt that these threats were an important factor, which forced the invaders to accept a cease-fire and later withdraw from the occupied points in the Canal Zone, although they do not seem to be the only factors. There are some writers who believe that the Soviet threats were "by no means the compelling factor in the decision to withdraw."28 The Soviet threats, however, were taken by the Americans with "deadly seriousness," and the ultimatum produced a night of "extreme tension"29 in Washington.

The most important consideration, however, was the effect these Soviet moves had on Egypt. Many Egyptians and other

27 ibid.
Arabs were convinced that the threat to bombard London and Paris with long-range Soviet missiles was the factor that compelled France and Britain to accept the ceasefire called for by the United Nations General Assembly in its emergency session. Some writers think that "this belief is still widespread." 30

The New York Times declared that the Soviet Union had emerged from the Suez Crisis as the dominant power in the Middle East. The Times on November 14, 1956, analyzed the situation as follows: "...the Soviet Union has won a great victory.... Regardless of the outcome of the immediate controversy...the Soviet leaders have staked out a new position in the Middle East that outflanks the Western European oil supplies and the Baghdad Pact." 31

World opinion, aided by the inflexible attitude of the Eisenhower-Dulles government, also exerted pressure on the invaders, the result of which forced the invading countries to accept the ceasefire called for by the United Nations.

The Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold, maneuvered the withdrawal of the British and French forces from the Suez Canal positions which they occupied, mainly, Port Said and Fort Fuad. The withdrawal proceeded under the supervision


of the UNEF commanded by General Burns, Chief of Staff of
the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

The Egyptian Civil and Military authorities moved in
and took over their previous positions. Seven weeks after
the invasion began, the last of the French and British forces
left Egyptian soil (December 22, 1956). The Secretary Gen­
eral made it clear that the function of the UNEF was "to
monitor the withdrawals of invading forces and not to in­
duce the Nasser government to enter into negotiations for
a final settlement of the Suez Canal or Palestine questions."\(^33\)

With the British and French forces withdrawn, the bulk
of the UNEF moved to the Sinai desert to monitor the with­
drawal of Israeli forces from Egyptian territory.

The Israelis, however, were unwilling to relinquish the
newly won territory. The Israeli attack on Egypt had been
"merely implementation of avowed Zionist expansionism."\(^34\)
David Ben-Gurion, then Prime Minister of Israel, in address­
ing the Israeli Knesset (Parliament), declared that he "would
never relinquish the newly gained territory and never consent
that a foreign force, no matter how called, take up positions
in any area held by Israel."\(^35\)

After six United Nations resolutions demanding uncon­
ditional withdrawal, however, the first of which dated as

\(^{32}\) Lilienthal, op. cit., p. 194.
\(^{33}\) ibid., pp. 194-5.
\(^{34}\) ibid.
\(^{35}\) ibid., p. 195.
far back as November 2, 1956, and American pressure which threatened to cut off aid, the Israeli forces left Egypt and the Gaza Strip on March 4, 1957. Once more the Strip came under Egyptian control.

The cause of the West was dealt a severe blow by the defiance of Britain and France of the United Nations Charter and their attack on a small and comparatively weak nation, using Israel as a spearhead.

Western pressures on Egypt did not end with the withdrawal of the invaders, rather it took the form of economic pressure and boycotts. Since the United States had opposed the invasion, it hoped that at a later date a rapprochement in American-Egyptian relations could be achieved. But, the unqualified Soviet support for Egypt was not matched in any way by the American government, and the United States joined her European allies in putting economic pressure on Egypt, especially during the critical period that followed the Suez Campaign. The three Western powers wished to achieve their aim to overthrow Nasser and take control of the Suez Canal out of Egypt's hands by means of economic and political pressures after the military action failed to achieve their purposes.

Egyptian assets were frozen by Britain, France, and the United States, and a partial boycott was imposed by France and Britain. They halted their purchases of Egyptian cotton, and the American government refused to sell badly needed wheat to Egypt. Additional measures
taken by the United States included a refusal to issue passports to American tourists who wished to visit the United Arab Republic. And when Vice-President Richard M. Nixon made his trip through the Middle East in March, 1957, he avoided Egypt intentionally.36

The Soviet Union came to the aid of Egypt when Egypt desperately needed help. The Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc purchased much of the cotton which formerly went to the West, and supplied Egypt with wheat and other needed foods.37 The need for food imports for a country such as Egypt was shown in a 1963 survey made by the United Nations in which it was declared that Egypt produced only half of its food requirements. The report accedes that "food aid...had become a vital form of economic assistance."38 In a situation of critical shortages of food, the United States withheld authorization for the CARE school lunch program.

Commenting on the cancellation of the food program, Senator Hubert Humphrey (D. Minn.) declared, after his talks with President Nasser: "We are losing ground with the people of Egypt...by ignoring the Egyptian people's human needs."39

37 Wheelock, op. cit., p. 250.
The events that were taking place in Poland and Hungary were overshadowed by the Suez War in Egypt and the Arab countries. The suppression of the Hungarian rebellion by the Soviet tanks did not affect the favorable image of the Russians which the Arabs held. The Soviet stand by the Arabs against the Western imperialists enhanced their image in the area despite their actions in Hungary and Poland. When the votes were taken in the United Nations for condemning the actions taken by the Soviet Union in Hungary, the delegation of Egypt abstained. President Gamal Abdul Nasser later gave an explanation for Egypt's attitude by saying: "Egypt abstained out of gratitude for the Soviet Union's position on Suez." 40

During the period of pressure exerted against Egypt and Nasser by the Western powers, the Egyptian leader and the Egyptian people came to appreciate the Soviet Union's offer of assistance, especially during the critical periods. The gratitude of the Arab people was expressed by President Nasser when he said: "When our petrol ran short during the Suez struggle, Russia supplied it. Our people are grateful to Russia for coming to help us in our hour of crisis." 41

The Soviet Union, by its unqualified support of the Egyptian and Arab cause, was regarded by the Egyptians and

40 As quoted in Wheelock, op. cit., p. 191.
their brethren in other Arab countries and their allies in Asia and Africa, as the protector and supporter of weak and small nations.

The Soviet Union benefited greatly from the actions of the Western powers. The invaders did not achieve their objectives, first of regaining control of the Suez Canal, and second, of overthrowing the Nasser government. President G. A. Nasser emerged from the crisis stronger and more popular with the Egyptian masses, the Arab peoples, and among his African and Asian friends.

The Suez Crisis and its outcome, (i.e., the withdrawal of the attacking nations, without the achievement of their goals to overthrow Nasser and take control of the Canal from Egypt), strengthened and benefited the Soviet-Arab relations. The Soviets had given their support in the United Nations and by means of threats sent to Britain and France, to the Arab cause, which greatly enhanced the Soviet prestige in the Middle East.

Egypt now had undeniable control of the Suez Canal. The threat of Western influence had been overcome in Egypt, and the Israeli invasion had been halted. Thus, Egypt maintained her territories and independence. The Soviets benefited by eliminating the spread of Western influence. In this way, the Soviets demonstrated their friendship for the Arab people while the West once more demonstrated its colonial nature.
CHAPTER XV

SOVIET-UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC
RELATIONS AFTER THE SUEZ WAR

The unqualified support given to the United Arab Republic by the Soviet Union during and after the Suez Crisis paved the way for more cooperation between the two parties, and encouraged the already existing mistrust between the United Arab Republic and the West. The economic and other kinds of pressures exerted by the former European colonial powers, Britain and France, joined by the United States, made the achievement of strong relations between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union easier.

This period of the relations between the two parties was marked by cooperation generally, although there was a period of strain in the relations which showed the lack of ideological foundations for a strong relationship. But it seems as if both the Egyptians and the Soviets decided that their respective national interests demanded that they maintain good relations and shelve their ideological differences.

A. Economic and Cultural Aid Programs

The Soviet Union under Khrushchev supplemented its propaganda attacks against the economic assistance programs of the West with a growing foreign assistance program of its own. The foundations of Soviet foreign policy toward non-communist countries guided the Soviets during the Khrushchev
era and continued into the 1960's. A new theory of "peaceful co-existence of differing social systems" was enunciated which shifted the emphasis from the military to more flexible political and economic methods for achieving Soviet foreign policy goals. In addition, the Soviets aimed to isolate world capitalism by recruiting the Third World, (i.e. the colonial, semi-colonial, and formerly colonial peoples) into the ranks of world socialism.

This new pattern for dealing with the developing countries was confirmed by the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February, 1956. The Congress revised the Party's policies toward the national bourgeoisie. The ideas that prevailed in the Congress were that the bourgeoisie of Egypt, or any country, "which builds up its own national economy and strengthens and develops the State-Capitalist sector"\(^1\) fulfills a progressive function.

Nikita Khrushchev, Party Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, in his report to the Central Committee re-evaluated the policies of the national bourgeoisie. He said that a vast "zone of peace"\(^2\) was emerging in the world. The "peace zone" consisted of the newly emerging nations and the socialist countries. The common interest of them


all was anti-western imperialism. Thus, the Soviet Union identified itself with these emerging peoples, with their nationalist feelings, and in our concern here with Arab nationalism. The Soviet Union identified itself with Arab nationalism's anti-western imperialism.

The new policies proposed by Khrushchev and adopted by the Congress of the Communist Party may be illustrated by quoting from parts of Khrushchev's speech:

"The new period in world history, predicted by Lenin, when the people of the East play an active part in deciding the destinies of the whole world and have become a new and mighty factor in international relations, has arrived.... These countries, although they do not belong to the socialist world system, can draw on its achievements in building an independent national economy and in raising their peoples' living standards. Today they need not go begging their former oppressors for modern equipments. They can get it in the socialist countries, free from any political or military obligations."

The Congress, having heard Khrushchev's report, adopted a resolution supporting and approving the recent establishment of good and friendly relations with Egypt and other countries.

The Russians recognized the aspirations of the peoples of the emerging nations in Asia, Africa, and in Latin America with new forms of political and economic policies toward

4 Ibid., p. 190.
them. The most ambitious aid programs to non-communist countries were those given to India and the United Arab Republic. These programs actually began in 1955 with the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal and with the increase of exchanges of various delegations, officials, and cultural groups. The cultural programs included the showing of Egyptian films in the Soviet Union for the first time. Also a tour of Egypt was made by the Beryozka Dance ensemble in March, and an exhibit of Egyptian books was shown at Lenin Library in Moscow in September. In October there was an evening of Egyptian Arts and Literature. In July, 1956, an agreement concerning the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes was signed between the two countries, whereby Egypt would obtain her first nuclear reactor, which was to be built at Anshas.

Three major agreements constituted the basis for the great economic aid given by the Soviets to the United Arab Republic. These three agreements are as follows:

1. An agreement providing Soviet aid to the United Arab Republic for the purposes of industrialization, including credits which totaled $175 million.

This major technical and economic cooperation program was reached when Field-Marshall Amer visited Moscow in November,

5 *Pravda*, October 25, 1956, p. 4. (Current Digest).
6 Ibid., July 15, 1956, p. 5.
1957, and the agreement was signed on January 29, 1958.

2. An agreement on Soviet aid for the first stage of the construction of Aswan High Dam, providing Soviet credits of $100 million to the United Arab Republic.

This agreement was arrived at and signed on December 27, 1958.

3. An agreement on Soviet aid for the implementation of the second stage of the Aswan Dam and the construction of a high-power hydroelectric station with credits totaling another $100 million.

This third agreement was signed on August 26, 1960.

All of the above-mentioned agreements were based on comparatively long-term loans which were to be repaid in twelve years, starting from the completion of the projects at two and a half percent interest. The most important feature of these agreements which have become a standard for Soviet dealings with the emerging nations of the third world, is the use of Soviet credits instead of grants. These newly independent nations are proud and sensitive, preferring to buy their commodities or get loans on easy

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10 Ibid., p. 66.

11 Ibid., p. 67.
terms, rather than to receive "charity." The Soviets, for their part, benefited by securing a steady flow of key commodities needed to support the growing demands of Russian factories.

Soviet aid to industry, as agreement number one states above, helped to create an economic sector owned by the State. Egypt invested the Soviet aid in heavy industry. This state of affairs had a great influence on the industrial development of the United Arab Republic, since it encouraged the expansion of the public sector of the economy, and also was an important factor in determining the form of state economic planning. The Soviet Union, as the agreement provided, would supply the machinery and most of the raw materials which were required for the establishment of the factories and projects. The Russians would also offer technical assistance in planning and constructing the plants.

Six major industrial plants were completed with Soviet assistance. These six are:

1. A 200,000 ton capacity steel plant at Helwan;
2. Two oil-product processing plants at Alexandria and Suez producing one million tons;
3. A large shipyard constructed at Alexandria;
4. A petro-chemical plant of 250,000 tons productive capacity at Aswan;
5. An antibiotics plant.

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13 Goldman, Soviet Foreign Aid, pp. 74-75.
Further demonstrations of this particular part of Soviet policy during the second half of 1958 include an agreement providing for direct airline service between the two countries, an Egyptian film festival in Moscow, and visits to the Soviet Union by Egyptian jurists, educators, and agricultural experts.

Another agreement providing a Soviet loan of $277 million was announced on May 24, 1964, by Mr. Khrushchev during his visit to the United Arab Republic. This loan, some economists believed, would finance about ten per cent of the Second Five Year Plan for the United Arab Republic. The loan was a short-term one, to be repaid within five years from delivery. It appears that this agreement, providing for the $277 million loan for industrial plans, was a supplement for the agreement announced in January, 1958, which was only partly fulfilled. The Soviet Premier also announced a gift of 180 tractors and about 300 farm trucks for a state-owned farm of 10,000 feddan upon his visit to the Province of Liberation (Modirist El-tahrir).

In June, 1965, at a time when food reserves in the United Arab Republic were at a low point, the Johnson Administration decided to re-evaluate its wheat-loan policy.

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14 Pravda, September 12, 1958, p. 6. (Current digest)
15 ibid., November 18, 1958, p. 6. (Current digest)
16 Goldman, op. cit., pp. 73-74.
17 ibid.
The Soviets, seizing the opportunity provided by the United States' withdrawal of its wheat loans to Egypt, decided to supply the United Arab Republic with 300,000 tons of wheat as a loan. This wheat, worth $21 million, was diverted on the high seas where the Russians were bringing it from Canada, and sent to aid the Egyptians. Such a dramatic move made a great impression on the nations of the third world.

Such Soviet-style assistance to Egypt in the form of loans and credits for Soviet made materiel was beneficial not only to the economies of both nations, but also to the sense of national pride. This type of assistance preserved Egypt's sense of pride and dignity and had a considerable impact on other nations of the third world. These other nations, acutely sensitive to anything which seemed like charity, also needed and wanted technical and economic assistance on generous terms, but terms which preserved their dignity and sense of national pride. Of significant importance for both its effect on the Egyptian economy and its impact on the nations of the third world was the offer of Russian aid to build the Aswan Dam to which we now turn.

B. The Aswan Dam Agreement and Its Implications

The Russians first indicated that they might finance the High Dam in October, 1955. Later, on December 17, 1955, Soviet Ambassador Solod announced that his country would
participate in financing the Dam, "unless contrary stipulations in Egypt's accord with the western powers excludes us specifically."\(^{18}\) This occurred while negotiations between Egypt and the West were going on. The Americans, especially, were very concerned about Egypt's ability to repay the loans. After a series of maneuvers by both sides, the United States withdrew its offer, and the United Kingdom and the World Bank followed suit.\(^{19}\) The United Arab Republic felt insulted, particularly about the way the offer was withdrawn and retaliated by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company. This decision led to the tripartite invasion of Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel in October and November, 1956.

After the West had withdrawn its offer, the question was: would the Soviets accept the challenge, or were they bluffing?

In September, 1956, Nuritcin A. Mukhitdinov, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet and a member of the Presidium, visited Cairo. Subsequent events suggest that his visit was concerned with Soviet participation in the financing of the Aswan Dam, although no official mention was made.

\(^{18}\) ibid., p. 64

\(^{19}\) (Note: For further discussion, refer to the previous discussion in Chapter II.)
The following month, October, 1958, Field Marshall Abdul Hakim Amer, then Minister of Defense and Vice-President of the United Arab Republic, visited Moscow. During a reception for Marshall Amer, Premier Khrushchev announced the Soviet participation in the financing and building of the High Dam. The Soviet Union agreed to loan the United Arab Republic $100 million toward construction of the first stage of the Aswan Dam. The loan was to be repaid in twelve equal installments at 2.5 percent interest over a period of twelve years commencing with the completion of the first stage. The Soviet Union further agreed to accept Egyptian commodities as repayment for the loan.

Construction on the Aswan Dam was preceded by a long period of negotiations between the Egyptian and the Sudanese governments. Although the Dam was to be built about two hundred miles inside Egyptian territory, the reservoir which would be created would extend about one hundred miles inside the Sudan, submerging the Nubian Sudan, and necessitating the evacuation of the population and its resettlement elsewhere. Therefore, an agreement between the Egyptian and Sudanese governments dealing with the Aswan Dam was necessary.

There had been an agreement in 1929 dealing with the distribution of the waters of the Nile River which had to be re-negotiated. The matter of allocation of the waters and also compensation to the Nubians for the loss of their properties were the subjects of the first negotiations between
the two governments which had begun as early as 1954. At that time, however, the Sudanese were annoyed by the fact that the Egyptian government had allocated money for the project before consulting with the Sudanese. 20

The negotiations continued without success; things appeared to be deadlocked. The Egyptian government decided to unleash a campaign by the mass media against the government of Abdullah Khalil. Khalil responded by engineering a coup d'etat which he thought would strengthen his hold on the government and place his followers in key positions. The coup had the opposite results, however. General Abboud and his followers in the Army took over with an orderly seizure of power in November, 1956. 21

The new rulers of the Sudan were radical officers who were linked with their Egyptian friends by bonds forged during their service together when the Sudan was under Anglo-Egyptian rule prior to the British evacuation of the Sudan in 1953. The new Sudanese government was immediately recognized by the Egyptians, and in return, the Sudanese sent a message to Nasser declaring that the "Sudan was not opposed in principle to the High Dam scheme." 22

While not opposing the High Dam project, the new Sudanese

20 Little, op. cit., High Dam at Aswan, p. 63.
21 ibid., p. 64.
22 ibid., pp. 64-65.
The United Arab Republic was intent on securing enough water for the Sudan. Negotiations proceeded under more favorable conditions for several months, and a final agreement was reached between the two countries on November 6, 1959, whereby the United Arab Republic would take 72 milliards of cubic yards of water and the Sudan would take 24 milliards of the water of the Nile. The two countries agreed to share the loss of 13 milliards of cubic yards of water by evaporation. The United Arab Republic agreed to pay 15 million Egyptian pounds to the Sudanese government for resettlement of the Nubians whose lands and property would be covered by the water accumulating from the Aswan Dam.23

At the end of January, 1960, a new agreement was signed whereby the Soviet Union agreed to loan the United Arab Republic $225 million for the second and third stages of the project.

The final arrangement for the financing of the second and third stages of the Aswan Dam was arranged for and signed on August 27, 1960. According to this final arrangement, the High Dam was to be financed as follows: 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
<th>Soviet Portion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Stage</td>
<td>$614,000,000</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second and Third Stages</td>
<td>$551,000,000</td>
<td>$225,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1,165,000,000</td>
<td>$325,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 ibid., p. 65.
The Technobrom Export Organization was empowered by the Soviet government to complete the Soviet share of the project. The Egyptian authority gave to the Technobrom people the design for the Dam which had been made in the 1950's by the German Hochtief-Dortmund Combine.\footnote{\textit{Little, op. cit., High Dam at Aswan, p. 218.}} The design had been approved by an international board of consultants, and despite some modifications by the Russians, was the fundamental design of the project.

The Aswan Dam agreement (between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union) constituted a marriage of convenience. The Russians were only willing to aid in the building of the Dam if their engineers and equipment were to be used to ensure success in their portion of the project.

The agreement had political as well as economic implications. From the political standpoint, the agreement was interpreted by the West as a commitment by Nasser to stake the future development of Egypt on Soviet rather than Western assistance. The effect upon the strained Egyptian-Western relations is obvious. In fact, the Dam had long been considered the key to the country's future, the Aladdin's lamp of Egypt's development agriculturally and industrially.

To be sure, the success of Soviet foreign aid to the United Arab Republic was associated to a large extent with the negotiations and work on the High Dam.
This project points out the lack of Western insight into the area of priorities to the Arab World. Thus, when the West turned their backs to Egypt, they lost their chance by default by withdrawing their offers of assistance. The situation was summed up by the normally pro-Western newspaper, An Nahar, published in Beirut, in which the following comment was made: "...the Soviet Union had taken the place of the West on the banks of the Nile to help Asser at long last to build the Pyramid of the twentieth century...." The newspaper went on to show that the dam and its importance as "...a powerful and probably final dam to Western influence, not only in the Arab world, but in the whole of Asia and Africa..." 

In addition, the agreement meant a further Egyptian commitment to trade with the Soviet bloc during the period commencing in the late 1950's and extending into the 1970's. This is due to the fact that repayment of the loans is to be made in Egyptian commodities, while the loan itself was in terms of credits extended by the Soviets to the Egyptians.

There are many economic implications and advantages to the High Dam. Besides the increase of the irrigated areas by some 25 percent, the production of ten billion kWh of electricity annually, it also has very important advantages.

27 Little, op. cit.
There will be a certainty about the amount of water available for each crop during summer or winter. This will enable the agricultural planners to plan the products of the land in proportion to the needs of the people and for the best export opportunities. The United Arab Republic will be able to allocate a million acres of land to rice and, thereby reduce its dependence on cotton, the value of which has declined since the advent of synthetic fibers.

Another important economic advantage to the High Dam will be that of regulating and controlling the flooding of the Nile which used to inflict great damage on Egyptian villages and agriculture. However, with the High Dam (Essaedi El-Aali) the wild Nile will be tamed and the money and manpower that used to be allocated for guarding the river and strengthening its banks will not be necessary and can be allocated to other productive projects.

It is hoped that the High Dam, when completed and all the projects related to it, will increase the Egyptian national income by about $500 million, a sum which, if achieved, will be enough to pay for the Dam and the work associated with it in two years' time. 29

The new resources which the Dam will produce will benefit the Egyptian economy, although that will depend to a

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28 Little, op. cit., p. 225.
29 ibid., p. 218.
large extent on the wise planning of industrial development. The new resources will help raise the standard of living of the Egyptian people, one of the important aims of the July 23rd Revolution.

The Egyptian Revolution was staged against a stagnant economy as well as a reactionary ruling class, and Nasser and his associates realized from the outset that the improvement of the lot of the masses requires not only the redistribution of the wealth of the country, but also a substantial increase in national production. Agriculture alone cannot achieve the immense increase in national income needed to improve conditions for the masses, and, therefore, industrialization is regarded as the crucial objective. The expansion of industry depends, in turn, on the creation of new sources of power, and the High Dam at Aswan is part of this national drive to develop power sources to support industrialization. 30

The setbacks suffered by the relationship between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union did not affect the construction and completion of the Dam. The finished Dam stands as a symbol of Arab determination and Soviet persistence to build the Dam in spite of all the obstacles.

The Aswan High Dam is now practically completed with the exception of some decoration work. It is planned to be

30 ibid., p. 226.
completed and celebrated by July, 1970. The celebration of completing the building of the greatest Dam in the world will coincide with the celebration of the eighteenth anniversary of the Egyptian revolution that brought President Gamal Abdel Nasser to power on the 23rd of July, 1952.

C. Military Aid Programs

The Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal of September, 1955, was the step that opened the way to cooperation in military fields between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc agreed to sell different kinds of military equipment and arms on short term credits. The Soviets, however, never made any grants or long-term loans for the purchase of military equipment by the United Arab Republic. The Eastern bloc accepted payments in Egyptian rice and cotton, which they sometimes resold in Western markets for cash, rather than demanding payment in dollars or gold which is "hard currency" for the United Arab Republic and in short supply in Egypt.

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31 It was reported in the U.S. News and World Report of December, 1969, that eight of the twelve turbines which will constitute the hydro-electric power station on the Dam, are installed and producing three billion KWH of electricity feeding Egypt all the way from Aswan in the south to Cairo and Alexandria in the north. The other four will be installed before July, 1970.


33 For discussion of the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal, see Chapter II D.
Cooperation and friendship expanded between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union in the years following the Arms Deal.

It was the first in a series of steps which led to the deterioration of relations between the United Arab Republic and the West. The Soviets wasted no time discrediting the Western powers, presenting itself as a friend of the oppressed against the oppressors, and enhancing its own position in the Middle East. The Arms Deal served Soviet foreign policy and economic interests while meeting Egyptian national interest and domestic needs.

During the period of strain in the relations between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union, which occurred in 1959-61, the United Arab Republic continued to receive military hardware from the Soviet bloc, although she was not able to obtain the most modern weapons.

The year 1962 brought a continuance of the arms race between Egypt and Israel which continued in 1963. The United Arab Republic was reported to have purchased additional arms for the purpose of replacing the old MIG-19 with new MIG-21 jet fighters. Israel responded by purchasing a number of HAWK surface-to-air missiles.34

The arms race continued between the United Arab Republic and Israel. During 1963, it was thought that about 500

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Europeans, most of them West Germans, were developing rockets and military aircraft for the United Arab Republic.\textsuperscript{35} Perhaps this number is exaggerated. As it was reported in \textit{The New York Times}, the reason for Egypt's employment of these technicians to develop her defense system was because she wanted to reduce her "almost total reliance on the Soviets for military equipment."\textsuperscript{36}

It was also reported that the United Arab Republic had obtained a number of SA-2 surface-to-air missiles from the Soviet Union, which were installed in the Suez Canal area.\textsuperscript{37}

Following the 1964 change of leadership in Moscow with the ousting of Nikita Khrushchev and his replacement by Leonid Brezhnev as Secretary General and Alexei Kosygin as Premier, the Soviets appeared to be a little more cautious in giving aid, including armaments. No major arms deals were concluded between Egypt and the new Soviet leaders until after the June, 1967, Arab-Israeli War. The Soviets and the Chinese had been giving some quantities of small arms to the Republicans in Yemen, either directly, or by giving them to the United Arab Republic, which, in turn, gave the arms to the Republicans.

\textsuperscript{35} ibid., April 5, 1963, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{36} A statement by Mr. Averill Harriman, the Under-Secretary of State of the United States, as reported in \textit{The New York Times}, April 12, 1963, p. 3.

These Soviet weapons were helping the Egyptian effort to back up the new revolutionary regime which came to power in 1962. The United Arab Republic had some 70,000 troops fighting on the Republican side since the revolution (1962) until she withdrew her forces from Yemen after the June War of 1967, when she needed them for her own defense.

The Soviet weapons, even though they consisted of small arms and ammunitions, could be considered military aid from the Soviet Union to the United Arab Republic for it was in Egypt's interest to overthrow the anti-Wasser monarchy in Yemen and back the "progressive" Republicans against the "reactionary" Imamite in Yemen.

Soviet military aid to the United Arab Republic has political and economic implications. The impact of this kind of Soviet aid on Egyptian relations with the West is important. It helped widen the gap and the first Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal of September, 1955, may have precipitated the decision taken by John Foster Dulles to withdraw the American offer to participate in financing the Aswan High Dam. This last decision helped create a series of incidents that all led to the worsening of the relations between the United Arab Republic and the West in general, and the United States in particular. The West responded by arming Israel with the most sophisticated weapons in its arsenal, thus making the arms race in the Middle East even more dangerous, and got the area into the Cold War zone.
Soviet military aid to Egypt helped Egypt to challenge Israel's policies of invasions, encroachment and expansion into the Arab lands. It also helped enhance the United Arab Republic's prestige within the Arab world and in Africa, although this prestige has suffered some decline since June, 1967 War with Israel since Egypt lost the battle.

Soviet military aid to Egypt helped enhance the image of the Soviet Union in the Arab world and among some developing countries in Africa and Asia, where the Soviet Union appeared as a friend of these poor countries and the supporter of the oppressed against the oppressors.

Finally, Soviet military aid to the United Arab Republic had some economic implications. The Soviets found a large market for their military hardware and gained some economic profits. It also helped divert a large portion of Egypt's trade toward the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc, thus forcing Egypt to allocate considerable amounts of cotton and other commodities to be exported to the Soviet bloc for payment of military equipment. These amounts allotted for buying arms could have been spent on industrialization and development projects such as the Aswan Dam, if the arms were not needed to withhold the Israeli threat.

D. Growing Strains in the Relationship

What brought about the close ties of friendship between Egypt and the Soviet Union was the fact that their national
interests ran parallel in a common position of opposition to Western "imperialism" during this period. This mutuality of interests was strengthened by the series of events which began with the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal and was followed by the West's withdrawal of assistance for the Aswan Dam Project, the Suez Crisis, the expansion of cultural and economic ties between the two countries, and the Soviet agreement to build the Aswan Dam. With few exceptions, the period following the Arms Deal until 1957 was a harmonious one, and may be described as the honeymoon of the relationship between the two countries.

Friction within the relationship began with the departure of the Soviet Ambassador to Moscow in early June, 1957 for talks on mounting differences between the two parties. These grew out of Egyptian complaints over price increases, inferior products, and late deliveries that led the Egyptians to require price guarantees and punctual deliveries.

At this moment in the United Arab Republic-Soviet Union relationship, a new development occurred which was beyond the control of either country. The United States decided to take advantage of the friction and the ideological differences between the two countries in much the same way as the

38 (Note: In April, 1956, the Soviet Union offered to discuss the Suez Crisis with Britain, but the Arabs protested, considering it interference in their affairs.)


40 ibid.
Soviet Union had exploited the situation when the United States had withdrawn its offer of support for the High Dam Project in 1956. When Secretary Dulles was questioned about the relations of the United States with the United Arab Republic and Nasser, he answered: "We are getting along with him as far as I am aware." The two countries appeared to be ready to open a new page in Egyptian-American relations.

Dr. Fayez Sayegh described this new trend in the American policy toward "positive neutralism" as having begun to abandon its "pactomania" and to outgrow the resultant "neutrophobia."

Nasser welcomed this new American position toward "positive neutralism." On his return from a tour of the Soviet Union early in May, 1956, he gave a speech to the welcoming crowds in which he said:

"...I know and feel that the people of the United States aim and work for peace. Before I left for the Soviet Union, I was informed by the United States that it would pursue a new policy towards the U.A.R., that it would recognize our right

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41 ibid., April 9, 1958, p. 10.
43 Dr. Fayez Sayegh, graduate of Georgetown University with a Ph.D. in philosophy, has written many books both in Arabic and English, and has served as advisor to the delegation of Lebanon at the United Nations, as a counselor of the Delegation of Yemen, and as Charge d'affaires of the Arab States Delegations Office.
44 Sayegh, Fayez, ed., The Dynamics of Neutralism, p. 25.
to pursue a policy of positive neutralism....
This independent policy of positive neutralism and non-alignment has finally triumphed, having been recognized by the two strongest powers in the whole world...\(^45\)

Accompanying the developing rapprochement in the relations between the United Arab Republic and the West, particularly in the United States, were a number of articles in the Egyptian press which criticized the Soviet Union for what was termed the "Yugoslav lesson." This charge related to the situation whereby the Soviets announced their decision to delay the previously granted aid to Yugoslavia for about five years because of the continuing ideological and political conflict between the two countries.

At this point, President Nasser decided to reduce his dependence upon the Soviet Union because the "Yugoslav lesson" demonstrated what could happen to the United Arab Republic. Perhaps Nasser's decision was influenced, also, by the close personal friendship between the Arab and Yugoslav leaders who, with Nehru, were recognized as the leaders of the Third World, or non-aligned bloc of nations.

The worsening of relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic was typified by a statement in the semi-official Egyptian newspaper, \textit{Al-Ahram}, January 4, 1959, which noted that "The struggle against imperialism has ended."

What will be the attitude of the Communists in the future? It seems that the Egyptian leaders, at this point in 1959, were impressed by the achievements that had taken place in the Arab world since they came to power in 1952. During this period a lot had been achieved in the struggle against Western imperialism and pacts in the Middle East. The Sudan received its independence from the joint Anglo-Egyptian rule in 1953. The 60,000 British troops had been evacuated from the Suez Canal Zone according to the British-Egyptian Agreement of 1954. The Suez Canal was nationalized and became a property of the Egyptian people. General Glubb was sent home to England by King Hussein, under Egyptian pressure, after he had been the Commander of the Arab Legion in Jordan since the establishment of the Jordanian Army back in the late 1940's. The Middle Eastern Command, the Baghdad Pact, and the Eisenhower Doctrine had been fought and defeated. The strongly pro-Western monarchy had been overthrown in Baghdad in 1958 and the only Arab country that joined the Western-sponsored pact withdrew. And, finally, the merger between Egypt and Syria in February, 1958, formed the United Arab Republic.

The leaders of the United Arab Republic believed, at this point, that the struggle against imperialism had ended. Believing that the "struggle against imperialism" had

ended, Nasser wished to pursue his policy of achieving Arab unity. With the pursuit of a policy of Pan-Arabism by Nasser, the interests of the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic clashed over the desire by both parties to dominate the area. The Soviets had long championed Arab Nationalism as a force directed against "Western Imperialism." When, however, it manifested anti-Communist sentiments in Arab policies and reacted against external great power influences in the Arab world, the Soviets opposed it, at least indirectly.

The formation of the United Arab Republic finished the honeymoon period and brought differences out in the open. The merger of Egypt and Syria in February, 1958, was rushed by Nasser and some Syrian Army officers who favored unification in the face of what they regarded as a "Communist conspiracy." 47

From the time the Free Officers had seized power under the leadership of Nasser, the revolutionary government had been anti-imperialist and anti-Communist. Even at that time of the Suez Crisis when Egypt received the unqualified support of the Soviet Union, President Nasser declared his determination not to become the "stooge or hireling or pawn or satellite" of anyone, and he declared further his ideological independence of "all foreign ideologies, such as Marxism,

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The new regime in Egypt, however, has always distinguished between the Soviet Union as a state and Communism as an ideology. The new leaders acted on the assumption that destroying the Communist party in Egypt, and later in Syria after the merger of the two countries, would eliminate the threat of Communism. The Egyptian leaders did not associate the Communist threat with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

From the time he came to power, Nasser's statements and actions lend credence to the view that he was and continues to be anti-Communist. In an interview in September, 1954, Nasser declared that "...if there is ever a government here that wants to be on the side of the Russians, I don't think it can be this government."49

The attitude of the Moscow-directed Syrian Communist Party toward the unification of Syria and Egypt serves as a good example of Soviet opposition. The Syrian Communist Party, opposed the unification, especially since unification meant that the Syrian Communist Party, and all political parties, would be dissolved as one of Nasser's conditions for accepting Syria into a merger with Egypt. After unity was achieved, the Syrian Communist Party distributed a pamphlet

denouncing the unification and calling for the separation of Syria from Egypt. 51

The reaction of President Nasser and his strong man in Syria, Colonel Abdel Hamid el Sarraj, was to undertake a campaign against domestic Communists. Nasser described them as traitors. In an obvious effort not to offend the Soviet Union by linking the Arab Communists to it, Nasser spoke on a nationwide broadcast about "Zionism and Communism" and branded the Syrian Communists who opposed Arab Unity as "Zionist agents." 52 Following the speech, a series of arrests of Communists in both regions were made, and two printing houses with Communist sympathies were closed. 53

The timing of these mass arrests of Egyptian and Syrian Communists almost coincided with the initial session of the Twenty-First Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Nikita Khrushchev, in his report to the Congress, criticized Nasser for his anti-Communist measures. 54 In discussing Nasser and Kassim, Khrushchev hailed their efforts to overthrow imperialism, but he added that:

"...we cannot fail to state our attitude toward the fact that a campaign is being conducted against the progressive forces

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51 Radio Cairo, December 23, 1956.
53 Ibid.
54 General Abdel Karrim Kassim emerged as a leader of the revolutionary regime that overthrew King Faisal of Iraq in 1958.
in some countries under the spurious slogans of anti-Communism. Since there recently have been statements in the United Arab Republic against the ideas of Communism and accusations were leveled at Communists, I, as a Communist, consider it necessary to declare at the Congress of our Communist Party that it is wrong to accuse Communists of helping to weaken or divide national efforts in the struggle against imperialism. 55

Because the Soviets were disappointed with the "reactionary nature" of the national bourgeoisie, the alternative for the Soviets seemed to be that of resuming their support of local Communists. This approach apparently had been neglected following the decisions of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It appeared that the Soviets had returned to the policy pursued prior to the revision of their attitude toward the national bourgeoisie in 1956. Khrushchev, attacking the national bourgeoisie in the Congress of 1959, sounded like Stalin, although a bit more flexible.

The events which took place in Iraq in 1959 did the most harm to the relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic. On the 8th of March, 1959, a revolt took place led by Colonel El-Shawaf against General Kassim in the province of Al-Mosul. This revolt was supported by pro-Nasser elements in Iraq, tribal sheikhs, merchants, and army officers who favored joining the United Arab Republic.

55 Grulio, op. cit., p. 59.
General Kassim, though not himself a Communist, used the organized militia of the Iraqi Communist Party to crush the rebellion. Kassim also employed units of the army led by officers with Communist leanings who used their tanks to crush the rebels with much bloodshed. 56

During and following these bloody events, the propaganda networks of the United Arab Republic were directed against General Kassim. The general theme asserted that Iraq was being dominated by Moscow-directed local Communists. President Nasser himself gave a speech three days after the unsuccessful revolt in which he accused General Kassim and "Communist agents of a foreign power" of working against Arab Unity and charged that Kassim was an opportunist and the Soviets were imperialists who used the local Communists the way the West had used the feudal powers to control the Middle East. This was the first time President Nasser had attacked General Kassim and the Soviet Union, 58 but it was not to be the last.

In the midst of this new crisis in the Middle East, an Iraqi governmental delegation happened to be visiting Moscow. The delegation used this opportunity to maximize everything

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57 Ibid.
58 (Note: When Nasser said in his speech "Communist agents of a foreign power," it was understood that he meant the Soviet Union.)
that Nasser said and gain further Soviet support for the Kassim regime.

Khrushchev answered the charges of President Nasser in a speech he gave while he was receiving the Iraqi delegation in the Kremlin. In this speech, Khrushchev described Iraq under General Kassim as more "progressive" than the neighboring countries. The Soviets mistakenly believed that because Kassim was using the Communists against the pro-Nasser forces, they would have a better future in Iraq than with Nasser. By "neighboring countries" Khrushchev was understood to mean the United Arab Republic, and hinted that the Soviets were placing more emphasis on Iraq than on the United Arab Republic. Mr. Khrushchev described President Nasser as "a rather young man and rather hot-headed," and accused him of attempting to annex Iraq, by which action "he took upon himself more than his stature permitted." 59

At the same time, however, Khrushchev noted that the Soviet Union could maintain friendly relations with both Iraq and the United Arab Republic, as he indicated in the following statement:

"What will relations...be now? I think they will be the same as before. After all, when we built up friendly relations with the U.A.R. we were aware of President Nasser's anti-Communist views. True, we thought that more tolerance and more attention to the people's democratic demands would be shown in the

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course of the national-liberation struggle, which requires unity of all anti-imperialist forces. Unfortunately, measures are being taken instead to suppress freedom-loving aspirations.... We would like to say as friends that such a policy, if continued, will inevitably fail."60

President Nasser angrily responded to Khrushchev's remarks by warning that: "Except for my hot-headedness, our country today would be a Western base for rockets and atomic bombs directed against the Soviet Union itself. With that same hot-headedness, we will face the new danger as we have faced enemies in the past.... We will also win against the new agents of Communism."61

The height of the bitter exchange came in a speech given by President Nasser on March 30, 1959, in which he said:

"We tried not to make the local activities of Arab Communists in Iraq or Syria a reason for any clash with Russia as long as Russia did not interfere in our affairs. We were trying to convince ourselves that the Communist parties in our countries were independent of international Communism. We found out that they were not, and that was why I called them Communist stooges. They carried out orders and instructions to liquidate patriotic and national elements in order to place our country inside the zones of Communist influence. We were suddenly faced by flagrant interference in our internal affairs by Russia. There was concrete evidence of an alliance

60 Pravda, March 17, 1959, p. 1-2, as translated in Current Digest of Soviet Press.

between the Russian leaders and Communists working against us inside our country.  

Attempts to repair the damage to Soviet-Egyptian relations were initiated by the Soviet Union during the May Day celebration of 1959. Among the slogans issued for May Day was one stating: "Warm greetings to the United Arab Republic." There was also an exchange of letters between Mr. Khrushchev and President Nasser, initiated by the Soviet leader. Although Nasser appreciated the Soviet leaders' initiative, he declared that the United Arab Republic was "the only stumbling block for Eastern Communism or Western Imperialism in the Middle East."  

Another move initiated by the Soviet leader came while visiting India in May, 1959, where he declared that relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic would continue as usual. As quoted in The New York Times, Mr. Khrushchev said:

"We, properly speaking, have no conflict at all with the U.A.R. We do not demand anything of the United Arab Republic, or for that matter, any state. We intend to go on basing our relations with the U.A.R. on equality and respect for sovereignty to our mutual advantage."  

At this point in Soviet-Egyptian relations there was

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62 Wheelock, op. cit., p. 275.
another significant trend toward an economic rapprochement between the United Arab Republic and the West. On July 1, 1959, an agreement providing technical assistance was reached between the United Arab Republic and the United States. This agreement provided for resumption and expansion of American aid, and it was clear that the agreement was more important for its political significance than for its economic implications. The United Arab Republic also took measures to re-enter Western markets by reducing the price of cotton. This action demonstrated the desire of its leaders to decrease dependence on the Soviet bloc.

With this change in the political atmosphere between the United Arab Republic and the West, more assistance was made available. The Ford Foundation awarded a grant of $300,000 to the United Arab Republic, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development granted a loan of $56.5 million for widening and deepening the Suez Canal.

The United Arab Republic re-established diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom on December 1, 1959, which had been severed by Egypt during the Suez Crisis of 1956, and its relations with the United States were described in late 1959 as being "on a more normal and natural footing than they have been for the past ten years." 66


Subsequently, however, two incidents occurred, in April and May of 1960, which greatly damaged the newly re-established good will between the United Arab Republic and the United States. Members of two labor unions in New York picketed on April 14 to protest the refusal of the United Arab Republic to allow ships under the Israeli flag to pass through the Suez Canal. The unions refused to unload the United Arab Republic's ship "Cleopatra" and continued their picketing despite the denouncement of that action by the State Department.

The Arab workers in the United Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq responded to the continued picketing of the New York Zionist-oriented unions by refusing to handle American chartered ships in Arab ports. The boycotts ended on the 7th of May, but by that time much damage had been done to United States-Arab relations.

The second, more important, event which dealt a strong blow to the new spirit of good will was taken by the United States Senate. Senator Paul Douglas introduced an amendment to the Mutual Security Act which would authorize the President to withhold foreign aid from any country that waged economic warfare against another country. The amendment was adopted by a vote of 60 to 25.

68 The Congressional Record, Vol. CXI, Part 7 (April 27, 1960, p. 8756.)
President Nasser considered this action by the United States an interference in the internal affairs of the United Arab Republic and another example of "Zionist domination." 69

He criticized the government of the United States and praised the government of the Soviet Union, pointing out that although there were differences between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union over ideological matters, "Yet Russia never threatened to cut off aid or taunted the United Arab Republic about such aid. For this she earned our eternal gratitude." 70

Soviet economic aid continued to flow to the United Arab Republic despite the strained relations between the two countries. Perhaps the Soviets sought to continue their economic aid to Egypt because they did not want to lose the fruits of their previous political support to Egypt started at the time of the Suez Crisis in 1956. Soviet leaders, also, perhaps wanted to continue their pledge of helping the Egyptians to build the High Dam and did not want to lose their previous investment in the Dam, and the loans they had given to the United Arab Republic's industry.

In addition, the Soviet leaders were trying to avoid attaching political conditions to their aid programs to underdeveloped countries in response to the sensitivity of

70 ibid., May 9, 1960, p. 5.
these countries over their newly won sovereignty. The Soviets, however, manipulated their aid programs to countries of doubtful ideological impact, such as Finland, Yugoslavia, Iceland and Australia, according to the political situation.  

It is of great significance that the Soviet Union continued its economic aid to the United Arab Republic during this period. This fact convinced the Arab leaders that Soviet aid does not have strings attached to it. They appreciated the Soviet attitude, especially with the American decision to cut aid to the United Arab Republic in front of them.

E. A New Soviet Diplomatic Offensive and Rapprochement

Relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic had undergone a substantial change from the honeymoon period which began with the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal in 1955 until 1959 when the ideological dispute erupted. Yet, in the 1960's the two countries decided that they still needed each other. The United Arab Republic had continued need of economic and military aid which it could not get from the West, particularly after the Suez War of 1956. Consequently, the United Arab Republic began again to turn to

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the Eastern bloc to find the sources of support needed in the drive to modernize and to oppose Israel.

The Soviets, for their part, also needed the United Arab Republic because it was considered to be one of the most influential nations among the non-aligned countries of the Third World. The Soviets needed the example of the United Arab Republic as a means to encourage support for national liberation movements in Asia and Africa since Egypt had suffered under colonialism and wanted to work with the emerging nations to deter neo-colonialism. Thus, the Soviet national interest of encouraging national liberation movements coincided with the domestic needs of the United Arab Republic, and the marriage of convenience was patched up.

Further, the Soviet Union needed the United Arab Republic on its side in its growing ideological dispute with China in order to deter Chinese influence in the emerging nations of Asia and Africa. The Soviets also wanted to prevent the Arab countries from being used by the West for their strategic importance, for bases directed against the Soviet Union, for the vital oil supplies, and as pawns in the Cold War. The Soviet Union sought to increase its influence in the Middle East in order to widen the political gap between the Arabs and the West.

Another reason for the Soviets to want to retain the good relations with the United Arab Republic was to preserve
and protect their economic aid investments, such as the work already started on the Aswan Dam. The Soviets had no wish to invest heavily in the economy of the United Arab Republic and then lose the political advantage to be gained from such maneuvers. Rather, the Soviets wished to tie the Egyptian economy even closer to the Eastern bloc by having the Egyptians commit much of their economic production to the repayment of Soviet loans. Commencing in 1961, therefore, the Soviets again initiated a diplomatic offensive aimed at reinvigorating and expanding its influence in Egypt and other under-developed countries.

At the 22nd Party Congress in 1961, the Soviets adopted a new policy which included support for the concept of a "national-democratic state." This program suggested a non-capitalist\(^72\) path of development which would be made possible by the unification of all "democratic and patriotic" forces\(^73\) in the national-democratic state. Under the title, "The National Liberation Movement,"\(^74\) the program said:

"The establishment and development of National Democracies opens vast prospects for the peoples of the economically under-developed countries. The political basis of a national democracy is a bloc of the progressive patriotic forces fighting to

\(^72\) (Note: non-capitalist, though non-Communist, also.)


\(^74\) ibid., p. 10.
The Soviets saw this program as a blueprint for the future development and transition of emerging nations to the path of Socialism by the strengthening of the public sector of the economy and the strengthening of the political position of the working classes.

The adoption of this new Soviet program in 1961 coincided with the enactment of economic reforms, known as the "Socialist Laws,"\(^76\) by the United Arab Republic which suggested an improvement in the relations between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union was forthcoming. These reforms by the Egyptian government had a favorable effect on the Soviet leaders and paved the way for a rapprochement between the two countries after the damage suffered during the stormy period from 1959 to 1961. The two parties decided to maintain good relations, although this time they were cautious and to some degree, reserved as compared to the harmonious relations during the period from 1955 to 1956.

Along with these economic reforms, a meeting of the National Congress of Socialist Principles\(^77\) was called to

\(^{75}\)Ibid., p. 11.

\(^{76}\)According to these laws, major industries, all banks and insurance companies were nationalized and they became known as the July, 1961 Socialist Laws.

discuss Nasser's program for the implementation of a democratic, cooperative, socialist society in Egypt, and if agreed upon, to adopt this program. The National Charter which resulted from the deliberations of the Congress reflected Nasser's ideas on socialism, later to be known as "Arab Socialism." The program adopted by the National Congress for Socialist Principles assigned the workers and peasants 50 percent of the seats in the National Assembly and the management of the factories or companies in which they worked.

"Arab Socialism" differed from the Communist definition of socialism in many ways. First, Arab Socialism rejected the idea of the class struggle and saw its elimination through peaceful means; second, Arab Socialism respected national or unexploitive capitalism; third, Arab Socialism acknowledged inheritance although it was taxed; fourth, Arab Socialism respected religions and personal beliefs.

The effect of these measures taken by the Egyptian government on Soviet-United Arab Republic relations was favorable. Although there were varying positions taken toward these developments within the Communist world, there was general agreement that the new measures did not go beyond State Capitalism. Even so, this was an acceptable situation under the concept of national democracies, for the Soviets hoped that it would be a stage in the transition which would lead to a "true" socialism.
The Soviets placed considerable emphasis on political reforms, for they followed the convention of the National Congress of Popular Forces in 1962 with greater interest than other Communist states. The *New Times* described the National Charter as a progressive and positive document, and the convening of the meeting was hailed as the most significant political act taken by the government of the United Arab Republic since it came to power in 1952.\(^76\)

As a result of the adoption of the National Charter as state policy, Egyptian workers, on May 1, 1962, observed their first May Day festival in the Republic Square in Cairo.\(^79\) This event and the Socialist Reforms adopted the previous year appeared to have a salutary impact on the rapprochement between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union.

The Nasser regime, while inhibiting the activities of the local Communists, seemed to be more conscious of the importance of the public sector of the economy. This recognition, dating from the early months of 1961, coincided with the adoption by the Soviets of the policy of acceptance of the non-capitalist, national front path which they suggested for Third World nations.


\(^{79}\) The writer was watching the thousands of workers gathered in the Republic Square for their first festival ever held in Egypt.
The Soviets accepted Arab Socialism as a force with which they could find accommodation, at least for the time being. G. Mirsky, a correspondent of the New Times, declared: "There is no denying that no other non-Socialist country in Asia or Africa had ventured on such radical reforms." He also described Egypt as dynamic, although he considered Nasser's concept of democracy "nebulous."

Relations between the two countries proceeded on a friendly basis again in the period after 1961 as the United Arab Republic went forward with its economic and political reforms and the Soviet Union accepted and supported the new approach. The official attitude of the Egyptian government toward the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1962 was described by a Western observer as a "good deal more friendly," than it was two or three years earlier. It was at this time that the Soviet Cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, visited the United Arab Republic and was warmly received.


ibid., p. 13. (Note: The West also seemed to be satisfied or at least less worried about the new reforms, because they seemed to be expecting Arab Socialism to be more radical. The Arab Socialism was described as "much milder, more humane, and less doctrinaire than that of Communist countries." See Malcolm H. Kerr, "The Emergence of a Socialist Ideology in Egypt," Middle Eastern Journal, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (Sept. 1962) p. 140.


The writer was there watching Gagarin touring the streets of Cairo in a black Cadillac convertible, saluting the crowds.
During this period, a new three-year trade agreement was signed in June, 1962, providing for “a new high” in the relations. According to this agreement, the United Arab Republic would receive machinery, chemicals, oil, metals, and machine tools, while supplying cotton, textiles, bananas and gasoline to the Soviets.

Another new element affecting the United Arab Republic-Soviet Union relationship occurred on February 6, 1963, when Nasser’s rival regime in Iraq under General Kassim was overthrown by the pro-Nasser, pro-Unity forces under Colonel Abdel Salam Aref. General Kassim was executed the same day.

The fall of the Soviet-supported Kassim regime and the seizure of power by pro-Nasser elements was followed by the persecution, arrest and execution of Communists. How, contemporary observers muse, would the Soviets react? What would be the effect of their reaction on United Arab Republic-Soviet Union relations?

There were some angry and unfavorable reactions in the Soviet press toward the anti-Communist policies of the Aref regime, but it appears that the Soviet leaders had no alternative after this development but to deal with the strong man in the area, viz., Gamal Abdel Nasser.

By 1963 the Egyptian government was proceeding with the

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implementation of the Socialist Reforms adopted in 1961. The Soviets assumed a "wait-and-see" attitude toward the implementation of the reforms. They seemed to feel that the situation left much to be desired, although they thought the economic reforms were progressive.

Another event which was out of Soviet control took place in 1963, when the United States Congress voted to disqualify the United Arab Republic and Indonesia as beneficiaries of United States' aid programs. This action by Congress angered Egyptians, provoked Nasser to sharp criticism, harmed United States-United Arab Republic relations, and served to strengthen Soviet-United Arab Republic relations.

The reason given by the Congress for this action was that the United Arab Republic was "preparing for aggressive efforts against countries receiving its (U.S.) aid." The Arabs believed that the Zionists and pro-Israeli elements had a hand in this decision. This action demonstrated once again to the Arabs that the United States attached strings to its aid programs in contrast to the Soviet aid programs. Even during the height of the ideological dispute between the Soviets and United Arab Republic leaders in 1959-61,

85 According to the Mutual Security Act, aid should be halted from any country that is "engaging in or preparing for aggressive military efforts against the United States or any country receiving its aid." See: Congressional Record Vol. CIX, Part 16 (November 7, 1963), 21353 ff.
Soviet aid had continued uninterrupted. Nor had the Soviets even threatened to stop such aid. The result was that Soviet prestige in the Middle East was greatly enhanced, while American prestige continued to slump.

During 1964 many important events took place which strengthened the Soviet-United Arab Republic relationship. The First Arab Summit Meeting in Cairo in February, 1964, was extensively covered by the Soviet press and met with its approval. The aim of the heads of the Arab States was to make plans which would prevent Israel from diverting the waters of the Jordan River. This plan, if completed by Israel, would deprive Arab lands in Jordan of water for irrigation and water supplies for villages and towns, Izvestia described the Arab Summit Meeting as "a significant landmark in the history of the liberation struggle of the Arab East," and attributed the success of the conference to the far-sighted policies of President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

A new provisional constitution for Egypt was also adopted on March 23, 1964, and the state of emergency that had been in effect since the Free Officers came to power in 1952 was ended. In connection with the new constitution, the government announced plans to release all untried political prisoners. This move also enhanced United Arab Republic

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Soviet Union relations since many were Communists.

Chairman Khrushchev visited the United Arab Republic for two weeks in May of that year when the first stage of the Aswan Dam Project was completed. Khrushchev, Nasser, Aref, and Abdullah Al-Sallal, President of Yemen, participated in ceremonies in which the Nile was diverted by means of explosive charges.

A possible source of friction in the relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic concerning the first payment for the first stage of the Aswan High Dam, which was due, was avoided during the Khrushchev visit. It was reported that the plight of the United Arab Republic in early 1964 and mid-1965 was serious. In such a situation, the loan had either to be renewed or the debt had to be postponed. The situation did not promise of a new Soviet loan and what was worse was the fact that the American government decided at this point to "re-evaluate" its wheat-loan policy in 1965, because the United States thought that it was helping the Egyptians indirectly to repay the Russian loans.

Khrushchev, however, decided unexpectedly to loan the United Arab Republic $227 million during his visit to the United Arab Republic to participate in the celebration of

completing the first stage of the Aswan Dam. This new loan relieved the stress and alleviated the tensions between the two countries.

The increased tempo of the Soviet offensive was possibly directed toward deterring the spread of Chinese influence in the Arab world and in Africa, since Chou En-lai, the Chinese Premier, had visited the United Arab Republic only four months earlier. The Khrushchev visit helped to strengthen the Soviet position.

Following the Khrushchev visit to the United Arab Republic, more frequent mention was made in the Soviet press of the "national-socialism" concept. After all, the concept of "national-democracy" had been invented by the Soviets to justify their continued support to regimes such as Nasser's even though his program was neither scientific socialism nor capitalism.

The Nasser regime had taken many steps to the Left in the transition to Socialism, but Nasser continued to denounce Communism. The Soviets seemed to accept this situation and Nasser's statements about unity of the working people against exploiters, even though Nasser was obviously not approaching the question of Socialism from the correct Marxist-Leninist

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89 Soviet Foreign Aid, pp. 72-73.
The Soviets seemed to accept the idea that the working class did not have to lead in the revolutionary struggle and that they, the workers, have to follow the progressive intelligentsia and revolutionary democrats in this stage of development. The Communist-inspired revolution of the proletariat and peasants would come later.

The announcement on October 16, 1964, that Khrushchev had been relieved of his position did not appear to affect the relations between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the new Soviet leaders quickly assured the Egyptian government that all the commitments of the previous government would be honored.

Positive evaluations of progress in the United Arab Republic continued in the Soviet press. The United Arab Republic was described as offering instructive lessons to other developing countries. The most significant event, however, was the repeal of the Emergency Laws which had occurred in March, 1964, prior to the Khrushchev ouster. The Soviets warmly supported this action since it would enable those who were detained for their political beliefs, including Communists, to play a part in the advance to new forms of social life in their country.

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The apparent resolution of the ideological dispute, (i.e., not letting the differences of opinion on ideological matters disrupt economic and foreign policy programs), restored good relations between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union and preserved their "tactical" alliance against Western imperialism.

F. The June War

In 1965, the Palestinian Arabs, frustrated in their attempts to return to their homeland and tired of living in refugee camps, subsisting on United Nations' charity for seventeen years, decided to establish a military organization, known as El-Fateh, which would coordinate commando attacks against Israel. The Israelis refused to acknowledge the claims of the Palestinians, and responded to their raids with attacks against their neighbors in the hope that these countries would control El-Fateh in order to prevent further Israeli reprisals, mainly along the borders with Jordan and Syria.

It was not until 1947 that the United Nations devised a plan for the independence of Palestine which would divide it into two parts, one for the Jews and one for the Palestinian Arabs. In 1948, in the absence of agreement over the Partition Plan, the British withdraw from Palestine, and the Zionist terrorist organizations, such as the Haganah and the Stern, which had waged guerrilla war against both the Arabs and the British, turned their full force against the Palestinian Arabs, forcing them to flee for their lives. In May, 1948, the state of Israel was established in Palestine, and both the United States and the Soviet Union granted recognition.
During the first quarter of 1967, the border between Israel and Syria remained the chief trouble spot. Israel persisted in sending its tractors to plow the "disputed" lands in the demilitarized zone even though they knew from past experience that the Syrian guns would open fire on them. The most serious clash occurred on April 7, 1967.

An Israeli air attack on April 7, 1967, in which Israel used napalm bombs against Syrian villages, increased the pressure on the United Arab Republic to help Syria in the face of threats of further Israeli attacks. Syria and Egypt had signed a treaty of defense in 1966 through which Syria could invoke Egyptian assistance. Furthermore, reports from other Arab countries claimed that a senior Israeli military officer had stated that Israel "would carry out military operations against Syria in order to occupy Damascus and overthrow the Syrian government." These reports were confirmed when The New York Times revealed on May 14, 1967, that Israeli leaders had "decided that the use of force against Syria," might be "the only way to curtail increasing terrorism." It added, "Any such Israeli reaction... probably would be of considerable strength but of short duration and limited in area." The author added that "the comments

being heard (in Israel) in recent weeks, and especially since last weekend (have been) stronger than those usually heard in responsible quarters."

These events in Syria placed President Nasser in a difficult position. He realized that the Arabs were too divided and still too weak militarily to challenge Israel. Nasser tried to caution the Arab militants who overestimated their strength, and other Arab powers who challenged him to have a showdown with Israel, perhaps out of a desire to see him defeated.

On May 14, 1967, Syria indicated that she would seek Arab support and would invoke her defense agreement with the United Arab Republic if Israel attacked. In addition, Syria drew the attention of the United Nations to the Israeli threats.

In this situation, Nasser found himself with no alternative except to take a "calculated risk." In order to protect his ally, Syria, expecting the Soviets to come to his aid if necessary, and to save his prestige in the Arab world, Nasser put his army on alert on May 15. The next day he placed it on an emergency footing and began to move some divisions to the Sinai Peninsula. In order to emphasize his moves, he asked the United Nations Emergency Forces to concentrate in the Gaza area and leave the way clear for

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Egyptian troops to occupy its former positions on the frontiers with Israel. For the first time since 1956, the Egyptian and Israeli military forces found themselves facing each other across the border.

With the UNEF withdrawn from Sharm El-Sheikh at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba, the Egyptian troops reoccupied that strategic spot. The Israelis had been using the Gulf for importation of oil and strategic materials and regarded it as a lifeline in carrying on trade with much of Africa and Asia.

The United Arab Republic closed the Gulf of Aqaba to any Israeli shipping which carried oil or strategic materials with the intention of creating pressure on Israel to deter her from invading Syria. Nasser did not regard this action as certain to lead to a showdown with Israel since it was clear to him and many independent observers that neither Egypt nor the other Arab states were ready for war.

According to The New York Times of May 30, 1967, several

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98 The Arab states of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Republic have maintained that under international law, the Gulf is a territorial water, not an international waterway, since each nation claims 12 miles as its territorial waters and the Gulf is in most parts less than 3 miles wide. Moreover, the United Arab Republic and other Arab states considered themselves still in a state of war with Israel, and on that basis, felt that Israel could not enjoy the right of innocent passage because belligerents cannot be described as innocents in their relations with each other.

high Egyptian and Syrian officials visited Moscow in late May and returned believing that the Soviets would support the Arabs if there was a showdown, especially if the United States intervened in support of Israel.

At first, Israeli leaders took a dovish stand toward the blockade, but later, because of political pressures from such hawkish politicians as General Moshe Dayan, they reversed themselves and took a tough and inflexible position.

The United Nations Secretary General U. Thant described the situation as "grave" upon his return from a visit to Cairo. The matter was taken to the Security Council which held an emergency session on May 24, 1967, upon the urgent request of Canada and Denmark. The Security Council held many meetings which were unsuccessful. The Council meeting of June 3, 1967 was the last of these meetings before the war broke out on the fifth of June. The Security Council failed to prevent the military showdown between Israel and the Arab states bordering her. This failure to solve the problem and prevent the breakout of war is due to the failure of the super powers to reach an agreement on the Gulf of Aqaba issue.


The United States took the lead in the Security Council in criticizing the Secretary General for his hasty response to the United Arab Republic's request that the UNEP be withdrawn from Egypt. The United States also denied the United Arab Republic's right to blockade the Gulf of Aqaba against Israeli shipping. Finally, the United States introduced an interim draft resolution in which it urged the parties concerned to "exercise special restraint" and suggested that the United Arab Republic would have to reopen the Gulf of Aqaba for Israeli shipping.

The Arab delegations were willing to accept a resolution that would cool off the crisis, but were against lifting the blockade imposed upon Israeli shipping through the Gulf of Aqaba. They criticized the United States' resolution and accused it of acting on behalf of Israel. They also criticized the United States of being biased when it remained silent while Israel attacked Syria and planned further attacks with the intention of overthrowing the Syrian government, and at the same time, came to the defense of Israel when that country's intentions were checked by the prohibition of the passage of strategic materials through the gulf, and seemed ready to use its armed forces to protect Israel.

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102 ibid., p. 58.
103 Evening Bulletin, June 1, 1967.
104 ibid., June 3 and 4, 1967.
Soviet support for the Egyptian and Arab position in general was unyielding. In the Security Council the Soviet Union and Bulgaria supported the Arab position and were joined by India and Mali which also supported the Arabs and their position on the question of the Gulf of Aqaba. The Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc members accused Israel of moving her troops toward the Syrian border, and charged that the "Knesset" defense and foreign policy committees had adopted a policy of initiating military operations against Syria. 105

The Soviet Union rejected the American resolution, and they used the opportunity to show their support and solidarity with the Arab states. The American delegation made no effort to modify this resolution because they knew in advance that the Russians would reject it. 106

Thus, the United States encouraged the Israelis to be more militant and uncompromising especially by giving them strong support on the Gulf of Aqaba issue and by assuring Israel that American influence would be used to guarantee Israeli security and integrity. The Soviets, for their part, encouraged the Arabs to be more militant and uncompromising on the issues, resulting in a diplomatic stalemate.

The Soviet Union encouraged the Arabs to take strong positions out of a mistaken belief that they would be able to control events and prevent an actual outbreak of war between the Arabs and Israelis. Soviet behavior contributed to the Arabs’ illusion that the Russians would help them in the event of a confrontation with Israel, especially if the United States intervened on behalf of Israel.

The war began on the morning of June 5, 1967, when the Israeli air force unleashed a series of successive surprise raids on Arab air fields, destroying the Egyptian and Syrian air forces and controlling the skies over the entire area. With the threat from the Arabian air forces removed, Israel was free to napalm the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian troops who were forced to fight without benefit of air cover under the savage onslaught of the Israeli bombers. The battle was waged in the desert of the Sinai, and in Jordan and Syria, where the Arabs fought without benefit of good ground cover to protect them from the Israeli air strikes. The Arabs were unprepared for such a battle, they were not unified in their efforts, and the short duration of the war contributed to the Arab defeat.

During and following this brief war between the Israelis and the Arabs, it became clear what kind of relations existed between the Russians and the Arabs in general, and the United Arab Republic in particular. The Soviets were willing to give the Arabs strong support on the diplomatic level and in
the Security Council of the United Nations, but, when the crisis developed into a military confrontation between Israel, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, the Soviets became cautious. They feared that a minor, localized clash between Israel and the Arab states might escalate into a large-scale great power military confrontation.

They were also fearful that the United States might intervene on behalf of Israel at a time when they were unwilling or unprepared to risk a major war with the United States over such an issue.

They really did not want to get involved in a war defending the Arabs who were taking an anti-Communist stand when they did not get involved in Communist countries, such as North Vietnam, in their efforts to achieve a victory in Southeast Asia. The Russians wanted to preserve and extend their influence in the Middle East, first, by giving economic and military aid to the Arabs, especially to the United Arab Republic and Syria. They supported the Arabs in the Security Council during the war and also encouraged the Communist bloc, Muslims, and some Afro-Asian states to support them. Although they gave limited amounts of arms to the Arab states to rearm their forces, they did not give them enough to make them confident enough to launch an all-out attack on Israel in order to regain the occupied lands. In fact, Russia gave defensive weapons to the Arabs but not offensive weapons. Perhaps this fact, together with the disappointment of some
Arabs about the insufficient Soviet support during the crisis and their fear of the Americans, contributed to some resentment that built up against the Soviets in the Arab world following the war.
CHAPTER V

FINAL ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS

The basic assumption of this thesis is that "the relationship which developed between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic during the period from the Suez Crisis of 1956 to the June war of 1967 constituted a marriage of convenience," and that this relationship would be maintained so long as it continued to be mutually beneficial to the parties involved.

Out of the foregoing data emerges a number of significant questions which relate to the basic hypothesis. For example, did the United Arab Republic benefit from its close political and economic relationship with the Soviets? To what extent did the Soviets benefit from the arrangement? How did the relationship help to shape the United Arab Republic's foreign policy of positive neutralism? What impact did this relationship have on Nasser's role as leader of the Arab World? Did the Soviet-Egyptian relationship develop solely as a short-range "marriage of convenience," or was it part of a long range historical trend? Or was it, conversely, the West which indirectly pushed the United Arab Republic into the marriage by not recognizing Arab aspirations of self-determination, independence, and unity?

On analysis of these questions as they relate to the

161

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basic issue, and the setting forth of tentative answers to them, will lead into the final conclusions of this thesis.

First, the data show that despite the lack of ideological unity, the policies pursued by the Soviets and by Nasser were salutary to the national interest objectives of both. It has been a matter of policy with the Soviet Union to dismantle the instruments of Western imperialism wherever they may be found and to extend Soviet influence among the developing nations. The Soviet policies challenging Western imperialism coincided with the desire of the Egyptians to free themselves from British and later "Western" control, and this coincidence served as the basis for a mutually advantageous relationship.

The motivation for the Soviet position is found in the desire to extend the Marxist-Leninist ideology throughout the world. In the countries of the Middle East, however, local Communists were weak and poorly organized. The Communist ideology had little success in a pre-industrial Arab society motivated by steadfast attachment to a common religion and a strong emerging nationalism. In the face of such existing conditions, and with ideological and political goals in mind, the Soviets decided to replace their support for local Communists with support for national liberation movements led by the national bourgeoisie, in an attempt to substitute Soviet influence for the meager influence of the local Communists.
When, in 1955, the Egyptian Free Officers had assumed the responsibility for the direction of their country, they were primarily concerned with overcoming the effects of Western imperialism. In this concern, they were supported by the Soviets. It is significant, however, that the Egyptians were successful in negotiating the British evacuation without much Soviet assistance. It was not until Nasser determined to modernize the Egyptian Army in the face of the Israeli threat\(^1\) that the Egyptians, denied unencumbered military aid by traditional western sources, took advantage of Soviet assistance through the opening wedge known as the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal of 1955.

The significance of the Arms Deal lies in the western reaction to it. If the West had been willing to provide the needed weapons at reasonable terms, the Egyptians would not have had to seek arms from the Eastern Bloc. Having precipitated the event, the West erred again by interpreting it as a serious ideological and political link-up between the Arab and Communist worlds rather than as a business arrangement. The West compounded the problem when the United States reacted to the Arms Deal by withdrawing its offer of financial assistance for the Aswan Dam. This action precipitated a series of events, including the nationalization of the Canal, which culminated in the Suez War of 1956.

\(^1\)The Gaza Raid in 1955 by Israel showed the weakness of the Egyptian Army.
The Soviets pressed the advantage to be gained from Western diplomatic fumbles in a continuing effort to extend their influence and prestige in the Middle East. The Western actions during the period, 1955-1956, literally forced the Egyptians to a Hobson's choice (i.e., dealing with the Eastern bloc for needed goods).

In other words, the actions and directions used by the West closed all doors to the Egyptians. What in essence the West did was to seek its own goal of the containment of Soviet power. In subordinating all other considerations to this goal, the West overlooked the rising nationalist feeling of the Arab people to control their own destiny. Thus, when Egypt turned to the Eastern bloc to secure the arms denied her by her traditional Western sources, the Western powers feared that the Egyptian leaders were joining the Communist camp in the cold war. The West first attempted to entice, then to coerce, Egypt back into the Western fold. Under the direction of the American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, the West sought to complete its globe-girdling system of alliances to contain Communist power by building a Middle East defense arrangement. This alliance would lend Western support to common anti-Communist Middle Eastern alliance aimed at preventing a Soviet penetration into the region. Arab leaders, more fearful of Western influence and intervention than of Eastern (which they had never experienced), rejected the plans for the Middle East
alliance. The Arab rejection, based largely on Nasser's opposition, led the West into an effort to "tighten the screws" and apply greater pressure on Nasser by withdrawing the offers of assistance for the building of the Aswan Dam. This action precipitated the nationalization of the Suez Canal by the Egyptian government, which, in turn, produced the British, French, and Israeli countermove in the form of a joint attack on Egypt.

Later developments gave some indication that Egypt was not on the verge of becoming a Communist state and that coercive methods applied by the West were not particularly successful. The West in the late 1950's began to change its policy to compete with the Soviet Union in attempts to win Egypt's favor. Loans and grants of assistance were made. The West also began to recover from its "pactomania" and accepted "positive neutralism" as a legitimate policy for Third World states. Just as the Soviet Union had earlier taken advantage of the West's diplomatic fumbles, so, too, in 1959-61 the West exploited Soviet mistakes.

By 1961, however, the Soviets were actively seeking a rapprochement with Egypt, and again the West reacted adversely to these circumstances. Perhaps the inability of the West to develop long-range goals and a consistent policy towards Egypt and the Arab world based on such common areas of interest as anti-Communism and regional unity had a great deal to do with the faltering diplomatic policy which the Soviets
so ably dramatized to their own benefit.

The relationship between Egypt and the Soviet Union also encouraged Western support for Israel. The West provided military, economic, and diplomatic support for Israel during the period under review. The Western powers aided in Israel's expansionist moves during the Suez Crisis in 1956 and later during and after the June War of 1967.

As a result of their narrowly contrived foreign policy vis-a-vis Egypt and other Arab nationalist elements in the Middle East, the Western powers fumbled an opportunity to work out mutually agreeable relationships and to make friends out of their former colonial possessions. They lost the advantageous and prestigious position which they had enjoyed for years in the Arab world, and succeeded only in forcing the Arabs to look to the Soviets for aid and support. Western policies, it can thus be concluded, were primarily responsible for forcing Egypt into a position of seeking political, economic, and diplomatic support from the Soviet Union during the period of the 1960's.

This apparent Hobson's choice leads us to an analysis of the first question of whether the United Arab Republic on balance benefited from Soviet support and, conversely, what gains or losses resulted from the relationship. Obviously, there were both gains and losses, but given the necessity of a Hobson's choice, the gains tended to outweigh the losses.
The establishment of a close relationship with the Soviet Union had served to strengthen the Egyptian position in world politics. Without Soviet support, the Egyptians probably would not have been successful in achieving full political emancipation from the West. With Soviet support, the Egyptians have been able to overcome Western imperialism by nationalizing the Suez Canal, by increasing their military capabilities, by increasing their economic progress and by ending their dependence upon the West. Soviet assistance filled the gap created by the withdrawal of the West from the Aswan Dam Project. The trade agreements provided Egypt with new markets for Egyptian products and new sources for imports. The beginnings of industrialization were made possible by Soviet agreements to provide technical assistance and loans for specific infrastructure and industrial projects.

Tom Little, British political scientist, in his book, *High Dam at Aswan*, states that such assistance "impressed the Egyptian masses" and directly benefited the people. As a result, there has been increased popular support for the Egyptian government. Social legislation enacted to improve the lot of the peasants and workers and other domestic policies of Arab Socialism have contributed to that popular support.

On the other hand, the relationship with the Soviets has cost the Egyptians most Western support. This has
resulted largely from the West's misunderstanding of the force of Arab nationalism and the concept of "positive neutralism." The concomitant alteration of the socio-economic structure to the ideals of "Arab socialism" also cost the Egyptians the support of some of the feudalists and traditionalists of the Arab world.

Finally, it would appear that the development of close ties with the Soviets cost the United Arab Republic some freedom of action in her pursuit of neutrality. Egyptian leaders felt some obligation to the Soviet Union to return some of the support they had received in their struggle with the West. This obligation extended from declarations of friendship to abstentions in United Nations General Assembly votes on questions of censure during the 1956 Hungarian Crisis. At times the Egyptians, in their pursuit of an independent policy, might have wished to protest some Soviet action, but they refrained out of gratitude, demonstrating some lack of freedom of action.

Yet, gratitude toward the Soviet Union has not prevented protests in the Egyptian press and public opinion which have opposed Soviet actions that indicate interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. For example, the United Arab Republic strongly protested the resumption in 1961 of nuclear testing by the Soviets which constituted a health and genetic danger to the peoples of the other states. Such actions show a pragmatic approach to dealing affirmatively
with the government on one level while responding unfavorably to its actions on another level.

At this point, we should point out the reason why the two-fold approach of dealing with the Soviets proved so effective. Nasser has stated on many occasions that the Communist ideology will never be compatible with the Arab way of thinking. The Soviet Union, as a nation state however, could be dealt with as any other state that wishes to help the Arab world achieve its independence and neutrality, so long as it did not try to force its ideology upon Egypt or the Arabs.

The Soviets for their part gained some definite advantages over the West with the establishment of good relations with the United Arab Republic. The Soviets, for example, successfully reduced Western influence in the Middle East and, at the same time, were able to fill the political vacuum by extending their influence in the area. Subsequently, by their actions toward Egypt, they were able to expand their influence among the emerging nations of Asia and Africa. Moreover, Soviet support of the United Arab Republic against Western imperialism helped to prevent the establishment of Western military bases on the southern borders of the Soviet Union, and Soviet encouragement helped Egypt to withstand the pressure from the West to participate in a Western-controlled defense organization.

In addition, good relations with the United Arab Republic
and other Arab states gained the Soviets access to the Mediterranean. The Russians were able, for the first time, in their history as a naval power, to establish a fleet in the Mediterranean supported by friendly ports in Syria, Egypt and Algeria. As Soviet support of the United Arab Republic continued, the Soviets also found growing support among most of the Arab states in the United Nations.

Good relations with Egypt served as an example to other developing countries of the kind of support they could expect from the Soviet Union. The Soviets dramatized their claim that their economic assistance programs, unlike those of the Western powers, had no strings attached. Such an example helped to extend Soviet prestige and influence among the developing nations of Asia and Africa.

Economically, the Soviet Union gained new markets for its goods and also succeeded in diverting a large proportion of Egyptian trade away from the West to the Eastern bloc. Soviet economic assistance was designed to encourage recipient nations to follow the path of socialism. They regarded the "Arab Socialism" which resulted as a step in the right direction even though it was nothing more than "State Capitalism" for the present.

In choosing to support Nasser, however, the Soviets lost the alternative of supporting other Arab leaders or local Communists. When the Soviets attempted to develop pro-Communist Kassim of Iraq as Nasser's rival for leadership
of the Arab world, they found that Nasser's influence was so strong that pro-Nasser forces overthrew Kassim. Since the Soviets had previously sacrificed support of local Communists in order to extend their influence in the area, they were left with no alternatives except increasing their support for Nasser.

In spite of the Soviet's economic, military, and diplomatic support of the United Arab Republic, they made little headway toward the achievement of their long-range goals. The most important long-range goal was the creation of Soviet-styled socialism in the Middle East. For example, Charles Cremeans, in his book, *The Arabs and the World*, concluded that the effect of sporadic attempts at supporting local Communist parties failed and also created opposite reactions. Some of the local Communist parties which were already weak were uprooted by nationalist forces and the Communists were branded agents of foreign powers. Thus, when "Arab Socialism" evolved in the United Arab Republic, it forced the Soviets to modify their ideas of the path of socialism in order to justify continued support of the Nasser regime. The Soviets paid a high price in the international ideological arena. They have since been branded as "revisionist" and "capitalists" by the Chinese Communists. Soviet Middle East policies contributed substantially to the growing world-wide schism in the once monolithic Communist world.

Reviewing briefly, one can see that both the United Arab
Republic and the Soviets had constructed a marriage of convenience, for neither side had gained a totality of their goals. Nonetheless, the gains were enough to bond the parties into a continuing pragmatic relationship.

The next question concerns the impact of the relationship on the role of Nasser both in domestic and foreign affairs. It should be obvious that the personality of Nasser played a crucial role in shaping the relationship between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union during the 1956-1967 period. What we must examine now is the effect that this relationship had on Nasser's leadership in Egypt and the Arab world.

The effect of the Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal served to strengthen Nasser's political position in Egypt and enhanced his prestige in the Arab World. The Arabs saw Nasser as having broken the West's monopoly in the Middle East.

The economic and cultural ties which resulted from the relationship with the Soviet Union enabled Nasser to effect broad social and economic changes within Egypt. Exposure to the Soviet ideology helped Nasser to develop his own political-economic domestic program which he termed, "Arab Socialism." Prior to the establishment of relations with the Soviet Union, no mention had been made of socialism; indeed, the Free Officers had no program except to overthrow the old monarchy and its corrupt government and free Egypt from imperialism.
Prior to 1955, Nasser was involved in the political upheaval created by the revolution and the struggle for political power. The signing of the agreement with Britain to evacuate the Suez, and Czech Arms Deal, brought Nasser political pre-eminence in Egypt. As a result of his leadership position in Egypt, Nasser found it necessary to develop programs which would effect the desired social, political, and economic changes. As a result of these considerations, Nasser developed a program for cooperative, democratic, socialist society in Egypt. The program of "Arab Socialism" which resulted created a shift in Nasser's political base from elements of the national bourgeoisie and remnants of the feudal elite to the masses who would benefit most from his Socialist-styled programs. "Arab Socialism" also tended to realign Nasser's support in the Arab League away from traditionalists toward the progressives.

Soviet support of Nasser had the unexpected result of eliminating his rivals. When the Soviets tried to develop Kassim of Iraq as an alternative leader in the Middle East, they found that Nasser had grown too strong; he had become the man to deal with in the Arab world.

The Soviet-Egyptian relationship enabled Nasser to develop his policy of "positive neutralism" which make him, along with Nehru and Tito, a leader of the non-aligned nations of the Third World. Soviet support of Nasser implied support of neutralism; in fact, the Soviets encouraged developing
countries to pursue policies of neutralism in their effort to become independent in their domestic and foreign programs from the continued power and influence exercised over them by their former colonial rulers.

The relationship was a "marriage of convenience," with each side benefiting from it. Nasser wasn't the best solution for the Soviet Union's exploitation of anti-Westernism in the backwash of colonialism, but he was available and he needed a new liaison with a great power as Egypt's older relationship with the West disintegrated. Nasser's support from the Soviet Union came at a critical time and made it possible for him to continue his policies of "positive neutralism" characterized by anti-Western imperialism and of building "Arab Socialism" in Egypt. His leadership role, both in the United Arab Republic and in the Arab world, increased by the political, military, and economic support resulting from the relationship with the Soviet Union. This support was needed to withstand Western pressures, Israeli attacks and threats, and to make his new program viable.

Having examined the causes underlying the Soviet-Egyptian relationship and having analyzed its impact on both countries and on President Nasser's leadership role, we now come to the final point of analysis. Is the relationship a temporary marriage of convenience or is it the result of historical trend that will continue and fortify
the relationship between the Egyptians and the Soviets over the long-term future?

In this section we shall confront the problem in two stages. The first shall deal with the impact of the Soviet-Egyptian relationship on the United Arab Republic's policy of Neutralism, and, second, the short-term or long-range effect of the relationship.

Dr. Fayez Sayegh, in his book, *Dynamics of Neutralism in the Arab World*, divided the Egyptian approach to neutralism into four stages. The policy of neutralism which began to evolve in Egypt about 1947 started with the first stage of "passive neutralism" which was characterized by a rejection of either alternative in the Cold War.

As Egyptians became more concerned with getting Britain out of Egypt, and remaining out of the Western Mutual Security System, neutralism in Egypt moved into its second stage which Dr. Sayegh called "negative neutralism." This meant the Egyptians began to take action to remove a colonial power.

The Czech-Egyptian Arms Deal of 1955 announced the birth of the third stage of "positive neutralism" whereby Egypt rejected alignment with any cold war antagonists and augmented this policy with an affirmation of the right of a neutral country to deal with any country regardless of its political or ideological complexion.

In 1959 the Soviets, disappointed by the "reactionary nature" of the national bourgeoisie, revised their policy
of support for national liberation movements in favor of support for local Communists. When the Egyptians became aware of this shift, they shifted and reorganized their economic, cultural, and technological ties with the Soviets to achieve a balance between the Soviets and the Western nations. Having achieved their balance, neutralism in the United Arab Republic was to evolve still further and assume the fourth stage, a stage Dr. Sayegh calls "messianic."

The final "messianic" stage began in the late 1950's and developed around three world leaders: Nehru, Tito, and Nasser. The hope of these men was that their brand of neutralism would create a third bloc, called the Third World. These three men hoped that their countries would assume the leadership among the other neutral countries. They also hoped that this bloc of neutralist countries could become a strong voice in the international arena and make themselves felt in the United Nations. Also, they hoped to give former colonies and semi-colonies a third choice. Once these nations were independent, the Neutralist Triumverate believed, they would once more fall prey to neo-colonialist policies of the powerful nations if there were no other alternative. Hence, "messianic" neutralism was to spread the word and create the new Third World.

The impact of the new relationship with the East and the West served to make this evolution of neutralism possible. The trade agreements with the Eastern bloc helped to crystalize the Egyptian ideal of neutralism and helped to develop the
concept of the third world. Thus, Dr. Sayegh believes that positive neutralism and its evolution into a "messianic" concept is destined to be a powerful force in the world arena.

The second part of our final analysis deals with the question: Is the relationship that developed between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union during the period of 1956-1967 one of short-term impact or is it of long-range implication?

The writer concludes that the relationship between the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union constitutes a "marriage of convenience" and that the situation will continue only so long as it is mutually advantageous to both parties. Egypt began the relationship with the Soviet Union as a pragmatic solution to the problems of developing an industrial economy, dealing with the Israeli question, and securing Arab goals of "Freedom, unity, and Socialism." As long as the Soviet Union remains Egypt's source for military, economic and diplomatic support, and the West continues to deny such support to the Arabs while, at the same time supporting and strengthening Israel, the situation must continue. The Egyptians have no alternative source of support. Moreover, they reject the kind of "strings" or conditions which the West has attached to the aid it has provided in the past. Soviet aid, on the other hand, has been relatively free of the kinds of political conditions that
might alienate the Arab World.

The Soviet view is that Egypt is not now, but will become, socialist. They are willing to accept as a temporary status what the Egyptians call Arab Socialism, but they define it as "State Capitalism." The Soviets continue to aid and support Egypt in the belief that such assistance will further Soviet influence and goals for the Middle East. For the short run, therefore, Soviet national interest appears to be absorbed with the political and diplomatic gains secured by driving the West from a long-held sphere of influence. Soviet leaders probably believe that short-run political gains will also contribute to the long-range ideological objectives of gaining world support for Soviet-styled socialism. To this end, the Soviet government provided the United Arab Republic with the kinds of aid designed to increase the importance of the public sector of the economy. The Soviets believe that the concentration and strengthening of the public sector will concentrate the worker's and peasant's demands for political participation which will lead to Soviet-styled socialism.

As long as the West refuses to modify its positions, move away from its traditional colonialist attitudes, and develop a mutually agreeable policy in the Middle East, it cannot hope to alter the Soviet Union-United Arab Republic relationship.

If the Arabs should achieve political unity and make
spectacular economic progress by utilizing effectively their huge natural resources, such as oil and human resources, a third alternative to depending on help from either cold war parties would be possible. Also, if there should be a major change in the personalities involved, or a change in the attitude of the West on the Middle East problem, such alterations of circumstances might deeply affect the "marriage."

It is probably the hope of the Soviet Union that by developing its influence in the area, it can prevent any lessening of dependence on its support and it will be able to lead the Middle East on the path to "true" socialism in the future.

The three years that have elapsed since the June War of 1967 give some indication that the special relationship will continue and may develop into the kind which neither partner will be able to regard as a temporary "marriage of convenience." Each partner in the relationship, in other words, may become increasingly dependent on the other and find the strengthening of their ties essential as a result of growing hostility and involvement of the West. The key explaining the nature of the relationship is most likely the internal political-economic system of the United Arab Republic. If, in the future, Egypt were to adopt Soviet-styled socialism, this would indicate that the "marriage of convenience" had changed to a more permanent relationship.
it is the author's belief that such a development is not likely to occur due to the force of Arab Nationalism combined with strong religious ties that will oppose foreign ideologies and preserve Arab independence.
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