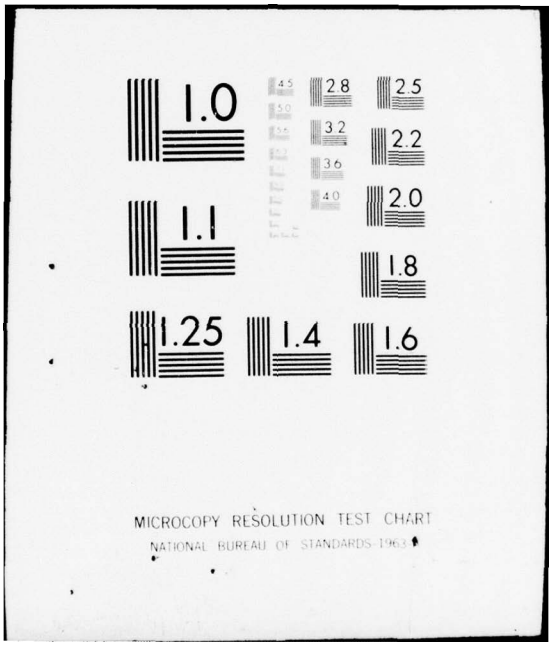
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SOVIET MIDDLE EAST POLICY SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR

R. D. McLaurin
James M. Price

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT

Abbott Associates, Incorporated
300 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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This report updates an earlier study* on Soviet interests, objectives, policies, and activities in the Middle East. The current report gives particular attention to regional Soviet military actions and deployments, but also considers economic assistance, trade, and foreign policy to the extent these affect security matters.

The Soviet Middle East presence has diminished and is now probably at a level justified by Soviet proximity, interests, and willingness to commit

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resources. Regime changes in Eygpt and Syria, new regional perceptions of U.S. policy, and significant financial changes following the 1973-1974 oil embargo and subsequent price increases--these developments have left the U.S.S.R. in a poor position to exert its influence over regional decisions. This trend will continue, except in the Persian Gulf where Soviet influence is only beginning to be felt and will probably increase somewhat over the next five years.

The Soviet military presence in the Middle East has diminished as a consequence of the expulsion of Soviet advisors from Egypt. Meanwhile, although the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean has grown, the Mediterranean Squadron is still no match for the combined NATO forces. In the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean areas, growing Soviet naval deployments and capabilities also still remain less than those of the West. In neither area do Soviet military or naval forces have an offensive tone, but naval capabilities for effective strategic defensive operations, especially through pre-emptive operations, have increased substantially. The Soviet military presence in the Middle East and adjacent areas poses no major threat to Western interests short of general war. Indeed recent U.S. foreign policy has placed the Soviet Union on the defensive in the Middle East.

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*R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), AIR 32800 FR.

PREFACE

This study was undertaken to update an earlier report* completed before the October War of 1973. The research is an analysis of Soviet interests, objectives, policies, and activities in the Middle East and North Africa, and the current report focusses on the post-1973 period.

Because of the political, economic, and military changes occurring after--and in some cases associated with--the October War, this study focusses to a greater extent on the Persian Gulf than did the earlier work. Moreover, given the much reduced level of effort, the current research does not address the status or role of local communist parties.

The authors share responsibility for the report. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and most of Chapter 6 were written by Ron McLaurin; Chapter 5 by Jim Price. The latter is responsible as well for those parts of Chapter 6 dealing with Iran and Turkey.

The principal author is indebted to a number of individuals who have provided assistance at various stages. Mr. Robert Kubal, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) and Command Gary G. Sick, U.S.N., of the National Security Council staff identified a need and some of the parameters for the updating of the previous report. Mr. Jerrold K. Milsted, OASD(ISA), provided administrative support without which the study could not have been undertaken. Substantively, we are indebted to Drs. Preston S. Abbott, Paul A. Jureidini, and, particularly, Dr. Mohammed Mughisuddin, all colleagues at Abbott Associates, Inc.; to Dr. Jon Glassman, Department of State; to Ms. Carol Fogarty, Central Intelligence Agency; to LT Charles Sills, U.S.N., Defense Intelligence Agency; to COL Jack White, Defense Security Assistance Agency and to Mr. Robert Kubal and ADM Thomas, U.S.N., both of OASD(ISA). The senior author would also like to express his appreciation to Mr. Larry Semakis, U.S. Department of State, who served as his host officer during the Scholar-Diplomat Seminar. Insights gained during that program have been most helpful. Ms. Cathie Love turned utterly illegible manuscript into readable, and we hope helpful, prose.

R. D. McL.
J. P.

*R.D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974).

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since 1969 the Middle East has undergone a number of important changes that have created a series of new challenges to the policies and actions of both superpowers. Among the more important of these developments have been the War of Attrition and subsequent Suez cease-fire (1969-1971), the Rogers peace initiatives (1969-1970), the death of Gamal Abdul Nasser and emergence of Anwar Sadat as Egypt's leader (1970-1971), the coup that replaced Salah Jadid with Hafiz Assad in Syria (1970), changing levels of social friction in Lebanon (1969-1976), the growth in the importance of Middle East oil to the United States (1972-1976), the October War (1973), the rise and decline of the Palestinian movement (1973-1975, 1975-), and the appearance of a Syrian-based Levantine entente (1975-1976) comprising Jordan, Syria, the Palestinian leadership, and the "new" Lebanon. This environment has so altered the Middle East as an arena for superpower confrontation, competition, and cooperation that the phenomena adverted to above require discussion in that context.

President Nasser's choice of the War of Attrition as a tool to increase the costs of the status quo has been discussed in some detail by a number of scholars, particularly Lawrence Whetten.[1] In terms of the Soviet Middle East role, the importance of the War of Attrition and the cease-fires that resulted in a "no-war, no-peace" situation was the consequent requirement, following the Israeli response, that the U.S.S.R. assume responsibility for the air defense of Egypt. This decision, coupled with the major effort to improve the combat effectiveness of the Egyptian armed forces, necessitated a substantial commitment of Soviet military manpower as well as the input of large quantities of relatively advanced

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[1] See Lawrence L. Whetten, *The Canal War: Four-Power Conflict in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: The MIT Press, 1974), pp. 67-89.

weapons. Given what we know about the Soviet politico-military policy process as it relates to the Middle East, the decisions that resulted in this unwonted level of Soviet investment could only have been taken with difficulty and over considerable opposition.[2]

The importance of the Soviet commitments--virtually unprecedented[3] outside the sphere of Soviet control in East Europe--is the change in the

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[2] R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), Chapter 3; Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); Thomas Wolfe, "The Soviet Military Scene: Institutional and Defense Policy Considerations," RAND Paper, 1966; Vernon V. Aspaturian, "The Soviet Military-Industrial Complex --Does It Exist?" *Journal of International Affairs,* XXVI, no. 1 (1972), pp. 1-28; Thomas W. Wolfe, "Policy Making in the Soviet Union: A Statement with Supplementary Comments," RAND Paper, 1969; Vernon V. Aspaturian, "Internal Forces and Soviet Policy on the Eastern Mediterranean," in U.S. Congress, House, *Soviet Involvement in the Middle East and the Western Response,* Joint Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Subcommittee on the Near East, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 92nd Congress, 1st Session, 19-21 October and 2-3 November 1971, pp. 82-90; Alexander Dallin, "Domestic Factors Influencing Soviet Foreign Policy," *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East,* ed. Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1973), pp. 31-58; Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); Ilana Dimant, "*Pravda* and *Trud*--Divergent Attitudes toward the Middle East," Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Soviet and East European Research Center, Research Paper No. 3, June 1972; Ilana Dimant-Kass, "The Soviet Military and Soviet Policy in the Middle East 1970-73," *Soviet Studies,* XXVI, no. 4 (October 1974), pp. 502-521; U.S. Congress, House, *United States-Europe Relations and the 1973 Middle East War,* Hearings before the Subcommittees on Europe and on the Near East ad South Asia, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 93rd Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, 1 November 1973, and 19 February 1974, pp. 3-4 (statement of Herbert S. Dinerstein). These and many other studies give ample evidence of the tensions and conflicts in the Soviet policy process.

[3] Moscow established a precedent for the direct participation of its military personnel in the Third World (and in the Middle East) earlier in what may at first glance appear to be a much more surprising environment--Yemen. We have argued (McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union,* pp. 265-266.) that a key element in this action was *visibility,* the limits on which reduced the criticality of the substantive policy issue. Such mitigating circumstances were clearly not applicable in Egypt, the daily victim of Israeli deep penetration (strategic bombing) air attacks, and the small number of Soviet personnel in the Yemen cannot be compared in political impact with the approximately 15,000 Soviet military personnel in Egypt in 1971-1972.

international situation that resulted from them. Infusions of Soviet manpower and weapons systems were related to the tempo of the diplomatic process. In addition, they excited American and Israeli political concern, and complicated the process of superpower conflict avoidance in the volatile Middle East. As we shall indicate more fully, the large Soviet military presence also contributed to Western (particularly American) disquiet over the regional aspect of the strategic military balance between the Soviet Union and the European allies.

The Rogers peace initiatives and the many other settlement approaches advanced in the early 1970s, as we shall point out at greater length below, were coordinated between the Soviet Union and the United States. The negotiations and agreements between the superpowers formed the context within which--and to some extent the limits against which--American and Soviet settlement strategies and tactics have operated ever since, even after the interruption of the October War. Because these conversations of the early 1970s are still the only agreed (as between the United States and the U.S.S.R.) basis for settlement, they are clearly crucial in importance if, as we argue below, one of the two superpowers still considers them such a basis. To what extent and in what directions will the movement toward a Middle East settlement influence Soviet regional and global policies? Is there a Kremlin perception that real settlement, even if it is possible, may not be in the Soviet interest?

One of the major symbolic events in recent Middle East history is the death of President Nasser. The virtually unchallenged center of political authority in his own country for 18 years following the revolution that deposed King Farouk, and the charismatic leader of much of the Arab world for most of that period, Nasser was unquestionably the single most important personality in the Middle East. Because of the Arab-Israeli debacle of June 1967, which almost cost Nasser his position in Egypt and did remove some of the lustre from his pan-Arab following, Nasser had been forced to turn increasingly to the Soviet Union to achieve the means to realize the objectives of undoing the results of the so-called "Six Day War." His single-minded determination to reverse the military outcome of that conflict

greatly altered the nature of Egypt's relations with the superpowers. Consequently, Nasser's death in 1970 opened the possibility for a reorientation of these relations.[4] Such a change did in fact follow the accession to power of Anwar Sadat. How have the Soviets handled the abrupt and drastic change in their relations with Egypt, the largest Arab state? What are their new objectives with regard to Cairo and its role in the Arab world?

Similarly, the deposing[5] of Salah Jadid in Syria brought to power a regime that--while maintaining a nominal Baathist cloak--approached Syria's principal economic and political problems very differently from its predecessor.[6] This contrast became apparent in the aftermath of the October War and particularly in the mid-1970s during the Lebanese civil war. The objectives of the new regime directly affected superpower roles and capabilities.

The many major developments in the Middle East often seemed to by-pass Lebanon whose history, inextricably entwined with that of the rest of the Levant before 1949, evolved after that date in the interstices of conditions unlike those in the other Arab states. Yet, pressures of social change took their inevitable toll on Lebanon--the social structure did not allow upward mobility in a society too heavily interactive with the West to ignore demands for such mobility; the rigid confessional political system (related to the static social system) did not accommodate itself to important demographic changes; and finally, the Palestinian refuge issue, with ramifications on both the political (left-right, new force-traditional)

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[4] Cf. R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict: Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian Objectives and U.S. Policy* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975), Chapter 2.

[5] The Assad coup in Syria was in fact a "process"--i.e., a series of coups and threatened coups that progressively weakened Jadid's power. *Ibid.*, Chapter 4.

[6] See R. D. McLaurin et al., *Foreign Policy Making in the Middle East: Domestic Influences on Policy in Egypt, Iraq, Israel and Syria* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977).

and social (establishment-new forces) problems already mentioned, emerged increasingly as a Palestinian-Lebanese problem as well. By the mid-1970s, Lebanon erupted in a violent civil war the denouement of which clearly was to alter international political relations[7] of the Levant states and thereby directly affect the policy options of the superpowers. Will Moscow support the Palestinians in their contest with Syria, and how will the outcome of the Lebanese conflict alter Soviet bilateral and regional options in the Levant?

After 1970, too, the United States experienced a dramatic growth in its dependence on Middle East oil to make up the shortfall between demand for oil, on the one hand, and domestic and traditional foreign supply, on the other. The loudest advance warning concerning the potential political impact of the changing energy picture was sounded in Apri 1973 by James Akins (later U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia)[8]. Just six months after Akins' little-heeded warning, the significance of the shifting oil flow situation was felt by the United States as a result of a selective embargo (of limited effectiveness) applied by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). Notwithstanding the dislocation

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[7] See Paul A. Jureidini, "The Abating Threat of War," *International Interactions*, III, no. 4 (1977).

[8] James E. Akins, "The Oil Crisis: This Time the Wolf is Here," *Foreign Affairs*, LI, no. 3 (April 1973), pp. 462-490. See also Cecil V. Crabb, Jr., "The Energy Crisis, the Middle East, and American Foreign Policy," *World Affairs*, CXXXVI, no. 1 (Summer 1973), pp. 48-73.

attendant on this action, U.S. dependence on imported Arab oil has continued to grow,[9] affecting the costs and benefits, as well as the range of conceivable midterm political-military goals, of various superpower options in the Middle East. Given the increased economic vulnerability of the United States to Arab oil embargoes and to petroleum pressure, generally, will the Soviet Union attempt to turn off the tap, or more conservatively, gain a position of influence that will at least enable it to do so?

The major event in the Middle East after 1970 must be considered to be the October War of 1973.[10] The War has given rise to many political developments, but more importantly, was also the catalyst that led to a number of attitudinal changes on the part of the confrontation states,

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[9] Direct and Indirect Importation of Middle East Crude Oil and Products, a % of Total Such Imports 1972-1976[a]

	1972	1973		1974		1975		1976[b]
	Direct	Direct	(Tot)	Direct	(Tot)	Direct	(Tot)	
Algeria	1.9	2.2	(2.4)	3.1	(3.4)	4.7	(4.8)	7.0
Bahrain	0.3	0.2	(0.2)	0.2	(0.2)	0.3)	(0.3)	Negl
Egypt	0.2	0.2	(0.2)	0.1	(Negl)	0.1	(0.1)	0.6
Iran	3.0	3.6	(6.9)	7.7	(12.0)	4.8	(8.9)	6.3
Iraq	Negl	Negl	(0.3)	0	(0.2)	0.1	(0.2)	Negl
Israel	0	Negl		Negl		0	(0)	0
Kuwait	0.9	0.8	(1.0)	0.1	(0.4)	0.3	(0.5)	Negl
Libya	2.6	2.7	(4.9)	0.1	(0.7)	3.8	(5.5)	8.5
Oman	Negl	Negl		Negl	(0.1)	0.1	(0.1)	0.3
Qatar	0.1	0.1	(0.1)	0.3	(0.9)	0.3	(1.5)	0.4
Saudi Arabia	4.0	7.9	(11.8)	7.6	(11.1)	11.2	(14.1)	22.7
Syria	0	Negl		0	(Negl)	Negl		Negl
Tunisia	0.2	0.3	(0.3)	0.2	(0.3)	Negl		0.2
U.A.E.	1.6	1.1	(1.3)	1.2	(1.4)	2.3	(2.9)	5.2
P.D.R.Y.	Negl	Negl		Negl		Negl		Negl

Sources: 1972-1975: U.S. Bureau of Mines. 1976: U.S. Federal Energy Administration, *Energy Information:* Report to Congress. First Quarter 1976, p. 49.

[a] Imports into the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Imports into U.S. territories, commonwealths, and trust territory are not included unless they are later sent to the United States.

[b] First quarter preliminary figures for crude oil only.

[10] A list of some of the books on this subject may be found in Chapter 1 of McLaurin et al., *Foreign Policy Making*

Arabs and Israelis in general, and citizens and governments of the United States and the Soviet Union. How has the experience of the War, including the sudden U.S.-Soviet confrontation at the end of the October hostilities, altered Soviet assessments of the costs, benefits, and meaning of Middle East settlement, detente with the United States, regional cooperation, local (naval) force, and political and economic support of Arab states?

The Palestinian "movement" rose, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of the 1967 Arab defeat. Although the Palestinian issue (in various forms) had been a question (and rallying point) of signal importance since the 1920s, the movement assumed a new, organized, and uncharacteristic impact on Middle East politics after the June War. Indeed, the Palestinians became the single most powerful instrument of force within several Arab countries, and as such were able to act with the trapping of sovereignty. Despite the defeat and expulsion of Palestinian forces at the hands of the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan in 1970-1971, the Palestinian movement through conventional military force, guerrilla raids, and terrorist attacks was a major actor in the Middle East from 1968-1969 until 1976. Paradoxically, the movement's importance grew from the Black September defeat until the political victories following the October War, and was sharply reduced in the wake of victory.[11] The Soviet Union has increasingly--but always very conditionally--allied itself with the Palestinian movement. How does the U.S.S.R. view this strategy today, and how is Moscow adjusting to the eradication of the Palestinians as an independent force?[12]

Finally, the mid-1970s see the emergence of a new and potentially far-reaching entente[13] embracing the Assad regime in Syria, as the entente's

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[11] For a discussion of the Palestinian role in Middle East politics, see William E. Hazen and Paul A. Jureidini, *The Palestinian Movement in Politics* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1976).

[12] Agustus R. Norton, *Moscow and the Palestinians: A New Tool of Soviet Policy in the Middle East* (Miami: Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1974); Moshe Ma'oz, "Chinese and Soviet Interrelations with the Palestinian Guerrilla Movements," unpublished paper (1973).

[13] See Fehmi Saddy, *The Eastern Front: Implications of the Syrian/Palestinian/Jordan Entente and the Lebanese Civil War* (Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., 1976).

primus inter parus, Hussein's Jordanian kingdom, the remnants of Lebanon as a vassal state or, less likely, some of its partitioned elements, and the Syrianized Palestinian leadership. While each element of the entente will no doubt act with some degree of autonomy in spheres of purely parochial interest, Syria will almost surely control (at least, dominate) any policy or action that may affect the Arab-Israeli conflict, U.S. or Soviet regional activities, or Syrian interests defined very broadly.[14] How will this entente affect Soviet policy and freedom of action in the Middle East? What opportunities will it open and close regarding Soviet participation in the elaboration of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict?

As another writer has pointed out, it is "striking how much we still stand . . . in the shadow of the events of 1970; how significant the events of that drama-filled year were in illuminating relationships among the major protagonists."[15] It is worthy of note that most of the major events and developments we have discussed above--the major developments that have shaped Soviet policy--began or gathered momentum in the 1969-1971 period.

This study addresses the general subject of Soviet policy and action in the Middle East. In this context, the authors pay particular attention to the issues and questions already raised. These issues, and the key developments from which they result can be briefly summarized as follows. The Soviet Union only became seriously interested in the Middle East after 1966.[16] From 1955 until 1967, Soviet influence in the Middle East was a limited but growing reality. After the June War, the United States tried desperately to avoid regional polarization, while the Soviet Union increasingly projected itself as the Arab ally, based on inter-governmental relationships that--even if they vacillated and appeared tempestuous at

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[14] McLaurin et al., *Foreign Policy Making,* Chapter 6.

[15] Abraham Becker, "The Superpowers and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1970-1973," RAND Corporation paper, December 1973, p.

[16] McLaurin, *The Middle East n Soviet Policy,* Chapter 2.

at times--constituted the prime windows of the key Arab states (Egypt, Iraq, Syria) to the outside world, at least in terms of political and military support against Israel. During the period before 1973, however, the central role of the United States in achieving Arab goals also became obvious, and this political role, in conjunction with the American willingness to take a more active part in the search for an Arab-Israeli settlement, led Egypt and Syria to look more seriously toward the United States after the October War. Regime changes in both countries and exposure to the Soviet Union also resulted in a leadership more sympathetic to the United States. Meanwhile, two of the stable regional governments--Lebanon and Israel--entered a phase of considerable domestic problems. The renewed interest in the West demonstrated by Egypt and Syria--and, in the economic area, Iraq--silhouettes more clearly the costs of Soviet support to specific regimes, but is probably less important than economic *and military* resource variables in the growing Soviet interest in the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean area.

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CHAPTER TWO

SOVIET OBJECTIVES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Although there have been major changes in Soviet objectives and policies vis-a-vis the Middle East since 1967, the degree of change reflects the necessary global and regional role of the U.S.S.R. more than it does conscious modification of priorities on salient issues. We have cursorily traced the history of Soviet interest in the Middle East elsewhere.[1] The important point to note is that the Middle East was largely peripheral to Soviet interest--and influence in the Middle East beyond Soviet capabilities--before 1955.[2]

Soviet Middle East regional objectives continue to center on avoiding conflict with the United States, minimizing Western influence in the Middle East, and increasing Soviet southern security and regional influence. Changes in objectives from before to after 1973 have been subtle, changes of degree rather than substance in most areas.

AVOIDING A SUPERPOWER CONFRONTATION

The conflict avoidance goal has been an imperative of Soviet policy in the Middle East, and if current actions vis-a-vis the United States seem to manifest greater self-confidence, the change is marginal. Indeed,

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[1] R. D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1975), Chapter 2.

[2] Although we (*ibid.*) and others (Hannes Adomeit, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East: Problems of Analysis," *Soviet Studies*, XXVII, no. 2 [April 1975]) have pointed out the so-called "Russian historical interest" in the Middle East and Persian Gulf bears no resemblance to post-1955 interests, objectives, and activities, many analysts continue to perpetuate the notion of a grand historical design. Moreover, included in the latter group are those who should certainly know better, e.g., Abe Becker ("Oil and the Persian Gulf in Soviet Policy in the 1970s," RAND paper, December 1971) and, surprisingly, even Stephen Page, whose otherwise excellent book, *The U.S.S.R. and Arabia: The Development of Soviet Policies and Attitudes towards the Countries of the Arabian Peninsula, 1955-1970* (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1971), is a model of sound content analysis and historical research. Since the 1940 German-Soviet discussions continue to serve as a key element in those writers' conclusions about Russian historical ambitions, we shall remind the reader once again that it was the Germans, not the Russians, who proposed directing Soviet ambitions toward the Persian Gulf and for reasons that are, as Adomeit has pointed out, quite obvious.

Arab expectations and perceptions now incorporate a recognition of Soviet unwillingness to risk a superpower confrontation over the Middle East.[3]

In view of the importance of the Middle East in international politics, its increasing salience to the United States, and the larger and more potent Soviet presence, the need to reach some understanding with the United States on respective regional roles was evident at least by the late 1960s. This requirement coincided with the superpower detente and therefore became a part of it. The two great powers' attempts to ensure that they were not drawn into a nuclear conflict as an outgrowth of their involvement in the Middle East were viewed with considerable suspicion within the region. Because the United States flexed its muscles in Jordan in 1970 and was still deeply involved in Vietnam--a war that may have been unpopular around the world but that, if nothing else, demonstrated the willingness of the United States to take military action far from its own shores--Arab states continued to feel the United States would back Israel, if necessary.[4] On the other hand, Soviet willingness to confront the United States on behalf of the Arabs was not credible. Thus, when the United States and the U.S.S.R. were seen to negotiate their regional roles during President Nixon's visit to Moscow in late May 1972, the common Arab view was that the two superpowers were perpetuating the "no peace, no war" status quo that left Israel in occupation of the West Bank, Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai. At least some of the Soviet problems in Egypt and elsewhere may be attributed to

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[3] See R. D. McLaurin, "The Soviet-American Strategic Balance: Arab Elite Views," *International Interactions*, III, no. 4 (1977); Mohamed Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan* (New York: Quadrangle, 1975), *passim*.

[4] R. D. McLaurin, "Arab Perceptions of the Superpower Military Balance," paper presented at the International Studies Association annual meeting, Toronto, Canada, 1976. During the October War a variety of interventionist fears and scenarios were articulated in the Arab world. See Wiliam A. Rugh, "Arab Media and Politics During the October War," *Middle East Journal*, XXIX, no. 3 (Summer 1975), pp. 310-328. Heikal's *The Road* is a source of endless and sometimes uniquely picturesque examples of Arab perceptions (as is his previous English-language book, *The Cairo Documents* [New York: Doubleday, 1973]).

the force of this perception.[5]

Caught between the possible need to intervene and the constant demands to provide advanced military material--both of these to maintain its role as the primary external Arab "friend"--on the one hand, and the more vital need to avoid a strategic confrontation with the United States, on the other, the Soviet leadership saw important potential advantages attaching to an Arab-Israeli settlement. Since the benefits were limited and the costs of settlement options varied, Soviet support for settlement was limited. Still, the Soviet Union has supported the concept of Arab-Israeli settlement on a limited basis since at least the late 1960s, as we indicate more extensively below. We believe this support is based to some extent upon the cost to the U.S.S.R. of the conflict, but primarily upon the fear of a superpower confrontation. This possibility appeared all the more realistic after the American alert of October 1973, which almost certainly took the Kremlin by surprise.

MINIMIZING WESTERN INFLUENCE

Despite the end of the Cold War and the general relaxation of East-West tensions within Europe, the U.S.S.R. has continued to try to reduce the European presence and European influence in the Middle East as elements of the hostile foreign role. At the same time, Soviet actions suggest a reluctant acceptance of some Western presence as a function of the historic interaction of Europe and the Middle East. The factors that give rise to this policy ambivalence are themselves conflicting.

First, the recent economic, social, political--and even military--actions of the major Middle East countries closest to the Soviet Union--Egypt, Iraq and Syria--in 1973-1976 have reinforced Soviet fears that, given the choice, Arab peoples and governments prefer to deal with Western countries.[6] (In some respects, of course, Arab countries have no realistic

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[5] See Heikal, *The Road,* pp. 160-184, and the series of editorials written by Heikal in *al-Ahram* in the spring of 1972; and the entire issue of *An-Nahar Arab Report,* III, no. 30 (23 July 1972).

[6] See R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974) *passim.* Most observers familiar with the Middle East recognize Arab preference for interacting with the West.

alternative to turning to the Soviet Union or other Socialist states. The barter terms of Soviet commercial agreements and economic assistance appear to be a clear-cut advantage to capital-poor Arab states,[7] while the political and military exigencies of the arms trade--including Western public opinion, spares availability, cost factors, and interchangeability potential, as well as the constraints resulting from current weapons inventory--foreordain a continued level of substantial Arab-Soviet interaction.)

Second, however, the magnitude of Arab international commercial, financial, political, military, and social needs far exceeds the Soviet capacity to provide resources in these areas. Moreover, the capital resources of the Middle East have recently grown as a consequence of the great increase in petroleum revenues. The Soviet leadership recognizes the U.S.S.R. can no longer aspire to more than a marginal role in most economic relations in the Middle East. Its political and military resources are much greater than its economic resources and allow for a unique role that optimizes the impact of limited resources.

An additional ambivalence characterizes the Soviet view toward the West, particularly in the Middle East. On the one hand, the West is no longer seen as a monolithic threat to the Socialist Commonwealth and no longer speaks with unity or uniformity on many issues. This evolution is especially evident on matters affecting the Middle East, because European governments see their immediate, vital interests affected by largely abstract policy iterations. Under the circumstances, it would be truly surprising if they were to agree to the American view.[8] On the other hand,

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[7] Cf. Chapter 5 below. There are some important disadvantages to accepting the barter agreements with the U.S.S.R., including loss of traditional markets, Soviet re-export history, and the like. Developing countries with little foreign exchange resource bases generally found bilaterally balanced barter agreements with the U.S.S.R. very attractive as a modality of conducting trade. That capital influx greatly affects these perceptions is clear, as in Iraq.

[8] Cf. U.S. Congress, House, *United States-Europe Relations and the 1973 Middle East War*, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs, 93rd Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, 1 November 1973 and 19 February 1974.

from a strategic point of view, Western Europe is still allied with the United States, and European influence in the Middle East must be considered as at least potentially hostile influence.[9]

BROADENING RELATIONS

The channels through which the realization of Soviet objectives is sought have not changed appreciably in the last few years. The movement away from intensive focus on several "progressive" states--an approach Communist ideologues worked assiduously on complicated doctrinal rationalizations to defend--and toward a less intensive and more broadly based presence throughout the region was well underway after the June War. Arms procurement patterns: elite religious and sociological fears in the more backward Arab countries in the Arabian Peninsula, Persian Gulf and North Africa--such barriers tended to extend Soviet exclusion from a number of Arab countries.[10] However, when Soviet policy began to lean toward the development of at least cordial relations with all the regimes of the Middle East, some progress was achieved, if for reasons as diverse as

(1) the refusal of the United States to provide certain types of weapons systems;

(2) the feared effects of the influx of Western techniques and their families on the social structure of conservative states;

(3) Soviet willingness to provide arms and technology at low cost; and

(4) regional political rivalries.

This broadening of the U.S.S.R.'s relations across the region, which we have described in more detail elsewhere,[11] was reinforced by the deterioration in Egyptian-Soviet relations following the death of Nasser in 1970.

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[9] Cf. Chapter 4 below.

[10] See Lilita Dzirkalis, "Present Soviet Policy Toward Third World States," paper, Southern California Arms Control and Disarmament Seminar, November 1971; Jaan Pennar, *The U.S.S.R. and the Arabs: The Ideological Dimension* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1973).

[11] McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, parts II and III; below, Chapters 3 and 6.

The Soviet investment in Egypt, in economic as well as political terms, was as large as any Soviet involvement outside Eastern Europe. The decimation of the Soviet Union-oriented clique in Cairo, the expulsion of the Russian advisors in 1972, and the gradual elimination thereafter of the whole family of extraordinary privileges built up and enjoyed by the U.S.S.R. in Egypt over a period of years were probably viewed in Moscow as further evidence against overcommitment. Although the radical reorientation of Egypt's external relations brought about an inevitable reallocation of investment priorities, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union will soon allow itself to become committed to any Middle East regime to the extent it was in Egypt. Thus, later (futile) Soviet attempts to expand relations with Jordan and to conclude a SAM agreement with once-anathematized Hussein regime were consistent with the more recent approach. Manifestly, the broadening of relations also allows for (and requires) considerably more flexibility than point concentrations.

SOVIET SECURITY

We have discussed the issue of Soviet security elsewhere.[12] No major developments took place after 1973 to further imperil security in the south, from a military, naval, or air perspective.

So far as ground forces are concerned, American and often Western strategically oriented ground forces were present in sizeable numbers only in Turkey. Although the number of American military and other advisory personnel in Iran and Saudi Arabia was on the increase,[13] these were almost exclusively military assistance personnel. Turkey, however, as a NATO member, hosted a number of NATO and U.S. facilities with uniquely strategic missions.

Until the early and mid-1970s, Soviet-Iranian relations had been improving for some years. However, about 1969-1970 the United States began to provide, seemingly without question, virtually all the military

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[12] McLaurin, *The Middle East, passim.*

[13] Robert M. Brodkey and James Horgen, *Americans in the Gulf: Estimates and Projections of the Influx of American Nationals into the Persian Gulf, 1975-1980* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975).

equipment Iran requested. Apart from its unfortunate regional implications, the open-ended supply relationship cooled--at least temporarily--the growth in Soviet-Iranian cooperation, which largely stagnated from about 1970.

The Cyprus problem, meanwhile, continued to bedevil American-Turkish relations. Since only U.S. bases in Turkey could be seen as enemy facilities, this deterioration was very much in accord with Moscow's interests and was greatly accelerated following the Cyprus conflict of 1975.

As we point out below (Chapter 4), Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean has grown substantially over the last decade, but levelled off--except during crises--around 1973. The Soviet Squadron in the Mediterranean is a large force, but is vastly inferior to Western naval forces in the Mediterranean in both size and firepower.[14] In addition, it is hostage to the latter, since its only lines of communications (LOC) with the Black Sea or Pacific Fleets are through narrow straits that can easily be closed by the West. Nevertheless, the growth of the Mediterranean Squadron and the fragility of the U.S.-Turkish relationship have slightly enhanced Soviet security.

SOVIET INFLUENCE

Originally viewed in the Kremlin as a means toward the end of increasing Soviet security, Russian influence in the Middle East has become an end in itself related to Soviet self-perceptions as a superpower of stature and power equal to that of the United States. Whatever the post-1972 change in Soviet rhetoric relating to the balance of global forces[15] may mean, it certainly is based on the view that the U.S.S.R. and the United States are preeminent powers of equal status in the world.

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[14] See Chapter 4 below.

[15] See Leon Goure, "Soviet Perceptions of the Strategic Balance in relation to the Soviet Concept of the Correlation of World Forces," paper presented at conference on Perceptions, RAND Corporation, Washington, D.C., April 21, 1976. The paper was presented on behalf of the Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami.

That the Soviet Union has long manifested an "insecurity complex" concerning its stature as a great power has been widely noted. The United States, seeking to exclude and then extrude the Soviet Union from the Middle East[16]--an objective wholly incompatible with Soviet power, proximity,[17] and interest--contributed in no small manner to this "complex." However, Soviet Middle East behavior in the period 1972-1976 serves to evidence greater confidence, less concern with image. We believe that the Soviets recognize the inevitability of their presence and influence in the Middle East now; indeed, we believe they may overestimate their staying power in a post-settlement environment.[18] So long as Soviet regional influence is assured, it will be a less powerful stimulus in policy. Once threatened, however, status will become again a key policy force.

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[16]As late as 1972, Henry Kissinger, special assistant to the president for national security affairs, spoke of "expelling" the Soviet Union from Egypt.

[17]Some argue that the Middle East is "pretty far away" from the Soviet Union, in fact. (Herbert Dinerstein, in U.S. Congress, *United States-Europe Relations*, p. 9.) However, as we have pointed out elsewhere,

> The borders of the U.S.S.R. are very close to the Mediterranean; the Black Sea coast of the U.S.S.R. is vulnerable to naval operations from the Mediterranean; more graphically, the oilfields of Baku are closer to Iraq's, the Persian Gulf's, and far closer to Iran's oilfields than Cairo is; and Cairo is closer to Soviet territory than it is to the capitals of the Sudan, Saudi Arabia, either Yemen, Oman, the Union of Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, or Iran, not to mention Libya or the rest of the Maghreb.

McLaurin, *The Middle East*, p. 15.

[18]McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, Chapter 11.

CHAPTER THREE

SOVIET POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST--THE POLITICAL SUBSTRUCTURE

Although we recognize the important weaknesses inherent in the unitary rational actor approach to policy analysis,[1] such a model is most appropriate to the limited objectives of this paper, which are primarily to analyze the conscious and concerted (rational) policy aims of the Soviet government (as a unit) in the Middle East, rather than to describe the reasons for specific initiatives, events, or developments.

A dominant theme in Soviet Middle East policy has been the avoidance of superpower conflict. As American spokesmen have frequently pointed out, a great power cannot allow its desire to avoid confrontation to deter the government from taking all actions important to the realization of other goals.[2] This observation applies with equal force to the U.S.S.R. which has been relatively active in the Middle East-North Africa region and has substantial economic and political investments to protect there.

Moreover, the factors impelling Moscow to avoid a confrontation with the United States are not limited to considerations of immediate military security. Mutual superpower perceptions and the relationship of these perceptions to the issue of detente are clearly relevant in this regard.

That the United States should continue to pursue a policy of detente is clearly in the interest of the Soviet Union. Yet, the Kremlin cannot sacrifice its many regional interests and strong points to this one end. The willingness to absorb specific tactical losses to preserve detente is manifest, but no great power can afford to subordinate *every* tactical opportunity to such vague, uncertain--however unquestionably important--and perhaps ephemeral developments.

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[1]The best discussion of these weaknesses is Graham Allison's exceptional book, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), especially Chapters 1 and 2.

[2]For example, see the press conferences of Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, 23 December 1975 and 4 February 1976, as well as the Secretary of State's address before the Commonwealth Club and the World Affairs Council of Northern California, San Franscisco, 3 February 1976.

Since the principal Soviet need is to avoid a superpower conflict, and since the possibility of such a conflict arising from the Middle East is marginal outside the Arab-Israeli problem, we shall consider this arena of Soviet behavior first and in the greatest detail as a principal issue area of Soviet foreign policy.

THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Soviet policy regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict has involved a hierarchical sequence of three principles:

- First, contain the problem and keep it from exploding
- Second, control hostilities (and consult with the United States, where necessary) should they occur
- Third, work toward a settlement

Containment of the Arab-Israeli Problem

Containment of the primary regional powderkeg, the Arab-Israeli conflict, is a difficult task for either of the superpowers because of the limited number of participants to which their influence extends and the limited degree of that influence. Before 1973, the Soviet Union and its East European allies were virtually the sole military suppliers of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria,[3] while the United States (and to a lesser extent, its Western European allies) filled the same role vis-a-vis Israel and Jordan.[4] Thus, neither Moscow nor Washington was in a position to influence the key antagonists on either side. After October, the military supply picture changed only in degree and to the extent that Egypt forsook its Soviet supply relationship--at least for a while--in favor of establishing military relations with Western suppliers. This major change could prove to be quite significant in the long term, depending upon (1) the success of Egypt's search for arms in the West, (2) the tenure of the Sadat regime, and (3) the progress made in settlement talks on Israel's northern and eastern front.

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[3] See R. D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1975), pp. 109-111; Jon Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), *passim*.

[4] McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy*, pp. 109-111.

The attempt to control hostilities has taken several forms. Most prominently, while Russian diplomats have not consistently supported specific peace initiatives (any more than their American counterparts), the Soviet Union has counselled against war with what appears to be consistency.[5] A second and perhaps more significant manifestation of the effort to keep the conflict from erupting into full-scale hostilities has been the types of araments sent by the U.S.S.R. to its Arab clients. The third example is in the move toward settlement itself, which is considered below.

We have little direct evidence of Soviet restraints on the Arabs concerning recourse to war. Apart from undertakings made to United States officials in this regard, we must look largely to Arab revelations, which are usually well after the fact, and to American intelligence resources to the extent they are reflected in the public statements of U.S. officials. The sum of evidence generally points in the direction of Soviet restraint. Certainly, it is the feeling of Arab elites that the Soviet Union has counselled against war.[6]

Arms transfers from the Soviet Union to key Arab clients have generally resulted in the provision of equipment advanced by regional standards but one to two generations behind similar equipment provided to Israel.[7] Contrary to many press reports, the U.S.S.R. has *not* sent its most advanced weaponry to Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. Even in the field of ground-based air defense (AD), the surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), air

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[5]Even such "cold war" analysts as the Center for Advanced International Studies group at the University of Miami point out that although "the Soviet Union affirmed the right of the Arabs to resort to 'other means,' this had not been matched by the advice Moscow gave its clients or the Soviet arms aid program." Foy D. Kohler et al., *The Soviet Union and the October 1973 Middle East War: The Implications for Detente* (Miami: Center for Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1974), p. 40.

[6]See, for example, Mohamed Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan* (New York: Quadrangle, 1974) and *The Cairo Documents* (New York: Doubleday, 1973).

[7]R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974).

defense artillery (ADA), and associated equipment provided the Arabs are only some of the Soviet weapons systems. Moreover, in other fields, such as aircraft, the export versions of jet combat aircraft are frequently modified in important respects.[8] As the October War made clear, another weapons area in which some control can be exercised is ammunition, spare parts, and replacement equipment.

It should be noted that the approaches to conflict containment suggested above are not intended to suggest the U.S.S.R. will actually prevent Arab states from going to war, even if the capability to do so is available. Before the October War, the Soviet Union was warned by Egypt of a likely crisis with Israel, although Moscow was informed neither of the exact timing nor of the magnitude of the action.[9] Yet, available reports do not indicate a serious effort to defuse the crisis. With the record to date, it appears the U.S.S.R. will counsel in the future, as in the past, against recourse to war, but will not attempt to interfere with a firm Arab decision to begin hostilities.[10]

Controlling Hostilities

There have been four Arab-Israeli wars--in 1948-1949, 1956, 1967 and 1973. In the first of these wars, the Soviet Union can hardly be thought to have been involved, since apart from its diplomatic support for and recognition of Israel, and its role in multilateral peacekeeping efforts, the sole concrete activity was the sending of some arms (via Czechoslovakia)

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[8] However, it should not be supposed that conflict control is the only reason for restraint in providing equipment. Soviet military leaders are understandably concerned about the possibility that the most advanced Soviet military equipment might fall into American hands, compromising security considerations. The capture of SAM-6 systems intact by the Israelis will--or so it is widely presumed--lead to the development of effective electronic countermeasures much more rapidly than if their development had taken place without the Soviet systems.

[9] To date, the best public record on this point is Mohamed Heikal's *The Road to Ramadan*.

[10] Soviet behavior in the 1967 war is considerably more ambiguous than that of 1973. Most observers believe Soviet 1967 behavior was characterized by a poor understanding of Israeli perceptions, expectations, and strategic policy, as well as by an exceedingly poor grasp of the limits of Soviet influence.

to the new Israeli state. Similarly, as a new actor in the area, the Soviet Union had little influence in or impact on the 1956 crises.[11] Indeed, one might argue that the greatest impact of Soviet behavior in the Suez crisis was on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies in their relations with each other rather than on the Middle East actors or the British or French policy.

In 1967 and 1973, U.S.-Soviet agreement was universally recognized to be a major prerequisite to achieving a cease-fire, even if not the only prerequisite. Moreover, the magnitude[12] and duration of hostilities were directly affected by Soviet (and American) actions. In both conflicts, the initial outbreak of hostilities was followed almost immediately by efforts to impose a cease-fire.[13] The common ground of the superpowers in the early stages of Arab-Israeli wars seems generally to be very limited: both wish to see something of how the course of the conflict will move before committing themselves to approaches that concede too much. Yet, both are intensely interested in avoiding a confrontation with each other. In October 1973, the United States and the Soviet Union maintained

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[11] Some question whether the Suez conflict can even legitimately be included among Arab-Israeli wars.

[12] The record rates of expending equipment and ammunition necessitated the kind of supply and resupply practices actually used. These rates were only in part a function of strategic and tactical planning (such as in artillery and ground-based AD); they also resulted from important weaknesses in support personnel and logistical systems that put many repairable vehicles out of combat. Another factor was training, both sides stressing heavy fire volume, the Arabs to compensate for inadequate gunnery training, the Israelis as a function of very good training.

[13] After the October War, most American writers criticized the Soviet Union for being unresponsive to American calls for a cease-fire. (E.g., see Kohler et al., *The Soviet Union*, p. 58.) In this respect, American histories differ markedly from other accounts. Arab writers (and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat) have criticized the U.S.S.R. for having attempted to bring about by ruse a cease-fire from the very first day of the conflict. Moreover, it was commonplace during the war for American commentators to remark that the United States Government was "in no rush" to establish a cease-fire, feeling another resounding Israeli victory might hasten a better-founded peace and the reduction of Soviet influence.

contact from a time soon after hostilities broke out. While this contact was primarily concerned with the discovery of a possible basis for a cease-fire, it is reasonable to assume that both superpowers used the same and other channels to explore perceptions about their own roles and problems relative to the conflict. There seems to have been an early, tacit understanding that neither would take direct military action beyond resupplying its clients. And both powers seemed to accept the necessity of letting the battlefield dictate the minimum and maximum political points within the parameters of which a cease-fire agreement was to be constructed.[14]

Achieve a Settlement

The final element of the Soviet approach to the Arab-Israeli problem is the search for a settlement. We believe this aspect of Soviet policy to be ambivalent and complex, subject not only to the interplay of various factions and interests in the Kremlim but also to cyclical and self-limiting forces generated by trends within the Middle East.

Soviet policy regarding a Middle East settlement--the subject has stirred frequent debate in the United States. In academic circles,

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[14]At the same time, the Soviet Union did urge all Arab states to support Egypt and Syria. Some observers see this behavior as contradictory to "controlling hostilities." We disagree. The point of hostilities control is not to reduce the level of conflict, but to maintain some influence over it and, ultimately, *to keep regional hostilities from leading to a superpower military confrontation*. While no one was in a position to assess precisely the Arab-Israeli balance of forces, the Russians, through intimate involvement in the military programs of both Egypt and Syria, must surely have been aware of at least some vague outside limits on the capabilities of the two principal Arab antagonists to sustain offensive military operations. Consequently, Moscow was well aware that initial victories would not--could not--lead to an effective military invasion of Israel proper. Without direct Soviet involvement or any real threat to the existence of Israel--a threat which in any event exceeded Egyptian and Syrian objectives--the United States was not likely to intervene. If additional Arab states heeded the Soviet call to assist Egypt and Syria, their contributions (even those of Jordan and Iraq) could only marginally affect the ultimate outcome of the hostilities. Thus, the costs of such a course of action to the U.S.S.R. were minimal. The benefits were somewhat greater, since the Soviet appeal was yet further evidence of support for the Arab cause and could only be contrasted with American behavior, which appeared to be supportive of the Arab enemy.

supporters of detente have tended to see a Soviet Union favoring a settlement and acting reasonably and responsibly to bring about a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, while those who see the U.S.S.R. in a more irrevocably hostile pose have generally stressed Soviet foot-dragging or, in some cases, reported Soviet impediments to the evolving of a settlement. Because of the secrecy surrounding intimate details of Soviet diplomacy, academic experts can pick the facts that support their position and refute the opposition, disregarding contrasting points of view as unsubstantiated speculation. Interestingly, State Department official's views seem to vacillate. We do not feel this divergence and fluctuation are without meaning. They reflect the ambivalence inherent in Soviet policy.

Since 1967 existing Arab states have had tangible objectives related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. These objectives are the return of the occupied Golan, West Bank, and Sinai. In addition, a resolution to the Palestinian problem has gained greater acceptance following the June War, since the parameters of realism have become narrower.[15] Return of the occupied territories is a goal at the intergovernmental level where the U.S.S.R. must deal. (By contrast, the sub- and transnational pressures of the Palestinian problem are less salient.) As Horelick and others have pointed out,[16] the occupied territories constituted an unprecedented

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[15]R. D. McLaurin, Mohammed Mughisuddin, and A. R. Wagner, *Foreign Policy Making in the Middle East* (New York: Praeger, 1977), Chapter 1.

[16]Arnold Horelick, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, ed. Paul Y. Hammond and Sidney S. Alexander (New York: American Elsevier, 1972), p. 600.

problem for Soviet Middle East relations. Since their return is a sine qua non for settlement, and since settlement is probably a sine qua non of their return, the Soviet Union must move toward a settlement if it hopes to maintain close, cooperative relations with these countries. Put differently, if Moscow can't deliver, the Arabs will go elsewhere.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Soviet Union is disposed to make visible efforts in the direction of settlement. In fact, however, as we have already pointed out, the possibility of superpower conflict is a principal consideration of Soviet policy makers, and thus also from the perspectives both of maintaining a detente relationship with the United States and avoiding a conflict, the Soviet Union is inclined to favor and move toward the establishment of a settlement.

However, when there is a visible movement that suggests progress towards a general settlement in the Middle East, much of the activity involves the United States. Partly because the United States is the only state with potential leverage over Israel--the country that holds the tangible keys to peace (the occupied territories)--partly because the United States has chosen to follow a highly personalistic approach to its negotiations with Arab governments, and partly because the current Arab leaders as well as the Israeli leadership are inclined to improve their relations with the United States[17] and to place considerable faith in at least certain types of American undertakings--for all of these reasons, the United States has been the *primus inter parus* in superpower-led peace initiatives. Thus, as the process evolves, Soviet leaders increasingly see the possibility that a settlement may be achieved that (1) gives only lip service (and, worse, lip service that is credible to no one) to Soviet participation,[18] (2) substantially improves the American position in bilateral relations with key Arab states,[19] and (3) creates conditions

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[17] R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict: Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian Objectives and U.S. Policy* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975).

[18] "Half-Way Meeting," *An Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 6 (10 February 1975), p. 1.

[19] "Soviet Apprehensions," *An Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 4 (28 Januray 1974), pp. 2-3.

that appear to seriously threaten the major regional role the Soviet Union has come to play over the last two decades. As the shape of a settlement begins to become visible, the Soviet leadership is able to see more clearly its vulnerabilities to Western, and particularly American, economic, military, and political competition.[20] This mechanism conduces to an increasing reticence to cooperate as a settlement nears, then to a positive attempt to block settlement.

These then are the tensions that drive Russian foreign policy with regard to a Middle East settlement, a dilemma that at once causes and explains the ambivalence of Soviet policy.

Notwithstanding the foregoing--and indeed emerging from it--the contention of the authors is that the movement toward settlement has been the stronger of the two contradictory themes in Soviet policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict since 1969-1970, and more particularly since 1973. The dominance of the settlement motif is explained by the relative sense of Soviet security based on the level of Soviet presence and activity across a number of countries and in diverse fields; by the primacy of the determination to avoid a superpower confrontation that might lead to nuclear war, especially after the tense period of late October 1973; to a lesser extent by the related policy to preserve detente; and perhaps by the inability to see the contradiction between regional nationalism, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the concept that Soviet influence will replace an inevitably eroding Western role.

Recent Soviet Policy on Settlement

Others have chronicled in more detail the fluctuation of Soviet settlement policy in the Middle East during the period from the War of Attrition to the October War and immediately following the 1973 hostilities.[21] We need not restate their accounts which we however suggest should be placed in the framework sketched above.

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[20] McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East*, Chapter 11.

[21] See, e.g., Lawrence L. Whetten, *The Canal War: Four-Power Conflict in the Middle East* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974) and Robert O. Freedman, *Soviet Policy toward the Middle East Since 1970* (New York: Praeger, 1975), *passim*.

The concrete aspects of the policy fluctuation described here take predictable forms. During periods in which the settlement objective dominates more completely the Soviet approach, the Palestinians have been advised to articulate limited goals, the Syrians encouraged (and bribed) to be forthcoming and patient, the Iraqis and Libyans counselled to at least moderate or mute their criticism.[22] When progress toward a settlement begins to evoke clearer perceptions of Soviet costs, Iraqi irreconcilables are not discouraged, the Syrians are advised to be wary of U.S. and Israeli objectives--a warning Syria can hardly afford to take lightly--and Moscow's support for the Palestinians is given greater visibility and fewer conditions.[23]

When and to the extent Soviet policy favors a settlement, as has been the case for most of the period since 1970, the form this settlement should take is similar in its essentials to the points made by Secretary of State William Rogers in 1969:

- "a peace agreement between the parties . . . based on clear and stated intentions and a willingness to bring about basic changes in . . . attitudes and conditions"
- "demilitarized zones and related security arrangements"
- "changes in the pre-existing lines [i.e., borders] . . . confined to insubstantial alterations required for mutual security"
- "just settlement [of the Palestinian problem taking] into account the desires and aspirations of the refugees and the legitimate concerns of the governments in the area"
- "Jerusalem . . . a unified city within which there would no longer be restrictions on the movement of persons and goods [and should be] roles for both Israel and Jordan in the civic, economic, and religious life of the city."[24]

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[22]"Kremlin Briefs Arafat on its Mideast Peace Plans," *Christian Science Monitor*, 29 April 1975, p. 4; Joseph Fitchett, "Soviets Reported Urging Arafat to Adopt Peaceful Procedures," *Washington Post*, 11 December 1974, p. A15; Marilyn Berger, "Russians Shift on Mideast," *ibid.*, 26 November 1974, p. A12.

[23]"Soviet Conditions," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 17 (29 April 1974), p. 1; "Soviet Reservations," *ibid.*, V, no. 21 (27 May 1974), p. 2. Cf. *ibid.*, V, nos. 28 (pp. 1-2), 23 (p. 1), 48 (p. 3).

[24]Statement of U.S. Secretary of State William P. Rogers before the Galaxy Conference on Adult Education, Washington, D.C., December 1969.

The Rogers Plan is now viewed in the State Department as the height of shallow thinking and ingenuousness. It is considered to have been a serious error to publicly advance specific proposals thereby alienating one or both sides and foreclosing later mediation. Indeed, many today question the realism of any policy that publicly places the United States in front of Israel in negotiation, thus opening the way for Israeli use of effective domestic U.S. pressure to blunt the U.S. initiative. The post-Rogers Plan view (that the most effective role for outside powers lies in creating conditions for settlement and "encouraging" the parties to establish and discuss their own settlement policies) still dominates American policy.[25]

The Soviet Union, however, views the situation differently. Soviet diplomats have emphasized that the Soviet Union has never wavered from the area of agreement reached in 1969-1971, that the U.S.S.R. still supports the principles and ideas on which the superpowers had seemed to generally reach an accord then.[26] They have expressed disappointment that the United States seems to have turned its back on the 1969-1971 talks. Soviet diplomats in late 1975 stressed that they were even cooperating with U.S. step-by-step diplomacy in the sense that they were not actively opposing it, even though they had serious reservations concerning the Kissinger step-by-step approach.[27] That the Soviets have been periodically discomfitted by their isolation from the center of the negotiation process while the United States took center stage has not been a secret.[28]

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[25]McLaurin, Mughisuddin, and Wagner, *Foreign Policy Making*, Chapter 2. This State Department view was asserted in strong terms to one of the authors by several senior officials of the Department in December 1975.

[26]R. D. McLaurin, Memorandum of Conversation, 3 December 1975, Participants: Mr. Tarasienko, Soviet Embassy; Mr. Vikulov, Soviet Embassy; Mr. Semakis, Department of State; R. D. McLaurin, Abbott Associates, Inc. (Hereinafter, McLaurin memo) This memcon is on file at the Alexandria office of Abbott Associates, Inc. "A Slow Process," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 21 (26 May 1975), pp. 203.

[27]McLaurin memo. Cf. Marilyn Berger, "Gromyko, Kissinger Confer," *Washington Post*, 18 February 1975, p. A11.

[28]McLaurin memo.

By the spring and summer of 1976, Syrian policy in the Lebanese conflict began to create additional pressures relevant to Soviet policy on an Arab-Israeli settlement. We address Soviet-Palestinian relations below,[29] but it is appropriate here to note that the virtual elimination of the Palestinians as an independent force in the conflict, when taken together with the radical shift in Egyptian relations with the superpowers, the continued vacuum in Soviet relations with Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Persian Gulf oil producing states[30] (whose subsidies are important to the Arab confrontation states), and the uncertainty of Syrian inclinations--these developments have evoked concern in the Kremlin lest the Soviet position throughout the Middle East be endangered.[31] Thus, in June, July, August, and September 1976, Moscow took various initiatives to support the Palestinians, and thereby Soviet relations with Iraq and Libya, with minimum risk to Syrian-Soviet relations.[32]

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[29] See Chapter 6.

[30] The Soviet Union has consequently tried to improve relations with Jordan most recently through an attempt to sell Soviet SAMs to that country after the initial breakdown in Jordanian-U.S. negotiations aimed at establishing HAWK missile sites in Jordan. Similarly, Soviet efforts to sell or give military equipment to Lebanon were several from 1970-1975. The Soviet Union moved to establish at least under-the-table relations with Israel in 1975 ("Renewed Contacts," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, IV, no. 17 [28 April 1975], pp. 2-4), a development that continued more openly into 1976 (Don Oberdorfer, "Russians Talk with Israelis," *Washington Post*, 27 May 1976, p. A1; Bernard Gwertzman, "Soviet-Israel Talks held by Envoys in Washington," *The New York Times*, 24 May 1975, p. 1). Some preliminary steps were made toward improving contacts, and establishing relations, with Saudi Arabia (Dev Murarka, "How Moscow is Countering Sadat's Tilt toward the U.S.," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 4 June 1975, p. 15) and other traditional Gulf states (Alan Berson, Klaus Luders, and David Morison, *Soviet Aims and Activities in the Persian Gulf and Adjacent Areas* [Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., 1976], *passim*).

[31] "Soviet Apprehensions," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 4 (28 January 1974), pp. 2-3.

[32] "Revision of Strategy," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 28 (15 July 1974), pp. 1-2; "Anti-U.S. Front," *ibid.*, V, no. 32 (12 August 1974), p. 1; "Rewards of Success," *ibid.*, V, no. 48 (2 December 1974), p. 3; "One More Time," *ibid.*, VI, no. 6 (10 February 1975), p. 2; Dana Adams Schmidt, "Kremlin Tries New Tactics in Tug of War Over Syria," *Christian Science Monitor*, 1 June 1976, p. 1; Christopher S. Wren, "Setback for Soviet," *The New York Times*, 12 June 1976, p. 5; John K. Cooley, "Soviets Held Unwilling to Estrange Syrians," *Washington Post*, 16 July 1976, p. A8.

The events of 1976, then, suggest the necessity of reopening the basic question, what would a settlement mean to the Soviet position in the Middle East?

Resolution of the principal aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict--territorial boundaries, peace treaties and recognition, Jerusalem, and the Palestinian problem--to the extent it reduces over time the threat of war that has been a constant in the Middle East for almost three decades, will greatly diminish the role of the U.S.S.R. in the confrontation states. Unable to effectively compete with the West in technology and commerce,[33] and even less able to compete in matters cultural,[34] the Soviet Union has relied principally on economic and military assistance as tools to effect and continue its presence.[35] While economic assistance will still be welcome, we think it likely that Syria in particular will reduce its arms procurement levels in order to increase economic and social development. Moreover, Syria will be able to diversify its weapons purchases, and will probably take advantage of that opporunity.

This is not to say that the Soviet Union will be excluded from the region. In a region of such diversity, there will always be intra-regional conflicts, and the parties to these conflicts will look outside the area for superpower support. We do feel that a settlement would end the prospects of dominant Soviet influence in the Middle East for the foreseeable future.

Indeed, mediating conflicts or maintaining neutrality between conflicting states that are both the objects of Soviet attention has been a major problem for the U.S.S.R. in the region and will continue to be a principal constraint on the dominance of any external powers.[36]

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[33] See Chapter 6 below, and McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, Chapter 5.

[34] McLaurin, *The Middle East*, Chapter 7.

[35] *Ibid.*, Chapters 5 and 6; Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, *passim*.

[36] "The Soviet Dilemma," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 15 (12 April 1976), Backgrounder; Cooley, "Soviets Held Unwilling."

Because we believe that it is not in the Soviet *regional* interest to see the achievement of a settlement in the Middle East, we expect a rise in Soviet-supported resistance to such a settlement if and as its realization nears. In that event, the United States must probably be prepared not only to offer or have offered concrete and important "sweeteners" for the Syrians, but, as well, to provide some global compensations to the Soviet Union for its perceived Middle East losses.

BACK TO NORTH AFRICA

The newest object of Soviet patronage in the Arab world is Libya. For almost five years after the 1969 coup that deposed King Idris, the Soviet Union was anathema to Libya's rulers, led by the Arab world's answer to Idi Amin, Muammar Qaddafi.[37] Today's "revolutionary" Libya is perhaps the best Arab example of Soviet disregard for ideological purity in its pragmatic search for influence. Whether Libya will prove worthy of Soviet attentions in this regard remains to be seen. Through Libya, Moscow has been able to increase the cost of Sadat's turn to the West,[38] assist the Palestinians without directly confronting Syria,[39] and continue its search for naval facilities along the Mediterranean littoral.[40] The past Soviet political excursions into the Maghreb have not proven durable,[41] and it is not at all clear that Soviet cooperation

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[37]Indeed, Qaddafi had taken such a strong anti-Soviet and anti-Communist position that the exploration of better relations was given over to the Libyan prime minister, Abdul Salam Jalloud. ("Better Than Ever Before," *An Nahar Arab Report,* V, no. 19 [13 May 1974], pp. 3-4.)

[38]*Ibid.;* "Enhancing Kaddafi's Prestige," *ibid.,* VI, no. 20 (19 May 1975), pp. 2-3; Juan de Onis, "Libya Said to Seek Closer Soviet Ties," *The New York Times,* 5 May 1974, p. 2; John K. Cooley, "Libya and Soviets Smile; Egypt Mutters," *Christian Science Monitor,* 22 May 1975, p. 3; Dev Murarka, "How Moscow."

[39]The Palestinian movement is said to have played "an instrumental role" in bringing Libya and the U.S.S.R. together. ("Enhancing Kaddafi's Prestige," p. 3.) Cooley, "Soviets Held Unwilling."

[40]See Chapter 4 below.

[41]Relations with Algeria have been generally good, but very unstable. After a period of Moroccan-Soviet flirtation around 1960, Rabat has been generally conservative, and has supported the West on many strategic issues.

with the Qaddafi regime is destined to break those precedents. The level of interaction with Libya is higher, particularly when the population of Libya is considered, but from the point of view either of the solidity of the Qaddafi regime's foundations or of the stability of its international policies, a long-term closeness between Benghazi and Moscow is far from a certainty.

EAST OF SUEZ

The much-vaunted Soviet move toward the Persian Gulf that is supposed to represent the effects of the post-1972 deterioration of Egyptian-Soviet relations is, we feel, a separate development only tangentially related to developments in the eastern Mediterranean. Notwithstanding the fact that the English term, "Middle East," includes both, the eastern Mediterranean/Levant and the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean areas are two regions posing very different politico-military challenges and potential for Soviet policy. Moreover, although inter-sub-regional issues have undeniably grown, Saudi Arabia and Iraq are the only Persian Gulf actors with a major interest in the other sub-region.

Because Soviet policy in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean areas has been addressed in other recent studies,[42] we shall circumscribe our discussion to a few essential elements.

The Gulf and Indian Ocean are not replacements for Egypt in Soviet eyes. If only because of Gulf petroleum resources, the U.S.S.R. would be interested in the area.[43] In addition, however, financial considerations have given the Gulf countries added importance in regional and international affairs; Iraq is a regional "client" of some duration; and Iran is of substantial importance to Moscow in view of its contiguity.

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[42] Berson et al., *Soviet Aims;* R, D. McLaurin, "Soviet Policy in the Persian Gulf," in *Conflict and Cooperation in the Persian Gulf*, edited by Mohammed Mughisuddin (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977).

[43] See Chapter 5 below.

Moreover, since the deployment of the Polaris A2, the Indian Ocean and its surrounding lands have been areas of strategic concern to Moscow.[44] This concern manifested itself in diplomatic initiatives as well as a growing military presence when the Soviet navy began to take on its new "blue-water" look.[45]

The politics of the Gulf and Indian Ocean areas in the 1970s are anachronistic, reminiscent of the decolonization era elsewhere that dominated some aspects of the global scene from 1947 until about 1970. The Gulf consists of a number of regimes of very traditional orientation committed to development of a conditional nature. The political philosophy of these kingdoms, sheikhdoms, and emirates is not just unrevolutionary; it is self-avowedly anti-revolutionary, conservative, and quasi-religious. Consequently, these states' policies have been characterized by the deep-seated distrust of their leaders toward communism and the Soviet Union.

Also parallel to the decolonization period in other areas, coexisting with the traditional governments are a number of *soi-disant* revolutionary regimes, such as that in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), military or police regimes (generally, on the Indian Ocean periphery), and other governments of uncertain ideology whose foreign policies nevertheless involve substantial interaction with one or the other of the superpowers.

The Soviet Union has taken advantage of those openings that have occurred around the Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean periphery to establish political, economic, cultural, and sometimes military relations. There has been scant pretense of ideological justification--nothing like the contrived rationalizations of a decade ago[46]--for Soviet support of or dealing with these governments. Today's rationale for Soviet political and military activities in the region centers on the importance of the area in global politics, national security, and local military strategy.[47]

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[44]Cf. Geoffrey Jukes, "The Indian Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy," *Adelphi Papers*, no. 87 (May 1972).

[45]Berson et al., *Soviet Aims*. See also Chapter 4 below.

[46]Lilita Dzirkalis, "Present Soviet Policy toward Third World States." Paper, Southern California Arms Control and Disarmament Seminar, November 1971.

[47]Berson et al., *Soviet Aims*.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Soviet military activities in the Middle East are related to Soviet strategic requirements as well as the Kremlin's Middle East policies. In order to consider these activities in their breadth, we shall address six separate types of Soviet military activities in the region: (1) facilities, (2) forces, (3) arms transfers, (4) training, (5) exercises, and (6) visits. As we have pointed out elsewhere,[1] the U.S.S.R. was engaged in none of these activities in the Middle East before 1955, but now is involved in all types on a regular basis.

FACILITIES

The Soviet Union has long criticized "foreign bases" in developing countries and claims to hold no foreign bases. For some years, this was the case (discounting bases in eastern Europe). However, Soviet facilities --to distinguish and spend time analyzing precise legal status is logomachy--more recently have included bases restricted to the use of the U.S.S.R. or constructed principally to serve Soviet ends. Most well known in this respect were the several facilities in Egypt used solely for Soviet purposes before the Russian expulsion from Egypt.

Soviet naval "facilities" tend to be--Egypt, again having been the exception--agreements for "use" of existing port or other base structures. As we have pointed out, the U.S.S.R. makes extensive use of anchorages in international waters, including Alboran, Lemnos, the Gulf of Hammamet, Cape Passero, Hurd Bank, Kithira, Cape Andreas, the Gulfs of Sirta and Sollum, and waters off Crete (including Gavidhos), Socotra, Rota, La Galite, Lampedusa, and Manfredonia.[2]

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[1] R. D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: Heath, 1975), p. 97.

[2] R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), p. 156; "Soviet Navy's 'Fatal Weakness,'" *Washington Post*, 18 August 1976, p. A24; U.S. Navy, Office of Information.

Agreements for the use of ports exist with Algeria, Libya, Syria, Yugoslavia, the Sudan, the Yemens, and Iraq. Until they were cancelled in March 1976, the U.S.S.R. also had rights to use Egypt's ports at Port Said, Alexandria, and Mersa Matruh. (These rights were terminated in connection with Cairo's abrogation of the Soviet-Egyptian Friendship Treaty signed in 1971.)[3]

The end of port use rights in Egypt is not significant to the extent normal port privileges are involved, since an increase in visits to Libyan or Syrian ports could offset the loss. However, the major repair, refit, and bunkering facilities in Egypt are now also unavailable to Soviet naval vessels. Thus, the only major facilities of this type currently open to Soviet ships in the Mediterranean are in Yugoslavia and Latakia, Syria, although some of these operations on a smaller level can also be undertaken in Tartus, Syria.[4] It is likely that the U.S.S.R. may attempt to develop facilities in Tripoli or Benghazi. (In addition, greater use might be made of the Algerian base at Mers-el-Kebir, but the Algerians have so far been consistent in their nationalist opposition to any substantial foreign military activities that give even the appearance of "foreign bases" or "foreign military rights.")

The reopening of the Suez Canal in June 1975 greatly enhanced Soviet naval capabilities to project, maintain, and support an Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf naval presence. We shall address this subject in more detail below in the context of our consideration of Soviet *forces*. The Suez opening has, however, increased the importance of Soviet *facilities* (use rights) in the Indian Ocean/Gulf area, specifically those in the Sudan and P.D.R.Y. Somalia, too, while generally outside the scope of this paper, must be considered in terms of its contribution to Soviet Indian Ocean capabilities. Moreover, Soviet air bases within range of the Mediterranean Sea, Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and the regional states are relevant, as well.

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[3]Flora Lewis, "Soviet Navy Loses Right to Use Egyptian Ports," *The New York Times*, 5 April 1976, pp. 1, 6; "Sadat to Oust Soviet Ships, Technicians," *Washington Post*, 16 March 1976, pp. A1, A13; "Soviet Navy Denied Use of Egypt's Ports; Sadat Warns Libyans," *Washington Star*, 5 April 1976, p. A1.

[4]John K. Cooley, "Aegean Seen Next Site of Soviet Fleet," *Washington Post*, 18 April 1976, p. A17.

Soviet naval facilities in Somalia have been given extensive publicity by the United States Government. They include a naval communications station, barracks, POL storage, and a missile storage and handling facility.[5] In Southern Yemen (P.D.R.Y.) the U.S.S.R. uses Aden as a submarine facility and Socotra for several functions. Although Basra is also extensively used by Soviet ships, there is less Western speculation concerning base rights there.[6]

A major weakness of Soviet forces outside the U.S.S.R. and its allies has been the lack of organic airpower. Soviet air bases in Egypt seemed for a while at least to reduce this weakness, and Russian MIG-25 reconnaissance flights were widely reported to be operating on a regular basis from Soviet-controlled air bases in Egypt. The loss of these bases has meant Soviet flights must now originate in Syria. However, the Berbera facilities also include an air base with a 15,000-foot runway. Soviet aircraft have operated from Berbera in support of Soviet

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[5] "U.S. Says Soviet Stores Missiles at Somalia Base," *The New York Times*, 11 June 1975, p. 4; John W. Finney, "The Soviets in Somalia: A 'Facility,' Not a 'Base,'" *ibid.*, 6 July 1975, p. 3; Guy Halverson, "Soviet Buildup in Somalia Disclosed," *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 June 1975, p. 1. The extensive American coverage of the Somali base development was a direct function of the U.S. Government's effort to secure Congressional support for expansion of the U.S. base at Diego Garcia. In early May 1976, U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James Akins testified before Congress that a Saudi offer to underwrite or provide aid to Somalia to eliminate the Soviet presence there was disregarded by the U.S. Government. Some members of Congress inferred from Akins' testimony that the Saudi offer was ignored in order to *use* the Russian presence in Somalia to justify the expansion of the Diego Garcia facility. Spencer Rich, "Ford Administration Role on Diego Garcia is Assailed," *Washington Post*, 7 May 1976, p. A2.

[6] Drew Middleton, "Soviet Said to Expand Air and Naval Activities in Persian Gulf Area," *The New York Times*, 8 March 1975, p. 2; John K. Cooley, "U.S., Soviets Seek Persian Gulf Bases," *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 February 1975, p. 2; "Strategic Risks," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 8 (25 February 1974), pp. 2-3. See also Drew Middleton, "Persian Gulf Emerging as Military Focus," *The New York Times*, 22 January 1975, p. 2. Elaborate speculation about giant Soviet bases being constructed in Iraq at Basra and Umm Qasr seem to have been shown by time to be great exaggerations.

naval operations in the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea. The U.S.S.R. has also been using a formerly British base in Aden, P.D.R.Y., for reconnaissance activity.[7]

FORCES

The Soviet Union has not had an extended history of deploying Soviet combat forces beyond territory under Soviet control (which includes eastern Europe). We have indicated the unusual nature of Soviet military activities in Yemen during the civil war there, and of the deployment in limited numbers of Soviet combat personnel to Egypt during the War of Attrition.[8]

Nevertheless, the new Soviet "blue-water" Navy[9] and a number of regional airbases have resulted in the deployment of substantial Soviet

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[7] Cooley, Aegean Seen"; Middleton, "Soviet Said." Some information on Soviet activities in Syria may be found in R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict: Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian Objectives and U.S. Policy* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975), pp. 211 and 242; and William Beecher, "Syria Said to Agree to Soviet Build-up at 2 of Her Ports," *The New York Times*, 14 September 1972, pp. 1, 18.

[8] Jon Glassman *(Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East* [Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975]) and others stress that the introduction of Soviet *combat* troops to Egypt was unprecedented in the postwar period. What are combat troops? Soviet combat troops, i.e., operational as opposed to advisory military personnel, were in Cuba in 1962, and Soviet pilots flew missions in the Yemen. We agree with Glassman and others that the Egyptian assignment was a fundamental change in Soviet policy, but largely because of the size of the forces involved and, for a while, of the degree of likelihood that they would see combat in circumstances that might reasonably be expected to be reported. However, most of the large influx of Soviet personnel sent to Egypt in the wake of the Israeli deep penetration raids during the War of Attrition took place in activities not likely to generate undue exposure or visibility.

[9] See Admiral Sergei Gorshkov's blueprint for his blue-water navy, *The Sea Power of the State*, summarized in 1974-1975 issues of the *Naval War College Review*. In fact, the Soviet Navy is a "blue-water" force only in the sense of its *size*. Its force structure, however, is molded very much as a first-strike, one-shot navy. "Understanding Soviet Naval Developments" (Washington: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations), April 1975, p. 19; C. B. Joynt and O. M. Smolanski, *Soviet Naval Policy in the Mediterranean* (Bethlehem: Department of International Relations, Lehigh University, 1972), p. 15.

air and naval forces in the Middle East. These forces include:

- about 55 vessels in the Mediterranean Squadron
- about 15 vessels in the Indian Ocean Squadron
- MIG-25 reconnaissance aircraft used largely or exclusively for strategic reconnaissance of Western forces.

Soviet naval deployments in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean/Arabian Sea/Persian Gulf seem to be stabilizing at these levels.

Originally established for strategic defensive purposes, the Mediterranean Squadron was subordinate to the Black Sea Fleet. Because the Suez Canal was blocked from 1967 until 1975, i.e., for most of the existence of the Mediterranean Squadron, that naval force was effectively connected to other Soviet naval forces only through the Dardanelles. The Squadron grew substantially between 1967 and 1973. It is a balanced force of surface and sub-surface combatants, with organic intelligence, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and logistical support. The Squadron frequently includes Soviet Northern and Baltic Fleet units for training purposes.[10]

The Indian Ocean Squadron has only more recently been permanently deployed. Generally, it consists of a missile cruiser, at least three destroyers, and at least two submarines. However, the Indian Ocean Squadron is expected to acquire one of the U.S.S.R.'s aircraft carriers within the next years.[11]

Soviet naval forces operate under severe geographical handicaps. All of the major Russian fleets either are bottled up in small, easily closed bodies of water or must use narrow straits that can be attacked by opposing forces.[12] Thus, the primary objective of Soviet naval forces in sustained operations will continue to be defensive, even if the area of Soviet naval operations grows and the level of force that can be used in the strategic defensive mission grows apace.

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[10] McLaurin, *The Middle East*, p. 99.

[11] "Soviet Navy's 'Fatal Weakness'"; Middleton, "Persian Gulf Emerging."

[12] "Soviet Navy's 'Fatal Weakness.'"

A mission of secondary strategic significance but of predominant importance in terms of the burden of day-to-day operations is the political mission. Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf "show the flag," i.e., symbolize in a tangible way the Soviet Union's regional interests and importance as a superpower.

Moreover, sometimes, as we shall see below, the Soviet Navy is used aggressively to communicate support for or opposition to specific policies or factions. Similarly, naval exercises reinforce the impression of the presence of a global power. Finally, as many writers have noted, the growth and active deployment policies of the Soviet Navy have raised the cost of unilateral American intervention in local conflicts. This development has had an effect on superpower activities and relations; neither is it lost on regional states in their own decisionmaking.[13]

Much has been written by Western observers, particularly by the United States Navy, about the changes in Soviet naval power and policy. That the Soviet Navy has grown and that this growth is reflected in policy is undeniable. However, it remains our contention that the Soviet Navy cannot--and need not for the foreseeable future--for strategic purposes be viewed as a threat to the Western nations nor even as a threat to their naval dominance. There are several bases for this assertion.

First, Soviet naval forces are, as we have already indicated, confined to waters from which egress is easily blocked.

Second, if Soviet naval power were used against the United States one must count on the additional naval forces likely to support each superpower. Soviet, East European, and other Socialist states' naval forces are greatly inferior to the aggregate naval power of the United States and its allies.

Third, ship numbers are misleading, since a high proportion of Soviet ships are support vessles.

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[13] R. D. McLaurin, "Arab Perceptions of the Superpower Military Balance," paper presented to the 1976 annual meeting of the International Studies Association, pp. 9-12.

Fourth, intervention capabilities (other than symbolic intervention) are limited by the small numbers of Soviet naval infantry normally deployed in the Middle East.[14]

Finally, Soviet naval forces still lack organic air power. To the extent Russian forces are engaged in operations close enough to their own shores to benefit from land-based air defense (both ADA/SAM and tactical air), this shortcoming is not a serious problem (although air cover for naval forces would degrade Soviet capability for similar missions on land). However, Soviet naval operations in the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean could not be given substantial shore-based air cover. The construction of aircraft carriers may be a small step toward ameliorating the lack of organic air, but three small aircraft carriers do not a credible naval air capability make. Air support, except in case of preemptive attack,[14] is critical to effective naval operations.

Table 4-1.

U.S. and Soviet Naval Strength in the Meditarranean Sea

	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Attack carriers	2	1
Helicopter carriers	1	1
Cruisers	1	2-4
Other escorts	15	9-12
Conventional submarines	3-6	8-10
SSM submarines	0	2-3
Fighter aircraft squadrons (carrier)	4	1
Attack squadrons (carrier)	6	0

Source: John M. Collins and John Steven Chwat, *The United States/Soviet Military Balance: A Frame of Reference for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 1976), p. 8. Updated to reflect deployment of *Kiev* to the Mediterranean Squadron.

Table 4-1 compares Soviet and American naval strength in the Mediterranean. Because strategic naval confrontations would also involve NATO and Warsaw Pact naval forces, attention must be paid as well to the modern, highly

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[14] By prepositioning certain ships destined for anti-carrier operations, the Soviet Navy could theoretically destroy U.S. attack carriers, even though such tactics would probably be suicidal in most cases. The objective of neutralizing, rather than defeating, the American Navy could conceivably be realized in this manner.

trained, and well-fitted Italian navy, the modernizing Spanish navy, the French navy, as well as the other NATO naval forces in the Mediterranean.[15] Table 4-2 compares NATO and Warsaw Pact ground and air forces in the Mediterranean theatre.

Table 4-2.

NATO/Warsaw Pact Forces: Mediterranean Theatre*

	NATO	Warsaw Pact
Forces on the Ground		
Armed Forces Personnel (total)	1,170,000	0
Tanks	4,250	0
Air Forces		
Fighter/Attack aircraft	600	0
Interceptors	175	0
Bombers	38	0
Naval Forces		
Attack Carriers	4	1
Helicopter carriers	1	2
Cruisers	4	3
Other escorts	85	10
Submarines (conventional)	40	9
Submarines (SSM)	0	3
Naval Air		
Carrier Aircraft	280	30

*Includes NATO forces of the U.S. (selected), France (selected), Italy, Greece, and Turkey; Warsaw Pact: Mediterranean forces of the U.S.S.R. U.S. aircraft in Spain are also included. No Spanish forces are included.

Sources: Collins and Chwat, *The United States/Soviet Military Balance*, p. 8; "Soviet Navy's 'Fatal Weakness'"; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, p. 160; Henry S. Bradsher, "Soviets Surprise Experts with Tough Carrier Jets in Mediterranean Force," *Washington Star*, 31 July 1976, p. A3, Drew Middleton, "Soviet Aircraft Carrier Strengthening Capacity of Fleet in the Mediterranean," *The New York Times*, 22 July 1976, p. 3; Lewis, *The Strategic Balance*, Appendix; International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1975-1976*.

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[15] See McLaurin, *The Middle East*, p. 99; and Jesse W. Lewis, Jr., *The Strategic Balance in the Mediterranean* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), pp. 111-116. More recently, the French have redeployed their carriers and some escorts from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

The portrait of comparative strengths and weakness in the Indian Ocean is much more complex. The small American Middle East Force, MIDEASTFOR, is essentially a flag-showing naval presence, not intended for combat purposes. Organizationally, MIDEASTFOR is a command responsible to the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, even though the U.S. Pacific Command has operational responsibility for the Indian Ocean area. By contrast, the Soviet Indian Ocean contingents are generally units detached from the Pacific Fleet.

Table 4-3.

Western and Soviet Strengths: Indian Ocean and Adjacent Areas

	Western Powers	U.S.S.R.
Ground Forces		
Armed Forces (Ground) Personnel	5,000	0
Air Forces		
Combat Aircraft	negl.	0
Naval Forces		
Carriers	0-2	0-1
Cruisers	0-3	0-1
Other Escorts	5-10	5
Submarines	0-3	1-3
Naval Aircraft		negl.

Although the power of Soviet forces deployed to the Middle East has grown since the assessment of our earlier studies, we do not feel we need go beyond the analysis presented at that time. The major increase

in the Soviet Indian Ocean presence--which some have argued poses a threat to Western petroleum supply--is a military threat only in a time of strategic conflict between the superpowers. Under such circumstances, the Strait of Hormuz is probably indefensible. Modern missiles and Soviet Central Asian-based aircraft could probably close the Strait easily.

Thus, Soviet naval power

> . . .is of symbolic importance. First, it demonstrates the fact that the Mediterranean[and Indian Ocean areas are] no longer an American--or even a purely Western--[preserve]. Second, and similarly, the naval force symbolizes the Soviet presence; its size and modernization--considering the U.S.S.R. is not a riparian state--show this is a great power presence. Third, probably more important than the degree to which [Soviet naval forces have] degraded the strategic capabilities of [Western regional power] is the degree to which indigenous peoples perceive this to be the case. Fourth, the [forces have] clearly placed additional constraints on American freedom of action. Additionally, the possibility of Soviet military intervention has been made more credible, perhaps directly or indirectly influencing internal Arab politico-military events.[16]

ARMS TRANSFERS

One of the preferred Soviet tools for presence and influence in the Middle East has been the sale or other transfer of weapons. In this, the U.S.S.R. is not alone, for the United States has been the primary regional arms supplier, although all major powers have provided at least some weapons to the Middle East.[17] (See Table 4-4.)

It has frequently been pointed out that the early (1955-1965) Soviet inclination to provide arms without adequate training or support gave way around 1967 to a more broad-based effort to increase the effectiveness of certain Arab military forces. That such a change should have occurred is hardly surprising; arms *supply* sufficed to achieve influence before

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[16] McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 161-162.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 163-166.

Table 4-4.

Major Arms Suppliers to the Middle East, 1951-1975

	1951-1955							1956-1960							1961-1965							1966-1970							1971-1975						
	US	UK	FR	Other NATO	USSR	East EUR	PRC	US	UK	FR	Other NATO	USSR	East EUR	PRC	US	UK	FR	Other NATO	USSR	East EUR	PRC	US	UK	FR	Other NATO	USSR	East EUR	PRC	US	UK	FR	Other NATO	USSR	East EUR	PRC
Bahrain																							X							X	X	X	X	X	X
Egypt	X	X	X	X	X	X						X	X			X			X	X						X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Iran	X			X				X	X		X				X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Iraq	X	X		X				X	X			X				X		X	X				X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X			
Israel	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X				X	X	X				
Jordan		X		X				X	X		X				X	X	X					X	X	X					X	X	X				
Kuwait									X							X		X					X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X		
Lebanon		X	X	X				X	X	X	X					X	X						X	X					X	X		X			
Oman		X							X							X		X					X		X					X					
Qatar																X							X						X	X	X	X			
Saudi Arabia	X	X	X					X	X						X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X						X	X	X	X	
Syria	X	X	X	X					X			X	X			X	X		X	X						X	X		X	X	X	X			
Turkey	X			X				X	X		X				X		X	X				X			X				X	X	X	X		X	
U.A.E.																							X							X			X		
Y.A.R.	X											X	X		X			X	X	X						X							X	X	
P.D.R.Y.																X							X		X	X						X	X		
Algeria																	X		X	X				X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Libya		X						X	X		X				X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Morocco										X		X			X		X		X			X		X	X		X		X	X	X			X	
Tunisia								X		X					X		X	X				X		X	X		X								

1967, but military effectiveness became a criterion of Soviet usefulness to Arab states after the June War.

Following the June War, and particularly after the War of Attrition, the U.S.S.R. significantly upgraded the level of its military training effort. (Training activities are described in more detail below.) A second improvement in military aid consisted of sending more appropriate or appropriately modified weapons systems. Third, a number of advanced weapons systems--some not deployed to Warsaw Pact nations--was sent, a major change from the Soviet pattern of sending outdated, second-line equipment to the region.[18]

During and after the October War, however, Soviet determination to maintain key restraints on arms supplies has been evident. Even when Arab states have received Soviet military materiel not yet deployed to the Warsaw Pact, they have virtually never received the best equipment the U.S.S.R. has. Most equipment is at least one generation behind the first line. Exceptions are marginal--surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), for example. The U.S.S.R. has at no time provided the wherewithal to convert the Arab forces from defensive armies to forces capable of mounting a sustained offensive against Israel.[19]

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[18]The best recent study of Soviet arms transfers to the Middle East is Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*.

[19]*Ibid., passim.* It is appropriate to note here a major difference between Soviet and Western military philosophies: "The United States honors a Principle of War called Economy of Force. Conversely, the Soviets implicitly prefer the Principle of Mass. [The former] therefore chooses quality instead of quantity, and generally retires outdated items when new ones enter the inventory. The [U.S.S.R.], which opts for both, adds recent arrivals to existing stocks, winnowing out predecessors only when they cease to serve useful purposes." (Emphasis in original.) Collins and Chwat, *The United States/Soviet Military Balance*, p. 15. It should be added that the Arab clients of the U.S.S.R. have also generally subscribed to the "Principle of Mass." Even old T-34 Soviet tanks are used. When they were not serviceable as armor or when TOEs phased down or out the number of T-34s, Syria, for example, used dug-in T-34s as additional artillery in prepared defensive positions. Apart from the principal human factors weakness of weapons counts and OB as a measure of military in the Middle East, this fundamental philosophical difference renders sterile counts even more misleading.

There should be no mistaking the size of the Soviet military assistance program in the Middle East. Five-sixths of all Soviet military aid has been in the Middle East and South Asia. Seventy-one percent has been to the Middle East and North Africa, fourteen percent to other countries bordering on the Indian Ocean (Somalia, India, etc.) and another five percent to Indian Ocean or Middle East proximate states not included for definitional purposes above (Afghanistan, Sudan, etc.) --a total of ninety percent of all Soviet military assistance. American and Soviet arms transfers are compared in Table 4-5.

From the figures in Table 4-5 it is evident that the Soviet Union has provided far fewer arms to the Middle East than has the United States. Even on a sub-regional basis, U.S. military assistance and sales outweigh Russia's.

As the new cooperation between Libya and the Soviet Union evolves, some of these figures are changing. Soviet data in Table 4-5 for 1975, are approximate, based on press accounts. Sources listed for Table 4-5 include data only through 1974.[20] There has been a significant change in the Maghreb where the 1974 total of Soviet military assistance was $395 million.

With figures such as those in Tables 4-5 and 4-6, we believe the argument that the U.S.S.R. has nurtured arms races is, if not refuted, certainly demonstrably irrelevant. One cannot study the inventory of Iran and easily conclude that acquisitions of the volume and types that Iran has made are required for defense against Iraq. Similarly, arms races in the Maghreb and the Levant are not the fault of the Soviet Union. Indeed, in the Arab-Israeli and Iranian-Iraqi arms races, the stronger party (though not necessarily the one with the larger arsenal) is primarily U.S.-armed. A similar, but far less clear-cut situation exists in the Maghreb.

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[20] A very useful annual publication previously issued by the State Department and entitled *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in* [*year*] is now being published by the Central Intelligence Agency under the title *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World,* [*year*]. Unfortunately, the new format is much less useful than the old, and figures for military assistance are not broken down by recipient.

Table 4-5.
U.S. and Soviet Military Assistance and Sales to the Middle East and North Africa, 1946-1975
($ U.S. Million)

	U.S. Security Assistance[a/c] (1946-1975)	U.S. Military Sales[b] (1950-1975)	Total U.S. Government (1950-1975)	Commercial U.S. Military Sales (1960-1974)	Total U.S.[c]	Total U.S.S.R. (1955-1974)
Bahrain	0	-	-	0	-	0
Egypt	0	.4	.4	2.0	2.4	3,450
Iran	867.4	10,366.7	11,234.1	151.7	11,385.8	850
Iraq	47.8	13.2	61.0	5.8	66.8	1,800
Israel		4,901.5	4,901.5	234.2	5,135.7	0
Jordan	284.4	280.4	564.8	4.2	569.0	0
Kuwait	0	400.9	400.9	.9	401.8	-
Lebanon	15.0	19.6	34.6	5.5	40.1	3
Oman	0	1.6	1.6	.8	2.4	0
Qatar	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	37.0	7,224.6	7,261.6	143.2	7,404.8	0
Syria	.1	-	.1	2.0	2.1	2,500
Turkey	3,812.1	312.8	4,124.9	22.9	4,147.8	0
U.A.E.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y.A.R.	-	3.0	3.0	0	3.0	80
P.D.R.Y.	0	0	0	0	0	80
CENTO	0	0	0	0	0	0
Algeria	0	0	0	.4	.4	550
Libya	16.1	29.6	45.7	33.0	78.7	900
Morocco	44.3	342.6	386.9	1.9	388.8	55
Tunisia	45.3	6.2	51.5	0	51.5	0
Total ME	5,063.8	23,524.7	28,588.5	573.2	29,161.7	8,763
Total No. AF	105.7	378.4	484.1	35.3	519.4	1,505
Total	5,169.5	23,903.1	29,072.6	608.5	29,681.1	10,268

[a] Military Assistance Program, excess grants at legal value (⅓ of acquisition cost), Turkish portion of Greek-Turkish aid, and other grants.

[b] Orders

[c] Does not include Security Supporting Assistance grants and loans ($ U.S. million): Egypt ($290.2), Iran ($205.3), Israel ($474.5), Jordan ($452.1), Syria ($83.0), Turkey ($823.6), Y.A.R. ($25.1), CENTO ($22.2). Does not include Near East South Asia Regional military assistance.

Sources: U.S. Agency for International Development, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations: Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945-June 1975*; U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Agency, *Foreign Military Sales and Military Assistance Facts November 1975*; U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1974*. Soviet data updated by author estimates based on press accounts for 1975.

Table 4-6.

American and Soviet Sub-Regional Military Assistance
($ U.S. Million)

	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Confrontation states[a]	5,749.3	5,553
North Africa[b]	519.4	847
Iran-Iraq	11,452.6	2,450
Northern Tier[c]	15,600.4	2,450
Y.A.R./P.D.R.Y./Saudi Arabia	7,407.8	160
Persian Gulf[d]	19,259.2	2,450
Indian Ocean[e]	12,474.5	2,522

[a]Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria

[b]Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

[c]Iran, Turkey, Iraq

[d]Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, U.A.E.

[e]Including Arabian Sea, India, Iran, Kenya, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Somalia, Tanzania, P.D.R.Y.

Sources: Same as Table 4-5; "Russ Forces have use of 16 Sites in Africa--Pentagon," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 January 1976, part 1, pp. 1, 8.

To date, the U.S.S.R. has provided virtually all arms on a loan basis. However, in some cases, inability to make scheduled debt payments has been accepted by Moscow, and the debts either rescheduled or retired. By contrast, the substantial debts owed the Soviet Union by Egypt have been a major cause of friction and have constituted a key Soviet pressure on the Sadat regime. (See below, Chapters 5 and 6.)

Current advanced Soviet weapons systems introduced or about to be introduced to the Middle East include the MIG-23 and TU-22, the SAM-9, and the BMP-76. The only major area of weapons systems in which no advanced versions have been sent to the region is naval. (However, this so-called "advanced" materiel cannot be compared with arms, ammunition,

and associated equipment delivered or on order to Israel and Iran. One cannot equate a MIG-23 with the F-15, and the air-to-air missiles [AAMs] and air-to-surface missiles [ASMs] sent to the Arabs are generations behind the stand-off weapons and other precision-guided munitions [PGMs] the United States is now delivering to Israel. The qualitative arms imbalance--in materiel at least--has probably never favored the Israelis more than at present.)[21]

TRAINING

We shall look at two categories of military training--(1) in-country training and advisory efforts, and (2) military training within the U.S.S.R.

In-Country Training

Since most Soviet arms transfers have gone to Middle East and North African states, it is hardly surprising that most Soviet military technicians--including advisory personnel--have also been sent to that region. Over the last five years, the regional Soviet advisory picture has changed substantially, most prominently in Egypt:

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[21]The role of Egypt in any Arab-Israeli war is vital, and the deterioration of Egypt's military position as a result of the lack of spares and replacements following the cut-off of Soviet military supply has placed the Arabs in an untenable military position. While Syria is receiving advanced Soviet equipment, the Syrians have neither the force size nor the trained manpower to effectively use this materiel. Moreover, post-October War U.S.-Israeli agreements have been reached for the sale of very advanced U.S.-produced aircraft, air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles, and associated ammunition. Many of these weapons systems have stand-off capabilities.

Table 4-7.

Soviet Military Technicians in the Middle East and North Africa, 1971-1975

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Algeria	1,000	1,000	600	600	600
Egypt	5,500	5,500	750	750	200
Iran	35	40	45	50	50
Iraq	400	500	750	1,000	1,000
Libya	0	0	0	50	50
Morocco	35	20	0	0	20
Syria	800	1,100	1,650	2,200	3,000
Y.A.R.	100	100	25	120	120
P.D.R.Y.	180	200	200	200	200
Total ME/NAF	8,050	8,460	4,010	4,970	5,490
Total World	9,480	9,450	5,590	6,910	

NOTE: Advisory, instructor, and technical personnel only. In 1971 and 1972 (to July), there were approximately 15-20,000 total Soviet military personnel in Egypt. Most of these were assigned to Soviet operational units and are therefore not shown on Table 4-7.

Sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance* (Annual); U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade* (annual for years 1971-1974); U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1975;* "Russ Forces have Use"; "Sadat to Oust Soviet Ships, Technicians," *Washington Post,* 16 March 1976, p. A1; Eric Pace, "Last of the Russians are Leaving Egypt," *The New York Times,* 31 July 1976, p. 6; Jack Foisie, "Russian Withdrawal from Egypt Likely," *Los Angeles Times,* 16 March 1976, part I, p. 10; Drew Middleton, "Soviet Expands Weapons Aid to Syria," *The New York Times,* 26 October 1975, p. 3; Drew Middleton, "Syria, with Forces Built Up Since '73, Maintains Alert Stance in Golan Area," *Ibid.*, 21 July 1975, p. 4; Oswald Johnston, "Price Tag on Reported Soviet-Libyan Military Pact Seen As Only $1 Billion," *Los Angeles Times,* 29 May 1975, part 1, p. 20; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union,* p. 173; Roger F. Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid to Iraq and Syria, *Strategic Review,* IV, No. 1 (Winter 1976), p. 57.

Contrasting the magnitude of U.S. and Soviet advisory efforts in the area, Table 4-8 indicates that American "advisors" in the Middle East and North Africa are substantially outnumbered by their Soviet counterparts. However, this statistic is very misleading, since the larger part of the U.S. training effort in the two major countries in which the United States has military missions, Iran and Saudi Arabia, is carried out by private U.S. citizens. Although we do not know the dimensions of the total American civilian training effort in several Middle East countries (indicated by NA in Table 4-9), Table 4-9 compares the number of Soviet military technicians in the Middle East and North Africa with (1) their U.S. government counterparts and (2) U.S. civilians engaged in DOD-related activities.

Table 4-8.

U.S. and Soviet Government Military Technicians
in the Middle East and North Africa: 1975

	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Algeria	0	600
Bahrain	0	0
Egypt	0	200
Iran	1077	50
Iraq	0	1000
Israel	0	0
Jordan	12	0
Kuwait	9	0
Lebanon	0	0
Libya	0	200
Morocco	21	20
Oman	0	0
Qatar	0	0
Saudi Arabia	160	0
Syria	0	3000
Tunisia	10	0
Turkey	134	0
U.A.E.	0	0
Y.A.R.	0	120
P.D.R.Y.	0	200
	1423	5490

Table 4-9.

U.S. and Soviet Defense-Related Personnel
in the Middle East and North Africa: 1975

	U.S. Govt	U.S. Private	Total U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Algeria	0	0	0	600
Bahrain	500	0	500	0
Egypt	15	NA	15?	200
Iran	1360	3200	4560	50
Iraq	0	0	0	1000
Israel	0	NA	0?	0
Jordan	12	NA	12?	0
Kuwait	10	40	50	0
Lebanon	0	0	0	0
Libya	0	0	0	300
Morocco	1000	NA	1000?	20
Oman	0	0	0	0
Qatar	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	370	1420	1790	0
Syria	5	0	5	3000
Tunisia	10	NA	10?	0
Turkey	7000	NA	7000?	0
U.A.E.	0	0	0	0
Y.A.R.	5	0	5	120
P.D.R.Y.	0	0	0	200
	10,290	4680+	14,935+	5490

Sources: Same as Tables 4-7 and 4-8; Robert M. Brodkey and James Horgen, *Americans in the Gulf: Estimates and Projections of the Influx of American Nationals into the Persian Gulf, 1975-1980* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975); Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) News Release 452-75, 89-76, 243-76; Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs); U.S. Defense Security Assistance Agency.

Most of the Soviet training missions have been established and operate specifically to train personnel on weapons systems acquired from the U.S.S.R. In the cases of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria, however, Soviet training has been a fundamental part of the overall military training effort. Although Egypt eliminated most of its Soviet training mission in 1972, remnants stayed on until 1976.[22] (By early 1977, there may be no Soviet training personnel in Egypt for the first time in many years.) Remaining trainers are primarily concerned with the maintenance of MIG-23s shipped to Egypt after 1973.[23]

The Soviet training role in Iraq and Syria has never been as pervasive as it was in Egypt by 1971-1972. Both countries have relied more on Soviet weapons training than on Soviet overall military training.

The quality and effectiveness of the Soviet training effort in Egypt are still disputed. Military personnel felt that while many Soviet advisors were qualified and earned Egyptian respect, others were not. Inevitable problems arose in the command of Egyptian units: to what extent were advisors only advisors?[24]

The departure of the Russian advisors in 1972 affected the Air Defense Command more than any other service since the Soviets had been essentially in charge of the air defense effort since the War of Attrition. Since a major effort of the Soviet presence was involved in training Egyptians in the operation and maintenance of the air defense system, the relative effectiveness of the system in the October War speaks well of the Soviet effort.

Considering the number of advisors involved in Syrian training, there have been relatively few reports of frictions between the Soviets

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[22]Eric Pace, "Last of the Russians Are Leaving Egypt," *The New York Times*, 31 July 1976, p. 6.

[23]Jack Foisie, "Russian Withdrawal from Egypt Likely," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 March 1976, part 1, p. 10.

[24]Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan*, p. 178.

and their Syrian counterparts.[25] While the Soviet effort in neither Iraq nor Syria approaches the level of Soviet training at its height in Egypt, comparative armed forces' size reduce the difference significantly. (See Table 4-10.)

Table 4-10.

Soviet Military Personnel in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria and Comparative Armed Forces Size--1971, 1973, 1975

	Armed Forces Size	Soviet Mil Techn	Total Soviet Mil	Ratio of Natl Mil to Sov Techn
Egypt, 1971	318,000	5,500	16,000	57.8:1
Iraq, 1971	95,250	400	400	238.1:1
Syria, 1971	111,750	800	800	139.7:1
Egypt, 1973	298,000	750	750	397.3:1
Iraq, 1973	101,800	750	750	135.7:1
Syria, 1973	132,000	1,650	1,650	80.0:1
Egypt, 1975	402,500	200	200	2,012.5:1
Iraq, 1975		1,000	1,000	
Syria, 1975	230,000	3,000	3,000	767.1:1

Sources: Same as Table 4-7.

Soviet training in all three Arab countries has been based on Soviet pre-nuclear military doctrine, and Egyptian and Syrian forces in the October War generally followed Soviet training and doctrine.[26]

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[25] After the withdrawal of Soviet advisors from Egypt, several reports about frictions between Soviet and Syrian military personnel arose. See "Cautious Approach," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, III, no. 32 (7 August 1972), p. 2; "New Policy Lines," *ibid.*, III, no. 35 (28 August 1972), p. 1; "Crisis is Brewing," *ibid.*, IV, no. 30 (23 July 1973), p. 2; Riad N. El-Rayyes and Dunia Nahas, eds., *The October War: Documents, Personalities, Analyses and Maps* (Beirut: An-Nahar Press Services, S.A.R.L., 1974), pp. 178-180.

[26] See Amnon Sella, "Soviet Training and Arab Performance," *Jerusalem Post Magazine* (8 February 1974), *passim*.

The method was summarized well by Chaim Herzog:

> . . . The Soviets . . . trained the Egyptian Army to take a military problem, to analyze it, to find a solution, to translate that solution into a military plan, to detail the plan, to exercise it and to prepare it operationally. The Egyptians . . . learned to act as a modern army. For years the individual soldier was trained in his particular role in war: each unit dealt with its own problem and nothing else. . . [E]very day for years all operators of Sagger anti-tank missiles lined up outside vans containing simulators and went through half an hour's exercise in tracking enemy tanks with their missile. Even later when the Israeli and Egyptian armies were ranged one against the other in a war of attrition inside Egypt on the West Bank of the Suez Canal, Israeli forces noted the simulator trucks driving up every day to the front lines in order to allow the troops to undergo their daily anti-tank training. This system was repeated right down the line in the army until every action became a reflex action.[27]

Repetition, then, was the key to training. The corollary of this approach is that solutions are stereotyped--"by the book." Arab forces are trained in set-piece tactics along "canned" lines that do not allow for the intervening variables that always occur in combat. In air training, too, Soviet training has stressed formation flying and standardized tactics, with limited air-to-air combat or air-to-ground work.[28]

Among the problems in Arab military combat performance, command and control and leadership problems are probably reinforced by Soviet training. The rigidity of Arab C^3 systems impedes the leadership potential of the increasingly competent junior officers. However, it is unclear, given reliance on Soviet training which promotes textbook solutions to stereotyped problems, that greater flexibility in command structure would lead to greater innovation and flexibility in field commands.

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[27] Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement: October 1973* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), pp. 34-35.

[28] Robert R. Ropelewski, "Egypt Assesses Lessons of October War," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (17 December 1973), p. 16; "The Middle East Conflict: The Military Dimension, Interviews with Riad Ashkar and Haytham al-Ayyubi," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, IV, no. 4 (1975), p. 6.

On balance, the Arab improvement in 1973 over 1967 and previous wars is largely attributable to better planning (and resulting surprise). It is not clear--despite voluminous literature to the contrary--that Arab combat performance relative to the IDF improved more than marginally between 1967 and 1973.[29]

The benefits of military training, like other intergovernmental assistance, to the country providing it are the intended response of the country and the influence such aid creates. By "intended response" we mean the individual and collective recipient reactions to the act and process of aid-giving.

> . . . The success of any international assistance programme depends in large measure on the psychology of the recipient. Whether the recipient accepts overtures from a potential donor, initiates negotiations, agrees to terms, accepts the donor's specific plan of operation, co-operates in the programme's implementation, allies himself with the donor on subsequent political matters, or grants other political or economic favours to the donor: these are all vitally influenced by the attitudes, aspirations and perceptions of the recipient.[30]

Soviet experience in recipient reaction has not demonstrated that in-country training programs, large (as in Egypt) or small (as in Morocco or Iran), have any real staying power or positive affect among the trainees. Moreover, many students of military assistance--both American and Soviet programs--have asserted that it is frequently the recipient rather than the training country that in practice wields influence.

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[29] See T. N. Dupuy and Janice B. Fain, "Laws Governing Combat," *National Defense*, LX, no. 333 (November-December 1975), p. 221; T. N. Dupuy et al., "Comparative Analysis, Arab and Israeli Combat Performance, 1967 and 1973 Wars," paper, Historical Evaluation and Research Organization, June 1976.

[30] Emphasis added. Kenneth and Mary Gergen, "International Assistance in Psychological Perspective," in Ronald De McLaurin et al., *The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application*, I (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office for Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1976), p. 315.

Military Training in the U.S.S.R.

Training in the U.S.S.R. involves a smaller effort than the foreign military training carried out by the Soviet Union in developing countries. For example, there were 3,575 developing country military trainees in the U.S.S.R. in 1975, and 5,490 Soviet advisory/technical personnel in developing countries in the same year. Table 4-11 presents the dimension of the military training effort in the U.S.S.R. compared to the U.S. effort.

Table 4-11.

Middle East Military Personnel Trained in the U.S.S.R. and the United States*

Military Personnel	Military Personnel Trained in United States*	U.S.S.R.
Algeria	0	1,975
Bahrain	0	0
Egypt	0	5,675
Iran	9,018	275
Iraq	372	2,950
Israel	0	0
Jordan	1,054	0
Kuwait	0	0
Lebanon	312	0
Libya	429	900
Morocco	1,105	75
Oman	0	0
Qatar	0	0
Saudi Arabia	1,174	0
Syria	23	3,325
Tunisia	446	0
Turkey	16,274	0
U.A.E.	0	0
Y.A.R.	5	0
P.D.R.Y.	0	725
	30,212	15,900

*U.S. Figures include only students trained under the Military Assistance Program. Students trained under sales agreements are not reflected in Table 4-11.

Sources: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid*, p. 31; U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Assistance Agency, *Foreign Military Sales*, p. 12.

Training of military personnel in the Soviet Union has been a controversial subject in countries receiving the training. The language barrier has created instructional difficulties in the U.S.S.R. as it has in the field. Arab military students do not attend all classes given to Soviet personnel, for security and other reasons. This has fueled resentment. Moreover, supplemental reading of technical journals is virtually impossible, because relatively little new material regarding defense matters is made public in the Soviet Union.[31]

At the same time, Soviet technical training of military personnel from the Middle East carried out in the U.S.S.R. is probably adequate. Rumors of lax discipline abound, but it is to be assumed that many of the problems that arise in general, advanced level courses of instruction do not plague technical military training to an equivalent degree. However, standard problems of Soviet military training do apply--stereotyped training, language problems, emphasis on standard answers to sterile training "problems," and set-piece operations.

Soviet Military Training in the Middle East Since 1973

The magnitude of Soviet military training of Middle East armed forces personnel is on the rise. With the anticipated influx into Libya over the next few years, this level may increase still further. However, it is clear that additional increases will be marginal and that the Soviet training effort as a tool to insure Soviet influence has "peaked." It is unlikely that any other Arab country can absorb the numbers of Soviet military personnel deployed in Egypt in 1971-1972. Because regional diversity guarantees the existence of regional conflicts, there will continue to be countries turning to the U.S.S.R. for support in arms and training. However, for the same reason, stability in arms and training procurement will continue to be elusive. Only a few years ago we could write "where the Soviet Union became a significant supplier in the Middle East, there the Soviet Union became the virtually sole supplier, at least of major weapons systems."[32] No longer is this true. Table 4-4 shows a

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[31]Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan*, p. 178.

[32]McLaurin, *The Middle East*, p. 108.

clear movement away from limited arms supplier situations in 1971-1975, and this primarily due to procurement after 1973. Training is in large measure a function of the arms trade.

Soviet training has been moderately effective in improving combat capabilities of the armed forces trained. In Egypt, improvement in combat performance from 1967 to 1973 was apparent, but was probably clearest in junior and middle-grade officer leadership. Syrian combat effectiveness in 1973 was greatly improved over an almost incredibly inept performance in 1967 (although Syrian and Egyptian troops made several impressive defensive stands in fixed positions in 1967). While combat performance relative to Israeli forces probably did not improve more than marginally, both Egypt and Syria conducted creditable modern military campaigns in accordance with strategy and tactics based on Soviet doctrine. Soviet training must be accorded at least some of the credit for the improvement. Since 1973, the Syrians have been working assiduously, under Soviet guidance, on correcting many of the deficiencies evidenced during the hostilities. Iraqi performance in 1973 is generally regarded as poor, and reports on Iraqi military training since 1973 are too scarce to permit judgment as to post-war training activity.

In terms of the influence Soviet training is designed to confer, it appears that military training is a lever of limited utility. The largest training effort outside the Soviet Union gave Moscow little influence in Egypt after Nasser died, and training is far less important than domestic political considerations in underwriting Soviet influence in Syria. Moscow was not consulted about the October War,[33] and has frequently complained of the difficulty in convincing the Syrians to heed Soviet advice. Moreover, the close relationship between counterparts that is presumed to characterize a military training environment frequently does not obtain. Soviet cultural patterns and security concerns work to increase the elusiveness of such a relationship in its training missions in the Arab world.[34]

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[33]Heikal, *The Road to Ramadan*, pp. 24-25.

[34]McLaurin, *The Middle East*, pp. 134, 138-140.

EXERCISES

Soviet exercises in the Middle East region are by nature naval exercises. Their intent is severalfold--(1) as a training tool in joint exercises with local forces, (2) as a demonstration of Soviet power to impress local nationals, particularly armed forces elites, and (3) as a training effort for Soviet forces. Our interest for the purposes of this report is focused on the first two of these intentions, and on the last only to the extent it reveals something of Soviet Middle East policy or activities.

Naval exercises with littoral states have been used to train the Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian navies. The post-1973 Egyptian friction has led to the end of Soviet naval cooperation with Egypt. Little is known about these operations, but they suggest that the Iraqi and Syrian naval doctrine and training closely parallel Soviet doctrine. The dismal Arab performance against the Israeli navy in October 1973 indicates that the Syrian navy has not so far benefitted from Soviet training. Exercises can probably be expected to assist only marginally. Soviet naval exercises probably demonstrate such a margin of professionalism over the naval forces they train that Soviet operations make a positive impact. Soviet naval exercises in the Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean have demonstrated to Western analysts a significant increase in Soviet naval capabilities.[35] In addition, exercises have shown an active strategic role is planned for Soviet establishments in Somalia and Syria.[36]

While exercises are customarily--at least in recent times--used to create goodwill rather than to intimidate, Soviet exercises have also been employed as a show of force to indicate support for specific political factions within Arab states.[37] Use of exercises in this manner (gunboat diplomacy) is limited and probably has relatively little impact.

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[35] Cooley, "Aegean Seen Next Site." Measures of the usefulness of exercises are their frequency, duration, and size. Soviet exercises are brief, rarely exceeding a few days' length. They typically include very few units. Lewis, *The Strategic Balance*, p. 73.

[36] Cooley, "Aegean Seen Next Site."

[37] "Saudi-Soviet Rivalry," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 18 (3 May 1976), p. 4.

VISITS

Since 1973, Soviet naval and armed forces visits have retained the character they had before the October War. The greatest difference has been the reduction in visits to Egypt--a sharp and sudden change.[38]

Soviet naval personnel, like economic and military aid personnel, also behave differently from their Western counterparts.

> The men are more rigidly controlled. Soviet sailors are not allowed to go ashore individually. They wear their uniforms, walk in groups of five or six, and are always accompanied by a petty officer. They do not frequent bars, and the times and places for souvenir shopping are arranged. The sailors rarely eat more than one meal in the local restaurants during the port visit.[39]

Overall frequency of naval visits has increased as a function of the increased (and now permanent) presence of Soviet ships in the Mediterranean Sea and, especially, the Indian Ocean. Visits have been used to apply pressure on domestic political factions within Arab countries, but are more generally carried out with a view to "showing the flag" and creating goodwill. As we have indicated elsewhere, the amount of goodwill actually created is limited by the fact that visits are made to countries with good relations already exist. Table 4-12 provides some idea of comparative U.S. and Soviet visits in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean areas.

Table 4-12.

Countries Visited by Soviet and U.S. Forces in the Mediterranean, 1964 and 1974

	1964	1974
United States	11	10
Soviet Union	1	7

Source: Lewis, Jr., *The Strategic Balance*, pp. 45-69.

CONCLUSION

A review of Soviet military activities in the Middle East and North Africa shows a clear growth trend in the nature and intensity of these

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[38] In 1973, for the first time, Soviet ships of the Mediterranean Squadron visited Messina and Taranto, Italy.

[39] Lewis, *The Strategic Balance*, p. 73.

activities, a curve that has probably leveled off. The reduction (and, later, elimination) of the Soviet presence in Egypt and the October War signalled the high-water mark of the Soviet military role in the Mediterranean part of the Arab world; such a point is yet to be reached in the Persian Gulf area. (See Tables 4-13 and 4-14.) It is likely that the U.S. role in the Mediterranean will remain significant--probably after growing somewhat beyond its current level. Meanwhile, the U.S. role in the Gulf area will also increase for the next few years, but will probably shrink on a relative basis later (as Soviet activities there rise).

The military activities of the Soviet Union in the Middle East and North Africa serve two principal purposes--political and military. Of these, their political mission is the more important. The Mediterranean Squadron and Indian Ocean presence do have a strategic military purpose related to the defense of the U.S.S.R., but this mission--which is inherently more critical than the political purpose--is of secondary importance on a day-to-day basis, given the political and military realities in which these Soviet forces are established and maintained.

Military training and arms transfers are a good index of political relations, especially if the lag between agreements and deliveries is taken into account. Tables 4-15 shows the change in weapons procurement patterns. Table 4-16 compares arms transfers of several powers other than the United States and the Soviet Union. It is clear that there is a recent move to diversify arms procurement, and that while Soviet arms sales to the Middle East and North Africa are not diminishing, the Soviet share of the regional arms trade is declining. (See Table 4-17.)

Soviet (and Western) arms transfers and other military activities designed to gain influence in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa can be effective. Unquestionably, the supply of spare parts, ammunition, and training create long-term recipient needs for cooperation with the donor that can enhance the latter's influence. However, as the Soviets have learned many times, periods of actual military conflict are the exception not the rule, and even during hostilities, as well certainly as during periods of non-hostilities, Soviet activities -- oriented toward securing and maintaining influence -- may conduce to local influence instead.

Table 4-13.

U.S. and Soviet Military Activities in the Middle East and North Africa (Except the Persian Gulf), 1946-1975

	1945-1954		1955-1964		1965-1975	
	U.S.	U.S.S.R.	U.S.	U.S.S.R.	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Facilities	X		X		X	
Forces	X		X	X	X	X
Arms Transfers	X		X	X	X	X
Training	X		X	X	X	X
Exercises	X		X		X	X
Visits	X		X	X	X	X

Table 4-14.

U.S. and Soviet Military Activities in the Persian Gulf, 1946-1975

	1945-1954		1955-1964		1965-1975	
	U.S.	U.S.S.R.	U.S.	U.S.S.R.	U.S.	U.S.S.R.
Facilities	X		X		X	
Forces	X		X		X	X
Arms Transfers	X		X	X	X	X
Training	X		X	X	X	X
Exercises	X		X		X	X
Visits			X		X	X

Table 4-15.

U.S. and Soviet Arms Transfer Countries, Middle East and Persian Gulf, 1951-1975

Supplier Country	Recipient Area	Countries	1951-1955 Countries	%	1956-1960 Countries	%	1961-1965 Countries	%	1966-1970 Countries	%	1971-1975 Countries	%
U.S.	Middle East	6	4	67	4	67	3	50	3	50	4	67
	North Africa	4	0	0	2	50	2	50	2	50	3	75
	Persian Gulf	10	4	40	3	30	3	30	3	30	7	70
	Total	20	8	40	9	45	8	40	8	40	14	70
U.S.S.R.	Middle East	6	1		2	33	2	22	2	33	3	50
	North Africa	4	0	0	1	25	2	50	2	50	3	75
	Persian Gulf	10	0	0	2	20	2	20	4	40	4	40
	Total	20	1	5	5	25	6	30	8	40	10	50

Table 4-16.

NATO and Other European Arms Transfer Countries, Middle East and Persian Gulf, 1951-1975

Supplier Country	Recipient Area	Countries	1951-1955 Countries	%	1956-1960 Countries	%	1961-1965 Countries	%	1966-1970 Countries	%	1971-1975 Countries	%
NATO	Middle East	6	6	100	5	83	6	100	4	67	6	100
	North Africa	4	1	25	3	75	4	100	4	100	4	100
	Persian Gulf	10	4	40	5	50	7	70	9	90	7	70
	Total	20	11	55	13	65	17	85	17	85	17	85
East Europe	Middle East	6	1	17	2	33	2	33	2	33	2	33
	North Africa	4	0	0	0	0	2	50	3	75	2	50
	Persian Gulf	10	0	0	1	10	1	10	2	20	3	30
	Total	20	1	5	3	15	5	25	7	35	7	35

Table 4-17.

Shares of the Middle East Arms Trade, 1950-1975[a] (in %)

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1950-1975
United States[b]	39.3	55.3	53.3	63.3	55.3	52.5
Other NATO	23.2	14.9	19.9	21.2	34.0	23.7
Total NATO	62.5	70.2	73.2	84.5	89.3	76.2
U.S.S.R.	35.6	25.0	24.7	12.8	8.4	20.4
Other Warsaw Pact	1.6	4.6	1.6	1.4	1.5	2.5
Other Western Europe	0.3	0.1	-	0.1	-	0.3
P.R.C.	-	0	0	0	0.1	-
Other	-	0.1	0.5	1.3	0.8	0.7

[a]Intraregional arms transfers are not included.

[b]U.S. MAP figures for 1950-1975 are actually for 1949-1975.

Sources: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *The Arms Trade with the Third World World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1972, World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1973, World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1974, World Armaments and Disarmament SIPRI Yearbook 1975;* International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1971-1972, The Military Balance 1972-1973, The Military Balance 1973-1974, The Military Balance 1974-1975, The Military Balance 2975-2976;* United States Agency for International Development, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants;* U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Assistance Agency, *Foreign Military Sales;* U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Trade 1963-1973.*

CHAPTER FIVE

SOVIET ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Soviet aid to the Middle East has generally been directed towards penetration. The evidence supporting penetration as the essential goal is that economic relations with the Mideast have been costly to the U.S.S.R., relatively more costly than equal economic interactions (in terms of both quantity and value) would be for the United States; that economic relations in and of themselves are of little worth to the Soviets (and in fact hinder more than benefit the Soviet economy); that the nature of and trends in Soviet economic enterprises in the region evince political priorities; and that the Soviet Union has been determined to demonstrate for politically relevant ends, "that the Soviet program of modernization [is] more effective than that of the West. . ."[1]

Events since 1972 have generated a decisive shift in Soviet economic policy objectives in the region. Although penetration is still a major Soviet aim, economic returns on Soviet agreements with the region are gaining in importance. In view of the changing priorities of Soviet economic relations with the region we have divided the subject of economic activities into sections on economic assistance and trade.

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

The nature of Soviet aid to the Middle East remained largely the same in 1973-1975 as it had been in the sixties and early seventies.

Characteristics

Aid from the Soviet Union is usually provided in the form of credits that can be drawn upon at any time by the recipient. These credits almost

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[1] John S. Badeau, "Internal Contest in the Middle East," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Political Science*, XXIX, no. 3 (March 1969), p. 177. Quoted in R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974), p. 133.

always take the form of loans whose terms are more demanding than those of Western nations. Soviet developmental loans generally require repayment over a 12-year period at 2.5% to 3.0% interest, with a grace period of no longer than one year. These developmental loans are often supplemented by commercial credits facilitating developing country (LDC) imports of Soviet capital goods for project construction. Generally, these loans require a 15 to 20% down payment, and are repayable over 5 to 10 years with low interest rates of 3 to 3 1/2%. Repayment of Soviet loans is usually in barter or local currency. This provision has widely been considered an advantage since it allowed the recipients to repay the Soviets with goods that were difficult to sell in the West, without losing either hard currency already on hand, or exports which bring hard currency into the country.[2] However, the Soviet economy increasingly requires more useful commodities (in the case of the Mideast, raw materials), and the substance of repayments has been affected by this trend. Egypt has been repaying its loans in cotton and other exports desired in the West and Eastern Europe and has complained bitterly about having to do so.[3]

Soviet aid is still strongly colored by political considerations. In 1973 and 1974, as a result of deteriorating relations, the U.S.S.R. contracted no new economic aid agreements with Egypt, while at the same time granting $100 million in aid to Syria, where bilateral relations were still close. As relations improved with Iran and Turkey, large Soviet extensions were contracted, with Iran receiving 98% of Soviet aid extensions to the Middle East in 1973 and Turkey 100% in 1975. (See Table 5-1)

For a variety of reasons, Soviet economic assistance to the Middle East in terms of credits (military aid excluded) has played a smaller role since 1972 than in previous years. First, Soviet regional aid is highly reflective of Soviet military and political aspirations and opportunities.

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[2]For example, the $200 million loan to Syria. See Robert O. Freedman, "The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The High Cost of Influence," *Naval War College Review*, XXIV, no. 5 (January 1972), p. 20.

[3]See discussion of Egypt below.

Table 5-1.

Soviet and East European Economic Assistance to the Middle East
(in $ Million U.S.)

Country	1974 U.S.S.R.	1974 E.E.	1975 U.S.S.R.	1975 E.E.	1954-1975 U.S.S.R.	1954-1975 E.E.
Algeria	0	0	0	70	425	414
Egypt	0	0	0	25	1,300	796
Iran	0	0	0	0	750	538
Iraq	0	0	0	0	549	419
Lebanon	0	9	0	0	0	9
Morocco	0	0	0	0	98	50
Syria	100	353	0	0	417	778
Tunisia	0	0	0	10	34	83
Turkey	0	0	650	3	1,180	30
Y.A.R.	5	0	0	0	98	17
P.D.R.Y.	0	0	0	0	15	21
TOTAL MIDDLE EAST	105	362	650	28	4,309	2,708
TOTAL NORTH AFRICA	0	0	0	80	557	547
TOTAL	105	362	650	108	4,866	3,255

Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1975.*

Having learned that granting even large amounts of economic assistance does not provide the donor with much influence in a recipient country's policy formation, the Soviets have become more hesitant to extend credits.

The second reason for the reduced importance of economic assistance is that the Soviet propensity to try to influence recipient nations' policies hardly goes unnoticed among third world leaders. Open use of aid as a tool of leverage has made nationalistic regimes more sensitive to the political ramifications of Soviet aid. A third factor adversely affecting the volume of Soviet assistance to the Middle East is that such aid often requires Soviet personnel to enter the recipient countries. The Russians are often not as welcome in this role as they once were. The cultural differences are often too great and friction develops between host country nationals and technical personnel.[4]

Fourth, Soviet aid is--as we have indicated--granted on the basis of credits which can be drawn on at any time. If the credits are not drawn on for several years (particularly if large amounts are involved), programmatic policy and planning for the Soviet Union's centrally planned economy become more difficult.

The quality of Soviet goods and technology--generally lower than those of the West--is a further restraint on Soviet aid activities. Countries that have a choice will often opt for Western assistance.[5]

A final reason credit aid is losing importance is the ability of Middle East oil producing nations to purchase Soviet equipment and planning outright without recourse to long-term loans. These purchases are not reflected in Soviet aid figures, but do emerge in trade statistics.

AREAS OF SOVIET ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Soviet assistance is directed toward (1) industrialization, (2) electrification and exploitation of major rivers, (3) mineral exploration and exploitation, and (4) education and training.

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[4]McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, p. 145. This problem was a real obstacle to finalizing the Moroccan phosphate agreement.

[5]As Iraq has done; see below.

Industrialization

Assistance for the development of LDC industries remains a major area of Soviet aid. Of the $191 million in credits extended in 1973, $188 million were extended to Iran for expansion of the Isfahan steel mill (which was constructed by the Soviets).[6] Industrialization often requires technical aid and training, increasing donor presence. To the extent that developed industries rely upon Soviet training and parts, industrial assistance increases the dependency factor in relations with the U.S.S.R.

While training in and implementation of Soviet industrial theory and practices are thought to increase respect for Soviet society, the Iranian steel mill has proven to be a disappointment to the Iranians.[7]

RIVERS AND ELECTRIFICATION

Assistance in tapping the natural resources of regional countries, especially in hydroelectric areas, has been an important aspect of Soviet aid to the region, highlighted by the much-publicized Aswan Dam. The dam plays an integral role in Egypt's electrification projects which continued in 1973 and 1974 under old agreements.[8] Aswan is not the only example of this type of assistance, as other dams (in Syria and Turkey for example) were under construction prior to 1973. In 1974, part of the $100 million extended to Syria (total credits for 1974 were $105 million) was for dam construction.

MINERAL EXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION

Mineral exploration and exploitation have been the fastest growing type of Soviet aid in the region. While most Soviet aid projects benefit the recipients more than the Russians, this type of aid is directly

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[6] The Isfahan steel project is the largest Soviet aid project ever undertaken in the Middle East. The Aswan Dam cost $325 million compared to the approximately $500 million that has been, or is being, spent on the Isfahan steel mill.

[7] Eric Pace, "Iran is Apparently Falling Short of Goals for Steel but has Accumulated $2 Billion in Surplus Revenue," *The New York Times*, March 11, 1976, p. 53.

[8] It is highly controversial, however. See *An Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 8 (24 February 1975), Economics and Oil.

beneficial to the U.S.S.R. Usually the Soviets supply manpower, machinery, and technical expertise for mineral exploration and exploiting known reserves, with repayment in the materials mined. Generally, this aid takes the form of technical assistance. Frequently, such aid is commercial in nature.[9]

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Education, training, and technical assistance constitute one of the most important aspects of the Soviet aid effort. The rationale for emphasis upon these activities is that individuals trained by the Soviet Union, either in their own country or, especially, in the U.S.S.R., will be more sympathetic to the Soviet Union and its allies in their attitudes, perceptions, and actions--private and official--than they would otherwise be. In some training and education areas the self-selective process ensures that it is the elites of the country who are being exposed to this experience, which suggests the approach is affecting those who "make a difference." As in the case of aid to industrialization projects (to many of which technical assistance is related), training may induce trainees (who are potential decision makers) to use Soviet methods, products or personnel.

Technical assistance personnel in the Middle East constitute one of the Soviet Union's major endeavors. Both 1973 and 1974 witnessed continued increases in Soviet technical personnel in LDCs with Algeria, the largest Middle East benefactor. The Soviets have also trained large numbers of LDC nationals in the U.S.S.R., but have strongly emphasized homecountry technical training. The Soviets have aided in construction of over 90 education facilities in the Mideast and North Africa of which 68 were in operation in 1974 (primarily in Egypt, Algeria, and Iraq). These facilities have provided training to 130,000 students.[10]

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[9] Note the Moroccan deal; see below.

[10] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1974*, January 27, 1976, p. 11.

While these programs have made real contributions to the development of the third world, and continue to do so, Soviet economic assistance, like its Western counterpart, still has not provided the Soviets much leverage in influencing LDC policies. Moreover, Soviet aid is small when compared to U.S. aid projects (See Table 5-2), so that the costs of reductions or termination of Soviet development assistance are relatively less to LDC economies than similar actions by the United States.[11]

Since Soviet aid has rendered limited results in the area of penetration (witness Sadat's refusal to follow a Soviet line), and due to the fact that the Soviet economy has been under stress the past three years, Soviet aid to the Middle East has dropped 50% since 1972. It has proven to be an expensive and largely ineffective political tool. It remains to be seen whether the present open use of "strings" (both political and economic) on past Soviet aid to Egypt will backfire. It appears that the Soviets are increasingly weighing the potential economic returns of Soviet aid projects and (military aid aside) are channeling funds into projects designed to reap benefits for the Russian economy as well as improve relations.

TRADE

Although Soviet aid to the Middle East has manifested a steady decline since 1972, Soviet trade with the region since that time has increased by 101%. This increase is to some extent reflective of the growing economic importance of the region to the U.S.S.R., whose attempts to influence politics by economic means have diminished in the past few years.[12] The economic importance of the Middle East to the Soviet Union lies in its raw materials and natural produce. It is these products that form a major portion of Soviet imports from the region.

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[11]However, when economic assistance from East European countries (which do not necessarily act on behalf of the U.S.S.R., but rarely act in a manner *contrary* to Soviet policy) is added to the Soviet aid total, the 197 sum surpassed total U.S. development assistance to the region.

[12]"Soviet Aid is Tied to Trade," *Middle East Economic Digest*, XVII, no. 19 (2 March 1973), pp. 231-236, 251; and McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, pp. 133, 158.

Table 5-2.

United States Developmental Assistance to the Middle East

Country	1953-1975		1973		1974		1975	
	Dev Aid[a]	Ex-Im Bank Loans	Dev Aid[b]	Ex-Im Bank Loans	Dev Aid[b]	Ex-Im Bank Loans	Dev Aid[b]	Ex-Im Bank Loans
Algeria[b]	184.5	248.7	.2	18.7	-	72.2	4.6	123.8
Egypt[b]	985.2	73.5	.8	-	13.0	9.0	117.3	16.5
Iran[a]	524.1	1069.5	1.3	237.7	1.4	270.0	1.7	5.3
Iraq	47.5	11.8	.2	.1	-	-	-	-
Israel[b]	1099.5	346.4	59.8	21.1	1.5	47.3	28.6	62.4
Jordan[b]	450.0	19.9	20.1	5.9	19.5	3.9	11.8	-
Kuwait	-	50.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	136.4	70.8	1.2	-	5.7	5.8	2.9	60.2
Libya[b]	191.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Morocco[b]	783.0	42.2	29.6	3.5	20.0	5.3	23.7	.2
Oman	.5	-	-	-	.2	-	.3	-
Saudi Arabia	27.9	26.5	-	-	-	-	-	1.1
Syria[b]	111.6	-	.2	-	-	-	21.6	-
Tunisia[b]	769.4	6.0	17.0	-	10.3	-	13.2	-
Turkey	1729.5	215.0	22.9	30.5	5.5	30.5	4.4	26.2
P.D.R.Y.	4.5	-	.1	-	1.6	-	-	-
Y.A.R.[b]	31.6	-	3.2	-	4.0	-	6.9	-
M.E.	5148.3	1883.4	109.8	295.3	52.4	366.5	195.5	171.7
N.A.	1927.9	296.9	46.8	22.2	30.3	77.5	41.5	124.0
TOTAL	7076.2	2180.3	156.6	317.5	82.7	444.0	237.0	295.7

Source: Agency for International Development. Statistics and Reports Division. Office of Financial Management. *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations: Obligations and Loan Authorizations*, July 1, 1945-June 20, 1975 (May 1976).

a - U.S. Development Assistance includes economic assistance granted under the Agency for International Development and predecessor agencies (loans, grants, and supporting assistance); Food for Peace (sales and donations including emergency relief); and other official economic assistance (including Peace Corps, capital subscriptions and contributions to international lending organizations, UNRRA, etc.).

b - Economic assistance figures do not include security supporting assistance which has been included in military assistance.

With respect to exports, Soviet trade is still linked to economic assistance. Aid projects frequently involve construction, and agreements often require the use of Soviet capital goods, which are one of the U.S.S.R.'s main exports.[13]

Despite the dramatic increases in Soviet trade with the region, the Middle East is not a major Soviet trade partner. Total Soviet specified trade with the Middle East in 1973, 1974, and 1975 never exceeded 6.5% of world-wide Soviet specified trade. Furthermore, the past several years have witnessed a shift in emphasis in Soviet trade policy away from the developing nations and COMECON and toward the industrialized West. Soviet trade with the industrialized, capitalist countries rose from 21.3% of the U.S.S.R.'s total trade in 1970 to 31% in 1974. During the same period, trade with COMECON dropped from 65% to 49%, and that with the LDCs increased only .1% (from 14.6% to 14.7%), despite the large gross figure increases.[14]

In the face of growing domestic demand, and beset with agricultural difficulties resulting in large and embarrassing imports of wheat from the United States, it is not surprising that the Soviet Union experienced its first trade deficit ever with the Middle East in 1974. Imports exceeded exports by 42 million rubles ($58 million). In 1975, the deficit rose to 142.2 million rubles ($197.7 million). Indeed, in 1975 the U.S.S.R. has an overall deficit of $3.65 billion, their first since 1972.

MACROECONOMIC SURVEY

In 1972, total Soviet trade with the Middle East was $1736.2 million with a trade surplus of $149.2 million. Despite the U.S.S.R.'s many political problems with the region and a marked decline in aid from $242 million in 1972 (and from $607 million in 1971) to $105 million in 1974, Soviet trade with the Middle East has doubled since 1972, with a total

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[13] *Middle East Economic Digest*, XVII, no. 19 (March 2, 1973), p. 231.

[14] "Middle East Development Needs Outgrow Soviet Scope," *Middle East Economic Digest*, XIX, no. 31 (August 1, 1975), p. 7; and United Nations, *Yearbook of International Trade Statistics* (New York:1975), p. 848.

turnover in 1975 of $3487 million. Soviet and American trade with the states of the Middle East are displayed in Tables 5-3 and 5-4. This large increase is the result of several circumstances and the figures must be viewed in the context of these circumstances, for overemphasizing the importance of the commercial growth is easy.

First, world trade from 1972 to 1974 increased by 99.4%, but almost the entire amount was due to inflation.[15] Thus, Soviet trade figures with the Middle East can be seen to be in line with the global trend. Inflation, particularly in oil, natural gas, and cotton has accounted for a large part of the Soviet commercial gains.

Second, when figures are given in dollar terms, the appreciation rates of the ruble to the dollar exaggerate the amounts to some extent. From 1972 to 1975, the ruble appreciated 15%. In 1974, the ruble had appreciated by 9% over the 1972 value.

Also, as indicated above, the total of Soviet trade with the Middle East represents a very small proportion (6.5% in 1974) of total Soviet trade, which has been marked by increasing emphasis away from COMECON and LDCs and toward the industrialized, capitalist countries of the West.

The fourth point--and the most significant--is that the U.S.S.R. represents only a small proportion of the trade of Middle East states. In 1973, only two regional states, Egypt and Syria, engaged in more than 9% of their trade with the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Soviet trade is dwarfed when compared with American Middle East commerce. In 1974, total U.S. trade with the region was $10,991 million, which represented 55% of total U.S. trade.

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[15] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Current Economic Developments," *World Economic Survey: 1974* (New York: 1975), p. 61. For example, imports of the developed market economies rose less than 1% in 1974, compared to 13% the previous year. Export increases were only 6%, compared to an increase of almost 14% in 1973. It has been estimated that increases in Soviet trade with non-Socialist countries were 8-14% for exports, and 6-11% for imports in 1974. See text at note 20 below. Thus, Soviet trade growth is substantially larger than that for the world as a whole, and is probably due in part to the Soviets' increasing trade with developed countries at the expense of trade with Eastern Europe.

Table 5-3.

U.S.S.R. Exports to and Imports from the Middle East
(Millions U.S. Dollars)

Country	1973 Ex	1973 Im	1974 Ex	1974 Im	1975 Ex	1975 Im
Algeria	87.3	70.3	145.6	81.0	156.1	187.2
Egypt	374.2	356.3	397.7	563.4	363.5	633.1
Iran	185.4	185.9	350.8	303.5	391.3	317.2
Iraq	191.0	257.3	240.6	357.4	376.4	452.3
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jordan	3.4	-	3.168	-	5.6	-
Kuwait	10.7	-	6.2	-	4.9	-
Lebanon	15.5	10.3	33.7	9.8	21.1	8.6
Libya	19.0	41.0	37.6	-	26.1	-
Morocco	38.2	35.2	71.4	43.6	63.5	57.3
Oman	-	-	-	-	-	-
Qatar	-	-	-	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	3.9	-	3.7	-	7.8	-
Sudan	3.4	-	5.0	3.2	6.5	11.0
Syria	97.3	63.0	92.5	135.0	137.6	95.6
Tunisia	7.8	7.3	10.7	11.9	4.9	9.7
Turkey	126.8	52.5	95.4	75.0	53.1	79.4
Yemen (Sana)	4.6	.3	11.2	.1	7.0	.8
Yemen (Aden)	15.5	.1	20.0	.1	19.2	.1
Total	1184.0	1079.5	1525.3	1584.0	1644.6	1842.3
Total World*	19,207	21,085	24,135	23,775	31,056.0	36,270.9
% World	6.1	5.1	6.3	6.7	5.2	5.0

*Specified trade only

Source: U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Intelligence and Research. *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1974*, January 27, 1976; and Uneshniaea Torgorilia SSSR 1975 g., Moscow (1976).

Table 5-4.

United States Trade with the Middle East
(Million U.S. Dollars)

Country	1972 Ex	1972 Im	1973 Ex	1973 Im	1974 Ex	1974 Im
Algeria	98	104	161	215	315	1091
Bahrain	27	20	41	17	80	61
Iran	559	199	772	343	1734	2132
Iraq	23	9	56	16	285	1
Israel	557	222	962	269	1206	282
Jordan	65	-	79	-	105	-
Kuwait	11	49	120	65	209	13
Lebanon	130	21	162	33	287	30
Libya	85	116	104	216	139	1
Morocco	58	11	113	14	184	20
Saudi Arabia	314	194	442	515	835	1671
Sudan	18	12	39	9	64	27
Syria	20	3	21	6	40	2
Tunisia	12	21	11	27	51	26
Total	2077	981	3083	1745	5534	5357

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census. *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1975.*

A fifth consideration is the economic benefits the U.S.S.R. accrues from trade with the Middle East. As most of the Middle East oil states which engage in trade with the U.S.S.R. are presently spending as much on development as they can afford, their importance as *customers* has dwindled. Also, comparatively capital rich countries such as Iraq claim that their development programs have surpassed the capabilities of socialist states to augment them.[16]

The primary economic importance to the Soviets of trade with the Middle East lies in Soviet imports from the area. The Soviet economy, which has recently experienced serious problems, particularly in agriculture, has increased its non-petroleum imports of raw materials from the Middle East. The large increases in value of imports over exports in 1974 and 1975 are chiefly due to the increases in *price* of raw commodities the Soviets are importing, as well as to less significant increases in volume. Increased natural gas prices alone caused a significant change in the import values. The U.S.S.R. imported 8,860 million cubic meters of natural gas from Iran in 1973. In 1974 the figure grew slightly to 9,094 million but the cost nearly doubled, largely as a result of the 85% price increase the U.S.S.R. acceded to in 1974.[17] In the future Russian imports of gas will increase under an agreement reached with Iran in 1975.

Other raw materials the prices of which increased significantly since 1972 are oil and cotton. Soviet oil imports in 1974 dropped by a total of 8,789 thousand tons from the 1973 level yet had a value of 70.4 million more rubles, accounting for 16.4% of Soviet imports from the Middle East. However, this cost increase on the import side was easily offset by the 700 million barrels (97 million tons) exported by the Soviets in the same year at a total cost of 4,400 million rubles.

The cotton trade differs markedly from that of oil. The quantity of cotton imported doubled in 1974 over the 1973 level, as did the price. Natural gas and cotton combined accounted for 23% of all Soviet imports from the Middle East in 1974.

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[16] *Middle East Economic Digest*, XIX, no. 31 (August 1, 1975), p. 7.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The trade deficit the Soviets have encountered with the Middle East will probably continue well past 1975. With internal demand rising, agricultural difficulties continuing, and a manpower shortage appearing increasingly likely over the next six or seven years,[18] the Soviet Union may be forced to augment its imports. These problems are already affecting future Soviet imports from the Middle East: in December 1974 the Soviet Union signed a $5,000 million barter deal with Morocco. This is the largest such deal with a developing country that the Soviets have entered into in 20 years.[19] The accord calls for the annual export of up to 5 million tons of Moroccan phosphates (a key ingredient in the manufacture of fertilizers) between 1980-1990, and for up to 10 million tons each of the following 15 years. In return--here once again the relationship between Soviet aid and trade is evident--the Soviets will assist in the mining of phosphate deposits in Ben Guerir, the construction of a new mine at Meskalas (where they will provide the equipment), and in the construction of roads and port facilities needed for the projects.

If estimates are correct that the overall real Soviet trade growth in 1974 was 8-14% in exports and 6-11% in imports, Soviet trade gains with the Middle East appear much less startling.[20]

When thus placed in perspective and compared to world-wide and U.S. commerce, Soviet trade increases that at first appear very large can in fact be seen for the most part to reflect world-wide inflation trends and only marginal real growth rate increases dwarfed by U.S. trade with the region.

Egypt

Egypt, the Soviet Union's largest regional trading partner, is a microcosm of the problems and benefits of having strong economic relations

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[18] Jack Anderson, "The Soviets' Manpower Shortage," *Washington Post*, 11 August 1976, p. B13. Mr. Anderson discusses a soon-to-be-released report by a top American Soviet expert, Dr. Murray Feshbach, and Stephen Rapawy for the Joint Congressional Economic Committee. The title of the work was not disclosed.

[19] *Middle East Economic Digest*, XIX, no. 31 (1 August 1975), p. 7.

[20] *World Economic Survey*, Part II, pp. 79, 81.

with the Soviet Union. Since Soviet dealings in the Mideast, including economic enterprises, are primarily directed toward penetration, Egypt's economic relations with the Soviets have manifested strong political overtones. With the marked decline in political relations between Egypt and the U.S.S.R., economic relations between the two nations have become very strained despite the large increases in trade volume between the two states since 1972. These political considerations, when combined with the hard economic terms for trade with the U.S.S.R., have created considerable economic problems for Anwar Sadat's already troublesome economy.

Major political problems that by their very nature have affected economic relations are: (1) the expelling of 15,000 Soviet technical experts in July 1972; (2) Egypt's post-October War "open door policy," which reduced the state's role in the economy (a strong departure from Nasserite socialism and thus a setback for Soviet influence); (3) the Egyptian-Soviet dispute arising from Moscow's decision not to replace losses from the 1973 October War and to only partially fill earlier arms orders; (4) Sadat's willingness to play the superpowers off against each other, and increasingly to turn toward the United States; and (5) Egypt's two disengagement agreements with Israel, agreements that seemed to disregard completely the Soviet regional role. These factors gave little incentive to the Soviet Union to augment or improve its economic relations with the Egyptians.

On the more purely economic side, Egypt has encountered the classical problem of relations with the Soviets. In the first place, Egypt has suffered extensively from the close "tying" of Soviet trade to economic aid. In order not to lose precious hard currency, the Egyptians must repay loans to the U.S.S.R. in kind (and Soviet loan terms are--as indicated above--relatively strict). Thus, repayment to the Soviet Union (whose own foreign exchange position is not strong) is the difference between exports to and imports from the Soviet Union. This deprives Egypt of the hard currency she could obtain on the open market.[21] The Soviets have

[21] *An Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 44 (8 December 1975), Economics and Oil.

further raised Egyptian ire by re-exporting Egyptian goods, often to other Eastern bloc nations, thereby eliminating a potential Egyptian market.[22] Moreover, Egypt has accused the Soviet Union of quoting artificially high prices for capital equipment,[23] a charge that Cairo is not alone in making.

In 1975 negotiations between the U.S.S.R. and Egypt took place on the rescheduling of Egypt's staggering debt to the Soviet Union.[24] These talks reflect the not-so-subtle mixture of politics and economics. Egypt (seeking a cancellation of its Soviet debts similar to the debt retirement extended to Somalia and the Sudan by Moscow), in the last few rounds of talks proposed a 10-year grace period on all debts with a 30-year repayment period for civil debt, and a 40-year repayment for military debt. The Soviet offer would have established a 20-year repayment period for all debts without any grace period. That Moscow refused to agree to Egypt's terms is hardly surprising in view of Sadat's recent foreign policy moves characterized by a distinct Western inclination.

In light of the past Soviet role as Egypt's sole major military supplier, the U.S.S.R. is in a strong position to "sell" its economic terms to the Egyptians as long as Cairo believes there is a significant possibility of war with Israel. To the extent this possibility diminishes, Soviet influence on the Egyptian economy will lessen. (This set of developments is a prime example of the tensions--examined in Chapter 3--operating on Soviet policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict region.) Egypt's economic difficulties and the Soviet Union's determination to make Egypt "pay" for its new political course, it is entirely possible that within one or two years Egypt will default on its payments to the U.S.S.R.

Iraq

Iraq, another major Soviet regional trading partner, has also come

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[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.*, V, no. 11 (8 April 1975), Economics and Oil.

[24] The debt varies from $800 million to $6 billion according to different reports. Sales of military equipment account for 80% of the debt.

upon difficulties in its economic relations with Russia similar to those encountered by Egypt. Under a 1970 trade agreement with Iraq, the Soviets are allowed to re-export oil to COMECON countries and to the West until 1979. The agreement has allowed the Soviets to purchase Iraqi oil at pre-embargo rates and then sell it on the open market at the world price. Thus, in 1973, the Soviets purchased $14.8 million of Iraqi oil (in exchange for arms), and resold it to West Germany at a price three times higher than Moscow paid. Both transactions were made before the oil had been delivered from Iraq.[25]

Soviet economic relations with Iraq are not colored by political considerations to the same extent as with Egypt. Despite the Kurdish problem, on which the Iraqis and Soviets have periodically been at odds, Soviet trade with Iraq grew by 352% from 1972 to 1975. Characteristic of Soviet trade, a substantial proportion of Soviet exports has been in industrial projects.

Iraqi trade has shifted, however, as a consequence of Iraq's broadening economic ties with the West. United States exports to Iraq quintupled from 1973 to 1974, exceeding Soviet exports to Iraq by $40 million. Iraq has denied that this is a reflection of a changing policy. The Iraqi Minister of Pharmacy and Industry stated that "Our turning to Western companies is not a sign of change, but rather that the volume of our economy has grown and made it necessary to involve Western participation in project implementation.[26]

It appears that the Soviets are well grounded in Iraq for the present. However, since Soviet and East European efforts are reaching capacity in Iraq, Iraqi dealings with the West may well soon surpass those with the socialist states. Should such a development take place, the Iraqis will have succeeded in evolving a pragmatic policy allowing them to benefit from both sides. The Soviet Union does not enjoy the same degree of leverage over Iraq as over Egypt and Syria, despite being Iraq's major arms supplier. Iraq dies not share a border with Israel, and therefore risks

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[25] *Ibid.*, V, no. 4 (28 January 1974), Economics and Oil.

[26] *Ibid.*, VI, no. 31 (4 August 1975), Economics and Oil.

much less by alienating its prime military supplier. Moreover, unlike Egypt and Syria, Iraq's oil reserves are plentiful, providing a likely source of substantial revenue for years.

THE SOVIET UNION AND MIDDLE EAST OIL

In the future, Middle East oil will be of increasing importance to the Soviet Union and COMECON. The picture for the Soviet Union is none-the-less much brighter than it is for her East European allies. In 1975, the Soviets supplied Eastern Europe with three quarters of its oil at prices well below the world market rate. Before then, they supplied 90% of Eastern Europe's oil. However, the Russians have warned COMECON to begin looking elsewhere for oil supplies.

In January 1975 COMECON adopted a new pricing system for internal trade. Prices of commodities are now fixed annually based on the average world market price for the preceding five years. This caused a sharp rise in the price Eastern Europe pays for Soviet oil. (In Hungary, for example, the price doubled in 1975, reaching 60% of the world price.) It is estimated that by 1980 Eastern Europe will require twice the amount of Middle East oil consumed in 1975, and that it will then be buying Soviet oil at current world rates.[27]

The situation for the U.S.S.R. is considerably better. In 1974, the Soviet Union remained a net exporter of oil, at the same time becoming the world's greatest oil producer. Soviet imports of Middle East oil in 1974 dropped by 8,789,000 tons from the 1973 level, and amounted to only 1% of Soviet oil production. The Russians also benefited from the major oil price increases since 1973, as well as from the new COMECON arrangement (which took place a year earlier than scheduled) discussed above.

By decreasing oil exports to its European allies, the Soviet Union can continue to retain its own petroleum independence from the Middle East.

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[27] *Ibid.*, VI, no. 13 (31 March 1975), Economics and Oil.

Soviet proven oil reserves are estimated to be 81,000 million barrels.[28] At current production rates these proven reserves will last for 24 years. Even if production increases by 20% over the next several years, the reserves would last for 20 years. Thus, the Soviet Union is in a relatively secure domestic position with respect to oil. Western writers expressing contrary hopes are generally unrealistic.

However, petroleum produced in the U.S.S.R. is consumed in Western Europe and Cuba, as well as in Eastern Europe. The political costs of reducing Soviet oil exports are significant, yet the inexorable rise in domestic demand--exceeding production capacity--will require Soviet leaders to reach high-cost decisions affecting either export of Soviet oil or domestic consumption. It is likely that rather than absorbing the political costs of a drastic cutback in supply to any one of these consumers, Moscow will spread reductions among them.

Unless the Soviet Union elects to reduce all exports of its petroleum sufficiently to cover domestic demand increases, growth in Soviet importation of Middle East oil is inevitable. Moreover, because petroleum sales to the West are an important source of hard currency, and because exports of oil to East Europe are a major element of control over Russian allies, we believe restriction of oil supplies to these consumers will be moderate.

Although production-consumption-export parameters that we have sketched demonstrate the likelihood of an upward sloping demand curve for Middle East petroleum products, it should not be assumed that this change portends a dependence on Middle East oil similar to European--or even American--requirements. The Soviet Union will continue to produce sufficient oil to meet domestic consumption. The decision to continue to

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[28] *Middle East Economic Digest*, XIX, no. 31 (1 August 1975), p. 16. "Proven Reserves" means the amount of oil recoverable under present technology at current costs without economic loss. In an industrialized country where internal demand for oil exceeds supply, exploration will be intensive and extensive and thus proven reserves may be taken as fairly accurate (particularly as regards known fields). In countries with a ratio of reserves to production weighted heavily on the side of reserves (such as the Soviet Union), the reserve figure tends to be quite conservative. Thomas C. Barger, "Middle East Oil Since the Second World War," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, CDI (May 1972), p. 34.

export oil to the West (and to COMECON) places Moscow in a fundamentally different position from that of Western countries, even though non-importation of Middle East petroleum involves real costs to all oil importers and thereby confers potential influence over suppliers. Because the Soviet Union can meet domestic oil requirements from its own production--and indeed its imports of oil products from the Middle East are marginal by contrast with Western countries--embargoes or threatened embargoes would not imperil the Soviet economy to any great degree.

CHAPTER SIX

SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE NATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER THE OCTOBER WAR AN INVENTORY

INTRODUCTION

Soviet relations with Middle Eastern states before the October War have been discussed in a number of previous studies.[1] Our objective in this chapter is to place recent--i.e., post-October War-- developments in Soviet-Middle Eastern bilateral relations in the context of Soviet policy described above.

Iran and Turkey continue to be the most important Middle East countries in terms of Soviet security interests. However, strategic military developments over the last two decades have progressively reduced the margin of defensive importance enjoyed by the "northern tier," just as these developments have increased the role of, first, the Mediterranean countries and, then, the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf states.

IRAN

The oil price rises since the 1973 October War have allowed the shah's major concerns--military security and rapid economic development--to

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[1] Books that have addressed the subject transregionally include Charles B. McLane, *Soviet-Middle East Relations* (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1973); Stephen Page, *The U.S.S.R. and Arabia: The Development of Soviet Policies and Attitudes towards the Countries of the Arabian Peninsula, 1955-1970* (London: Central Asian Research Centre, 1971); R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1974); Robert O. Freedman, *Soviet Policy toward the Middle East Since 1970* (New York: Praeger, 1975); Ira J. Lederer and Wayne S. Vucinich, eds., *The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The Post World War II Era* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1974); George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1971); Michael Confino and Shimon Shamir, eds., *The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East* (Jerusalem Israel Universities Press, 1973); Aaron S. Klieman, *Soviet Russia and the Middle East* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970); and Walter Laqueur's several books, but especially his *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (New York: Praeger, 1959) and *The Struggle for the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

become the key elements of Iran's foreign policy. Soviet influence both potential and actual was victimized by the shah's stated policy of dealing with anyone who can best help Iran.[2] For all practical purposes "anyone" refers to the West in general and the United States in particular. Soviet relations with Iran, which improved rapidly in the 1960s, have stagnated, while Western countries have become the mainspring of Iran's development program.

Unlike the 1940s and 1950s, however, the recent period has been characterized by cordiality and cooperation between Iran and the U.S.S.R. This tone in bilateral relations meets the minimum needs of both states: relative nonalignment by Iran reduces the military threat to the Soviet Union;[3] and cordial,[4] non-threatening relations on Iran's northern frontier permits the shah to deploy his very sizeable military forces in such a way as to optimize his influence in the Persian Gulf area.

The reasons for the ceiling in the level of Soviet penetration achieved in the mid-1960s and early 1970s date to the end of World War II. First and foremost is security--for Iran, vis-a-vis the Soviet Union; for the Soviets, vis-a-vis the West. After the Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan, mutual enmity and distrust were at the core of Soviet-Iranian relations. While this distrust was somewhat alleviated by the passage of time, the shah never forgot the 1946-61 period.[5]

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[2]See for example, Iran's Ambassador to the United States Ardeshir Zahedi's letter to the *Washington Post*, 7 January 1975, p. A17. Although this letter was written to justify Iran's looking toward the Soviet Union or other socialist countries, the statement is an accurate portrait of the Shah's overall foreign policy vis-a-vis the superpowers.

[3]The Soviet Union has scarcely criticized the large arms purchases Iran has made, even though the shah has frequently used the U.S.S.R. or Soviet strategy as his justification for the arms requests. However, the 1975 agreement between Iran and Rockwell International to build an intelligence station that would engage in communications intercepts inside the Soviet Union did provoke a critical article in Pravda.

[4]As the shah has said, "If a state could choose its neighbors itself, we would choose you." Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabeh, *The Foreign Relations of Iran* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1974), p. 83.

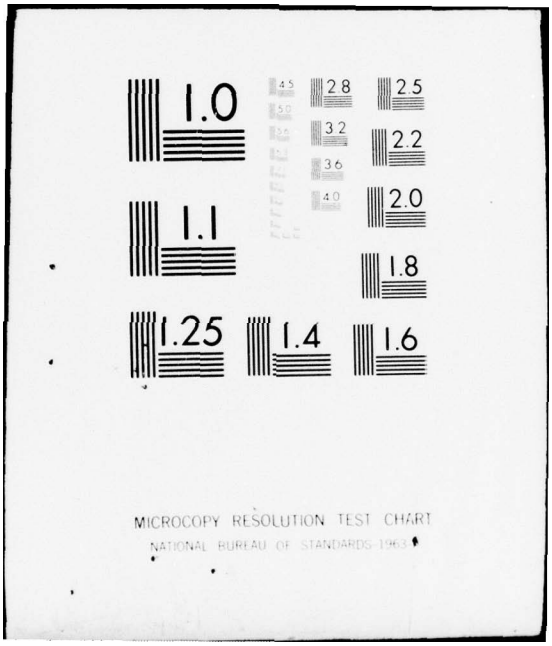
[5]*Washington Post*, 28 February 1976, p. A10.

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The shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlevi, places a strong emphasis on building up all phases of Iran's economy, particularly the military. The oil price boosts on the heels of the October War provided the shah with the funds required for massive increase in his military and industrial capabilities. Clearly, Iran could not afford to become dependent upon the U.S.S.R. for its military hardware, but the West did not constitute a military threat. In order to reduce the possibilities of dependence and vulnerability, Iranian arms procurement has always been at least minimally diversified. Weapons purchases have, however, by any standards that may be applied to developing countries, been massive. While the shah entertains no notions of defeating the Soviets in any military adventure, his aim (concerning his northern border shared with the Soviet Union) is to make Iran's northern oil fields "indigestable."

The shah's concept of security also extends to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean: the Straits of Hormuz are characterized as Iran's "jugular vein." Once again, the availability of high-quality Western arms of increasing sophistication and the absence of any active northern threat have led to a regionally important, expensive, and explosive Persian Gulf strategy.

A second reason for static Soviet influence lies in the shah's internal economic development programs. Iran wants as much as it can get, as soon as possible. Western resources in planning, capital goods, production, technical assistance and training are more highly valued in the Middle East than their Soviet counterparts. Since the shah feels Iran can afford to buy the best, the result has been a high rate of Western economic activity in Iran. By contrast with the total Western economic participation in Iran's development, and certainly by contrast with the Western role in Iran's military development, the Soviet Union is of secondary importance. However, such a comparison is misleading, for Soviet-Iranian relations, based on the twin factors of non-hostility and economic cooperation, have been a relatively stable, positive aspect of Tehran's overall foreign relations. In 1973 the U.S.S.R. extended another $188 million

in credits for the expansion of the Isfahan steel complex, whose production still has not attained projected levels. Trhough 1975, approximately $.5 billion in credits has been extended for the complex.

The mutually profitable natural gas agreement between Moscow and Tehran that we have discussed in Chapter 5 has recently been expanded to create a trilateral arrangement. From 1981 to 2001, Iran will ship 36.8 million cubic meters of natural gas per day to the U.S.S.R. which, for its part, will in turn deliver 31.1 million cubic meters daily to Western Europe. West European customers will pay Iran in hard currency for the Soviet gas, and the difference of 5.7 million cubic meters of Iran's natural gas will represent a transit fee paid to the U.S.S.R.

One of the most interesting of the recent economic developments between the two countries involved an Iranian extension of credits to the Soviet Union as part of a $3 billion bilateral trade deal arranged in 1975.

Because of the growth in Soviet-Iranian trade, the U.S.S.R. is assisting in the improvement of Iran's railroads in the north. Soviet-Iranian trade has grown significantly in recent years, even if the U.S.S.R.'s share of Iran's trade is certainly not great.

A fourth factor limiting Soviet influence in Iran is ideological. The shah is unselfconsciously conservative, and, though he will not hesitate to "deal with anyone," the regime does remain skeptical about Soviet ambitions in the Indian Ocean and South Asia and takes an active role in opposing, and supporting opposition to, revolutionary ideas and movements in the Persian Gulf region.

In the future, Soviet-Iranian relations will remain low-keyed. Soviet penetration in the economic realm will continue on a relatively limited scale. Soviet political operations in Iran are carefully monitored by Savak, and with the Tudeh party outlawed, and the consolidation of the Novin and Mardon parties into the Resurgence party, the shah has brought most of Iran's domestic political environment under his control. There remains a limited role for possible Soviet political penetration through

the "Islamic Marxist" terrorists currently creating much publicized civil disturbance in Iran. The connection of these terrorists with any foreign government remains unproven, however, and the label "Islamic Marxist terrorist" has lately been used to characterize any violent anti-regime activity.

TURKEY

The Soviet-Turkish rapprochement that began in the aftermath of the 1964 Cyprus crisis has recently been further cemented by a series of high-level exchanges of officials, and generous Soviet economic and technical aid to Turkey. The U.S. Congressional embargo and restrictions on aid to Turkey seem to have helped ease Turkey's traditional suspicion of the Russian motives in providing aid on a favorable basis. In providing $1.4 billion in credits (1975) for several large-size projects in Turkey, the Soviet Union is attempting to strengthen Ankara's resolve to maintain an independent foreign policy that would ultimately exclude the use of U.S. air and intelligence bases in Turkey.

After the December 1975 visit of Premier Kosygin to Turkey, there were strong indications that Moscow and Ankara would soon sign a "political document" in the nature of a non-aggression pact or a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Although Turkey's domestic politics has precluded the Turkish government from entering into a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, the Moscow-Ankara ties were substantially strengthened during 1976.

EGYPT

The most important Arab country in Soviet policy, and in regional affairs, has been Egypt. Moscow's economic relations with Egypt--alone among Arab countries--antedate the 1955 hurdle of the containment barriers. The U.S.S.R. has provided more total military and economic assistance to Egypt than to any other country in the world. Moreover, the nature of Soviet-Egyptian economic ties entered a new, more intimate phase in the 1970s.

The critical event in recent Soviet-Egyptian relations was the death in 1970 of former Egyptian President and Arab leader Gamal Abdul Nasser. Within two years, Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union had begun to deteriorate, and domestic groups favorably inclined toward Moscow were decimated. The mid-1972 decision to terminate the service of the enormous Soviet training mission in Egypt was but the most visible step in a process of reducing the Soviet presence and role in Egypt.

The American disengagement initiative immediately subsequent to the October War cut short the renewed anti-American sentiment occasioned by U.S. resupply of Israel during the hostilities. The personal involvement of the American Secretary of State--later called "shuttle diplomacy"--unquestionably played a key role in establishing the credibility of the U.S. effort to effect a cease-fire and partial withdrawal as initial "steps" in the "step by step" movement toward a general Middle East peace settlement.

From the signing of the first disengagement accord, Soviet reactions fell into the pattern described in Chapter 3 above. TASS reported the agreement without comment, and other Soviet and East European news organs sounded reservations, while Arab Communist spokesmen that generally follow Moscow on policy issues were openly hostile to the interim disengagement.[6]

Throughout the spring of 1974, U.S.-Egyptian relations continued to improve, and the disquiet in the Kremlin over the growing Egyptian "tilt" toward the United States grew apace. Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko visited Cairo in early March of 1974 to solidify Egyptian-Soviet relations and receive assurances that Sadat's opening to the West did not have an anti-Soviet meaning.[7] Notwithstanding these assurances, Egypt's westward movement became more apparent: in an interview with C. L. Sulzberger of

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[6]"Soviet Apprehensions," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 4 (28 January 1974), p. 2. Moscow sought to send a senior Soviet official to Cairo prior to the conclusion of the disengagement. Believing the proposed visit was related to Syrian reservations about the accord, Cairo refused the request in order to ensure the conclusion of the agreement without the introduction of additional impediments. Moreover, following the signing of the agreement, Anwar Sadat praised Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in unrestrained terms that--to judge from the Arab Communist press--clearly discomfitted Moscow.

[7]"Saving Friendship," *ibid.*, V, no. 10 (11 March 1974), pp. 2-3.

The New York Times, President Sadat disclosed that he had repeatedly sought arms from the U.S.S.R. since October only to be told that "the file is under consideration." Describing this response as "unacceptable," Sadat indicated he intended to diversify his arms procurement thenceforth.[8]

By 1975, Soviet-Egyptian political relations were deteriorating at an ever more rapid pace. A highly publicized visit by Soviet Communist leader Leonid Brezhnev was "postponed" by Moscow just before it was to take place in January 1975. Far from attempting to assist in the rebuilding of cooperation with Cairo's primary arms supplier and erstwhile political supporter, President Sadat took the offensive once more in January, publicly criticizing the Soviet Union again for its refusal to replace Egyptian weapons lost in the October War. Another visit to Cairo by Gromyko in early February produced a slight--and very temporary--halt in the deterioration of bilateral relations, as the U.S.S.R. deferred settlement of some Egyptian debts and sent some military supplies (including the MIG-23, not previously in Egypt's arsenal).[9]

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[8] See the Sadat interview in *The New York Times* of 22 April 1974. See also "Seeking Diversified Arms," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 19 (13 May 1974), p. 3. In an interview with *Al-Hawadith* (Beirut magazine) on 25 April 1974, Sadat made several claims relating to Soviet dependability as an ally in 1967, 1970 and 1971. Apparently Minister of War Gamasi, who went to Moscow in late 1974, proposed the construction of a MIG-21 plant in Egypt. Soviet conditions on such an agreement proved unacceptable to Cairo. "No-One's Backing Down," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 11 (17 March 1975), p. 2.

[9] "No-One's Backing Down"; "Half-Way Meeting," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 6 (10 February 1975), p. 2; Jim Hoagland, "Soviet Arms Flow Confirmed," *Washington Post*, 17 February 1975, p. A1; Drew Middleton, "Soviet MIG-23 Shipment to Egyptians is Reported," *The New York Times*, 19 February 1975, p. 1; "Details of Soviet-Egyptian Arms Accord are Disclosed," *ibid.*, 20 February 1975, p. 3; "Soviets Reported Sending Advanced MIG-23s to Egypt," *Washington Post*, 19 February 1975, p. A12. Beginning in January, Egypt also began to arrest Soviet supporters and Egyptian Communists. While this report does not address Communist Party-Arab government or Comunist Party-Soviet relations, it need hardly be stated that Soviet reaction to the arrests was negative. Articles in Communist journals routinely denounced the actions as evidence of anti-Sovietism as well as anti-Communism.

The dramatic improvement in Soviet-Libyan relations which began and developed as Sadat's government moved toward a more cooperative relationship with the United States, reached the point that by mid-1975 Sadat looked upon the burgeoning Benghazi-Moscow ties as a threat to his regime.[10] The antagonism between the two regimes was clearly a major factor in the Egyptian reaction to one of the largest arms agreements the U.S.S.R. has entered into with a developing country, an $800 million agreement that was the major news in the Egyptian press in May 1975.[11]

By the spring of 1975, then, Soviet actions manifested a move toward a series of policies designed to counteract--and increase the costs of--the new Egyptian turn to the West. These activities included the dramatic upgrading of Soviet-Libyan relations, more visible support to other critics of Sadat's policies (Iraq, Syria, and the Palestinians), and preliminary soundings designed to lead to improvement in Soviet relations with Saudi Arabia, Saudi financial support for Egypt having been critical to the success of Sadat's policies.[12]

To the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to provide military or economic resources to meet Egyptian requests and Moscow's reluctance to cancel or reschedule the sizeable Egyptian debt to the U.S.S.R.[13] was added in February 1976 Soviet refusal to repair Egyptian MIG-21s.[14]

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[10] See, for example, "Revision of Strategy," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 28 (15 July 1974), p. 2.

[11] John K. Cooley, "Libya and Soviets Smile; Egypt Mutters," *Christian Science Monitor* (22 May 1975), p. 3. The disparity in military resources between Egypt and Libya is such that the threat is indirect, not direct. See "Egypt Has Big Military Edge Over Libya," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 September 1976.

[12] Indeed, only Israel was viewed more negatively by *al-Ahram* than Libya in the spring of 1975. See Jon Cozean, et al., *The Arab Elite Worldview: A Report on A Study of Arab Perceptions of Regional Security Issues* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975), p. 28 and *passim*.

[13] H. Dev Murarka, "How Moscow is Countering Sadat's Tilt toward U.S.," *Christian Science Monitor*, 4 June 1975, p. 15; Joseph Fitchett, "Soviets Try to Bolster Syrian 'Eastern Front,'" *ibid.*, 26 June 1975, p. 4.

[14] See Chapter 5 and "The Debts Issue," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 33 (18 August 1975), p. 4.

Because the MIG-21 is the core aircraft of the Egyptian Air Force, this decision represented a major threat to Egypt's already declining military capabilities and necessitated a hurried Egyptian search for other sources of MIG-21 spares and repairs. Sadat immediately appealed to Czechoslavakia, India, North Korea, China, Yugoslavia, and other countries with Soviet-supplied arms.[15] When the U.S.S.R. in March refused to permit India to provide spares and maintenance for Egypt's MIG-21s, Sadat abrogated the Soviet-Egyptian Treat of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1971.[16] However, while the abrogation of the treaty is a fitting symbolic testament to the deterioration in bilateral relations, the act had little significance in an environment in which the treaty had been a dead letter for three to four years.[17]

Abrogation of the Soviet-Egyptian treaty was followed immediately by the Egyptian expulsion of the remaining Soviet military technicians in Egypt and the cancellation of Soviet port rights in Egypt.[18] This virtually total Egyptian self-removal from Soviet military support was to

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[15]"Soviets Reportedly Refuse to Repair Egypt's MIG-21s," *Washington Post*, 20 February 1976, p. A11.

[16]Jack Foisie, "Russian Withdrawal from Egypt Likely," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 March 1976, part I, p. 10; "Sadat to Oust Soviet Ships, Technicians," *Washington Post*, 16 March 1976, p. A1. Other countries included Poland and Romania.

[17]See Sadat's speech before the People's Assembly as reprinted in U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 16 March 1976, pp. D1-D29 (esp. pp. D27-D29). Cf. Thomas W. Lippman, "Egypt to Cancel Friendship Pact with the Soviets," *Washington Post*, 15 March 1976, p. A14; "Sadat to Oust"; Henry Tanner, "Sadat Acts to End Pact with Soviet Cairo Signed in '71," *The New York Times*, 15 March 1976, p. 1; "Highlighting the Shift," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 12 (22 March 1976), pp. 1-2.

[18]In fact, the expulsion of Soviet military advisors in 1972 signalled the end of the treaty's effective life, as the U.S.S.R. probably recognized. Christopher S. Wren, "Soviet Denounces Sadat's Treaty Break," *The New York Times*, 16 March 1976, p. 3. We have pointed out elsewhere (McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *The Soviet Union*, p. 232) that the treaty in fact was probably designed to brake trends in Soviet-Egyptian relations seen even then by Moscow as undesirable.

some extent gratuitous--like the expulsion of Soviet advisors in July 1972[19] --and was probably made in order to improve the chances of securing Western (especially U.S.) military equipment.[20]

Contrary to the early disagreements between Cairo and Moscow, Soviet criticism of the Sadat regime, which had been growing for some time, was substantial after the treaty abrogation. Moreover, the criticism was directed at Sadat personally,[21] a highly unusual practice in Soviet political communication practice.[22]

Neither Egypt nor the U.S.S.R. has sought the termination of contacts between the two countries, and indeed as relations entered their worst stage in the spring of 1976 Egypt and the Soviet Union signed a major new trade agreement for about $620 million. (This notwithstanding the debts issue on which the two governments were at loggerheads.) Although all Soviet military personnel will have left Egypt by the end of 1976, several thousand Soviet economic technicians continue to work on a wide variety of projects.[23] Thus, it is hardly surprising that in the late spring of 1976, both countries began an attempt to arrest the continued rapid deterioration in their relations: media attacks were stopped, economic differences discussed more amicably, high-level visits exchanged on a variety of outstanding issues, and some coordination attempted on a return

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[19]Foisie, "Russian Withdrawal"; "Sadat to Oust"; Flora Lewis, "Soviet Navy Loses Right to Use Egyptian Ports," *The New York Times*, 5 April 1976, p. 1. The military technicians provide essential maintenance for MIG-23s, some of the more delicate maintenance on the MIG-21s, and maintain the guidance systems of the surface-to-air missiles.

[20]It has been widely reported that Secretary of State Kissinger was astonished at the Egyptian action in 1972, unable to understand why the Egyptians has not asked for a *quid pro quo*.

[21]Henry Tanner, "Sadat Move on Soviet Called Step to Get U.S. Arms," *The New York Times*, 16 March 1976, p. 3.

[22]Peter Osnos, "Soviets Bitterly Attacking Sadat," *Washington Post*, 23 March 1976, p. C9.

[23]McLaurin and Mughisuddin (*The Soviet Union*, p. 233) point out that a more typical response would avoid invective or threat.

to the Geneva forum.[24] Although this small amelioration in relations between Cairo and Moscow--due in some measure to increasing Soviet problems with Syria--was interrupted by a coup attempt in the Sudan, an attempt for which the U.S.S.R. (through Libya) was held at least partially responsible[25] and which led to close cooperation between the Cairo and Khartoum regimes[26] (both of which attacked Moscow for its complicity in the adventure), the improvement demonstrates the recognition of both governments of their mutual interests in maintaining cooperation.

IRAQ

Unlike Syria, Iraq remained an "irreconcilable" following the October War, refusing to agree to Security Council Resolution 338. Before the war, Iraq signed a Friendship and Cooperation treaty with the U.S.S.R. (1972). The fruit of this relationship grew only later with the sale of approximately 12 TU-22 supersonic bombers, the only TU-22s in the Middle East. Later, Iraq received the MIG-23.[27]

The magnitude of Soviet arms transfers to Iraq may be misleading, however. Iraq has faced perceived security threats both domestic and international. The domestic problem--Kurdish unrest--was an issue that

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[24]Tanner, "Sadat Move." Cf. R. D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1975), p. 135, and U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1975* (Washington, D.C.: 1976), p. 8.

[25]"Healing the Rift," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 23 (7 June 1976), pp. 2-3; "Egyptians Halt Plan for anti-Soviet Move," *Washington Post*, 6 May 1976, p. A23; Thomas W. Lippman, "Sadat Seeking to Halt Deterioration, Review Ties with Soviets," *ibid.*, 7 May 1976, p. A19.

[26]Richard Critchfield, "Egypt Sees Russia Behind Libyan Strife," *Washington Star*, 6 September 1976; Numeiri on Sudanese television, 14 September 1976, as monitored by FBIS, in *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 16 September 1976, p. I3; James McMann, "Numayri Attack on Red Ambitions in Africa," *The Guardian*, 10 August 1976, p. 2.

[27]Eric Pace, "Egypt and the Sudan Conclude Agreement for Mutual Defense," *The New York Times*, 20 July 1976, p. 2.

divided the U.S.S.R. and Iraq on many occasions.[28] Similarly, the importance of Iran to Soviet security precluded Moscow from staking out an overly pro-Iraqi position on the Iran-Iraq dispute. Despite Soviet assistance, and large-scale arms transfers, the Baghdad government's relations with the Soviet Union were understandably affected by the Soviet-Iraqi differences on these two issues.[29]

By 1975, commercial relations between Iraq and the United States were on the increase, and Iraq's isolation had begun to diminish. Similarly, the Baathist leadership of Iraq, feeling itself more securely in power, began to diversify its arms procurement by signing an agreement to purchase tanks and armored vehicles from France.[30] These were among the growing differences between Baghdad and Moscow.

As the Iraqi-Syrian dispute emerged in 1975, and the Lebanese crisis worsened in 1975-1976, Soviet-Iraqi relations, though still cordial and characterized by a high state of cooperation and interaction, visibly deteriorated. The Euphrates waters conflict with Syria, after all, resulted from the Soviet-assisted and financed construction of a dam on that principal river. Similarly, the Iraqis criticized the Soviets for inadequate support of the Palestinians against the Lebanese Christians, Syrians, and "isolationist" Palestinian (i.e., Saiqa and the P.L.A.) forces.[31]

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[28]Roger F. Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid to Iraq and Syria," *Strategic Review*, IV, no. 1 (Winter 1976), pp. 52-54. There are reports that the TU-22s, which were used against the Kurdish rebels, were at least sometimes flown by Soviet pilots. (*International Defense Review*, [September-October 1974], p. 574).

[29]See R. D. McLaurin and Mohammed Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict: Egyptian, Iraqi, and Syrian Objectives and U.S. Policy* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975), Chapter 3.

[30]"Slight Differences," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, NO. 10 (11 March 1974), p. 3.

[31]Dana Adams Schmidt, "Iraq Loosens Dependency on Soviet Bloc," *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 January 1975, p. 3. Turning to France for arms may also have been Iraq's means of protesting for political delays in the filling of arms orders made to the Soviet Union. See "Cooling Ties with Russia," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 16 (21 April 1975), pp. 3-4.

Notwithstanding the above, Soviet and East European economic cooperation with Iraq remained at a high level. In July 1975, Iraq became the first country outside Eastern Europe to sign a cooperation agreement with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON).[32] Major additional Soviet aid projects were undertaken in 1975,[33] and Iraqi political cooperation with the U.S.S.R. will continue at a high level for the foreseeable future.

SYRIA

Syria's relations with the Soviet Union have been generally close since 1956, but the current leadership of Syria is much less Soviet-oriented than the regime it replaced in the "corrective movement" of 1970 that installed Hafez Assad.[34] We have described Syria's opening to the West elsewhere,[35] but unlike Sadat, President Assad's move has been tentative and moderate, a move to reestablish better relations with the West rather than to sever those with the socialist states.

From the spring of 1974, the change in the tenor of Damascus' relations with the West, particularly the United States, began to concern the Soviet leadership.[36] By that time, Egypt's movement toward Washington was underway, however, so while Moscow feared a similar development in

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[32] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid*, p. 26.

[33] *Ibid.*; The Economist Intelligence Unit, Limited, *QER: Iraq-Annual Supplement 1975, passim.*

[34] See Thomas Koszinowski, "Korrektur der Korrektivbewegung?" *Orient*, XIV, no. 2 (Juni 1973), pp. 83-85; McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict*, pp. 210-214; and Moshe Ma'oz, "Syria Under Hafiz al-Asad: New Domestic and Foreign Policies," *Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems*, no. 15 (1975), pp. 19-28.

[35] R. D. McLaurin, Mohammed Mughisuddin, and Abraham R. Wagner, *Foreign Policy Making in the Middle East* (New York: Praeger, 1977), Chapter 6.

[36] Benjamin Welles, "Soviets Pry at Syrian Resolve," *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 March 1974, p. 1.

Syria, the rate of actual change was slight by comparison.[37] Consequently, the U.S.S.R., on receiving some assurances from Assad, supported and indeed promoted a limited disengagement in the Golan.[38] Soon after the disengagement agreement was reached, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko, who was in Damascus during the final negotiations, and the Syrian government issued a joint communique that in effect reaffirmed the central role of the U.S.S.R. in the Middle East settlement process.[39] During 1974, the Soviet Union continued to ship military materiel to Syria at a rapid rate, so that by summer Syria's inventory met or exceeded its inventory at the opening of hostilities the previous summer. Among the equipment sent by Moscow were MIG-23s, SCUD missiles, SA-7s, T-62s, and 180mm howitzers.[40]

During most of 1974 and 1975, Soviet-Syrian relations were cooperative, perhaps in part because of the continued deterioration of Soviet-Egyptian ties. The failure of the Kissinger mission (for a second-stage Sinai withdrawal) in March resulted in similar indications of Soviet and Syrian relief. By mid-1975, the Politburo was prepared to agree with Assad that Egypt was an undependable[41] ally against Israel, and that Egypt was unlikely

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[37] *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 10 (11 March 1974), p. 3. Nevertheless, it is assumed that Soviet leaders must have been aware of a growing anti-Soviet feeling especially among Syrian military personnel. See "Soviet Reservations," *ibid.*, V, no. 21 (27 May 1974), p. 2.

[38] "Soviet Conditions," *ibid.*, V, no. 17 (29 April 1974), p. 1; Hedrick Smith, "Soviet Prodding Syria on Accord," *The New York Times*, 31 January 1974, pp. 1, 7; Juan de Onis, "Gromyko in Syria for a 3-Day Visit," *ibid.*, 6 May 1974, p. 7; Marilyn Berger, "Kissinger Mideast Bid Wins Russian Nod," *Washington Post*, 30 April 1974, pp. 1, 15.

[39] Hedrick Smith, "Soviet Says Pact is Only First Step," *The New York Times*, 30 May 1974, pp. 1, 12.

[40] Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid," p. 57; *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 June 1974, p. 8. Syria was the first country outside the Soviet Union to receive MIG-23s.

[41] In late October, a *Pravda* article attacked Sadat for "lack of good faith" and for betraying the extended period of good relations and the alliance between the two countries. That the article was signed "Observer" suggests approval by the Kremlin's highest levels. Peter Osnos, "Pravda Hits Sadat as Betrayer," *Washington Post*, 26 October 1975, p. A20.

to join in any new military confrontation with Israel.[42] This mutuality of views meant that Soviet military hardware continued to be shipped in large quantities to Syria.

In the spring of 1975, however, a more important development began--turmoil in Lebanon. The first stage of the conflict was largely a domestic power struggle involving a complex set of actors and objectives that shifted during the fighting.[43] This first phase ended in September, when the fighting became in effect a regional war fought by proxy in Lebanon. The major non-Lebanese sponsors of this war were Syria, Fatah, Israel, Iraq, and Libya.

The Assad regime had committed itself to the search for a settlement of the conflict with Israel, a settlement that would return the Golan Heights to Syrian control (even if demilitarized), reduce the staggering burden of military expenditures, and bring about some resolution to the Palestinian problem that could be accepted by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), at that time greatly influenced (through Saiqa) by Syria.[44] To these ends, Syria supported the moderate groups in the PLO, apparently assuming the Fatah-Saiqa domination would lead the PLO to accept a rump Palestinian state in the West Bank. As the Egyptian-Syrian alliance foundered, Syria formed a Levantine entente, or eastern front, composed of Syria, Jordan, and the PLO. (Lebanon was a natural member of this moderate alliance, but as a non-confrontation state was not generally perceived as a participant.) The eastern front alliance concept was a tacit recognition of Syria's sub-regional ascendance, for clearly Damascus was *primus inter parus*. The PLO was dependent on Syria and other territorial governments, despite the relative freedom it enjoyed in southern

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[42] Joseph Fitchett, "Soviets Try to Bolster Syrian 'Eastern Front,'" *Christian Science Monitor*, 26 June 1975, p. 4.

[43] See Fehmi Saddy, *The Eastern Front: Implications of the Syrian/Palestinian/Jordanian Entente and the Lebanese Civil War* (Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., 1976), and Paul A. Jureidini and William E. Hazen, *Lebanon's Dissolution: Futures and Consequences* (Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., 1976).

[44] McLaurin et al., *Foreign Policy Making*, Chapter 6.

Lebanon. However, the Lebanese conflict changed the Palestinian role and leverage. To the extent the Palestinians could operate independently they constituted a threat to the Assad strategy of settlement, for that strategy was based on Syrian primacy, that is, on going to the negotiating table with a full hand to play. Thus, the Syrian leadership saw no alternative to ensuring the defeat of Palestinian forces and their allies in Lebanon: no independent actor with a possible interest in scuttling a settlement could be permitted. At first, Assad used Saiqa "Palestinian" forces to contain hostilities; then, Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) "Palestinian" forces; and, ultimately, when neither of these Syrian-controlled Palestinian groups was successful, Syrian army units were sent in.[45]

The conflict in Lebanon eventually placed serious obstacles in the way of Soviet-Syrian cooperation. During 1975, this was not yet the case. Assad travelled to Moscow on 9-10 October to explain his reasons[46] for rejecting any additional step-by-step diplomacy on the Golan front and to seek additional Soviet political and military support. The support was forthcoming,[47] and major problems that germinated in Lebanon's civil war in 1975 did not blossom until the spring of 1976.

In late 1975, King Khaled of Saudi Arabia visited Damascus. At approximately the same time, the Syrian government began to experience

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[45] A somewhat different, very important, and altogether extraordinary review and analysis of the Lebanese problem and the Syrian role in it was presented by Assad to the Syrian Provincial Councils on 20 July 1976. It was carried by Damascus radio and is reported in full in FBIS, *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 21 July 1976, pp. H-1 to H-23.

[46] "Seeking Further Support," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no 42 (20 October 1975), pp. 3-4. A fuller explanation of the Syrian view is contained in Assad's speech referenced in the preceding footnote.

[47] Drew Middleton, "Syria, with Forces Built Up Since '73, Maintains Alert Stance in Golan Area," *The New York Times*, 21 July 1975, p. 4; Middleton, "Soviet Expands Weapons Aid to Syria," *ibid.*, 26 October 1975, p. 33.

serious problems with the Syrian Communist Party (SCP), which is allowed to operate in Syria as part of the National Progressive Front. After a period of tense accusations and complaints, the regime began to harrass, exert greater control over--and even imprison some--SCP members.[48] While the Soviet Union does not sacrifice its diplomatic relations in inter-governmental relations to defend local communist parties--not even in Syria where the SCP is very loyal to Moscow and is led by the most well-known Arab Communist, Khaled Bakdash--certain Soviet publication did decry the developments in Syria.[49]

Syrian actions in support of the Phalangists in Lebanon became more evident in the late spring of 1976. The Soviet Union, increasingly supporting the Palestinians and the PLO, expressed growing reservations about Syrian policy in Lebanon as the Syrians came into conflict with the Lebanese "nationalist" (i.e., Jumblatt) and Palestinian forces.[50] By June, following the overt dispatch of sizeable Syrian troops into Lebanon, Soviet criticism became public.[51]

As we have indicated elsewhere,[52] close Syrian-Soviet relations have not been without controversy in Syria, particularly in the military. The 1976 conflict between Damascus and Moscow also exacerbated existing disenchantment with Soviet weapons systems and resentment against the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) for its criticism of the Assad regime.[53]

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[48] Joe Alex Morris, Jr., "Arab Political Focus Shifts to Syria," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 February 1976; Morris, "Syria's Ties with Russ Show Signs of Cooling Off," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 March 1976, pp. 1, 10; "Differences Among Allies," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 21 (24 May 1976), pp. 2-3.

[49] Morris, "Syria's Ties."

[50] "Differences Among Allies."

[51] Christopher S. Wren, "Moscow Bids Syrians Leave Lebanon," *The New York Times*, 30 August 1976; *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 1 (7 June 1976), p. 3 (citing a *Red Star* article); "Truce in Lebanon Urged by Soviet," *The New York Times*, 10 June 1976, p. 4; Christopher S. Wren, "Setback for Soviet," *The New York Times*, 12 June 1976, p. 5; FBIS, *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 18 August 1976, p. G3.

[52] McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict*, pp. 211-212.

[53] Middleton, "Syria"; "Healing the Rift." Cf. "The Issue of Soviet Arms Supplies," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VII, no. 23 (7 June 1976), Backgrounder.

In view of the partial defeat of Palestinian-"nationalist" forces in Lebanon, the Soviet Union has had to face an agonizing policy question. Although Moscow has chosen to criticize Syria's Lebanon policy publicly, a decision must be made on whether and to what degree to support the Palestinians or the Syrians. If the choice were to be made on this basis alone, clearly the U.S.S.R. would opt for the latter for several reasons: Syria is more important than the Palestinians; Syria is a territorial actor, while the Palestinian movement is at best a potential territorial non-state nation; Syria is the stronger of the two. However, the Soviet Union has come under pressure from Iraq, Libya, and the LCP to take stronger steps to support the Palestinian cause in Lebanon.[54] As a result, Soviet public support for and private pressure on the Assad regime are likely to continue, but Moscow will not sacrifice its broad and historic relationship with Syria in order to please Iraq and Libya, particularly since the issue is clearly more salient to Syria's leadership than it is to Iraq or Libya's. Some limitations on economic and even military assistance may be imposed, but these are unlikely to be strict or long-lasting, since the Soviet Union above all wishes to avoid with Syria the kind of breach that has developed with Egypt.[55]

ELSEWHERE IN THE LEVANT

Over the period from 1973 until the Lebanese civil war broke out, the Soviet Union tried to improve its relations with Jordan and Lebanon, and offered to provide military materiel to each. Both countries' foreign policies, however, were more fundamentally affected by Syria's growing regional role than by Soviet activities.

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[54] Lippman and Osnos, "Soviet Foothold." See also, John K. Cooley, "Soviets Held Unwilling to Estrange Syrians," *Washington Post*, 16 July 1976, p. A8. One cannot overlook other conflicts between Iraq and Syria in the context of which the differences over Lebanon must be seen and in the resolution of which the U.S.S.R. has also been involved. See below.

[55] By September, in fact, the U.S.S.R. also was criticizing the "ultra-left elements" of the anti-Syrian coalition of forces in Lebanon, as well as the Syrians. "Pravda Scores 'Ultra-Leftists' in Lebanon," *Washington Post*, 9 September 1976. See also Assad's speech in FBIS, *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 21 July 1976, pp. H-1 to H-23.

After the October War, Jordan's low level of participation led to formal Arab recognition at Rabat of the PLO as the sole spokesman for the Palestinians, thereby suggesting the end of Jordanian claims as the legitimate Arab authority in the West Bank. However, although Jordan accepted the Rabat action, Hussein has not relinquished Jordanian aspirations to reassert control over the West Bank nor to play a larger regional role.[56] Recognizing that the threat to the Hashemite monarchy lay in Baghdad and that the Assad regime had made a concerted effort to improve relations with Jordan,[57] Amman and Damascus began to evolve a new relationship.

Syria's defense needs against Israel require the strengthening of the Jordanian and Lebanese fronts to draw down Israeli resources.[58] At the same time, Iraq is the prime Syrian enemy in the Arab world, and the Palestinians the greatest threat to Syrian policy. Consequently, current Syrian policy seeks to enlist Jordanian assistance, to strengthen and make more credible the Lebanese and Jordanian fronts, and to maintain good relations with the superpowers on the part of each of the members of the nascent Levantine entente.[59]

One of the principal elements of this strategy is to upgrade the military strength of Jordan and Lebanon. (For Lebanon, this strategy must now await an end to the civil war.) Thus, Jordan has attempted to acquire additional weapons from the United States, its primary military supplier. When an agreement on a SAM defense seemed to founder, Hussein feigned a turn to Moscow for similar equipment. Although the option was

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[56] R. D. McLaurin, Trip Report, 11-24 April 1975. This report is on file in Abbott Associates, Inc.

[57] See McLaurin and Mughisuddin, *Cooperation and Conflict*, pp. 216-217.

[58] R. D. McLaurin and Abraham R. Wagner, *Arab and Israeli Training, Readiness and Leadership: The Impact on the Net Military Balance* (Alexandria, VA: Abbott Associates, Inc., and Beverly Hills: Analytical Assessments Corporation, 1976). "Messages to Lebanon from Damascus," Damascus Domestic (radio) Service, as reported in FBIS, *Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa*, 22 September 1976, pp. H-1 to H-2.

never exercised--and indeed was never seriously considered--the Soviet Union did not hesitate to offer the required equipment on excellent terms.[60]

The Soviet-Palestinian relationship has been studied in a number of recent publications,[61] and we have indicated the Soviet approach to the two principal issues confronting the PLO today (Israel and Lebanon) above.

After the October War, the PLO gained widespread attention, and achieved somewhat greater legitimacy as a Middle East actor. The use of terrorism[62] as a tactic was reduced, with certain notable exceptions when the leadership felt progress toward a settlement was being made without--and therefore, in their eyes, at the expense of--the Palestinians. Notwithstanding its increased legitimacy, the PLO was not accepted by Israel as a participant in the Geneva talks. Israel refused to deal with an organization dedicated to the destruction of the Israeli state; the PLO refused to reduce any of its demands in advance of negotiations, demands that in sum negated the existence of Israel.

The Soviet Union attempted to persuade the PLO to abandon its most

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[60]Bernard Gwertzman, "Jordan-Soviet Arms Talk Arouses Concern in U.S.," *The New York Times*, 26 September 1976, pp. 1, 13; John K. Cooley, "Soviets Probe Jordan Arms-Sale Opportunity," *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 May 1976; Douglas Watson, "U.S., Soviets Vie for Jordanian Deal," *Washington Post*, 19 May 1976, p. A18; Don Oberdorfer, "Jordan Considers Soviet Arms Buy," *ibid.*, 26 May 1976, p. A8; "Hussein Seen Going Home Without Soviet Arms," *ibid.*, 29 June 1976, p. A12; "Odds of Missile Sale to Jordan Brighten," *ibid.*, 15 July 1976, p. A4. The approach to Moscow was made by the palace in order to secure a better financial proposal from the United States, on the one hand, and more Saudi financial support for the purchase, on the other. There should be no question of the willingness of the Jordanians to purchase or otherwise acquire Soviet weapons. However, Hussein is very reticent--and his military leaders are even more reluctant--to allow a Soviet advisory or training presence in Jordan.

[61]Moshe Ma'oz, "Soviet and Chinese Relations with the Palestinian Guerrilla Organizations," *Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems*, no. 4 (1974); Augustus R. Norton, *Moscow and the Palestinians: A New Tool for Soviet Policy in the Middle East* (Miami: Center of Advanced International Studies, University of Miami, 1974).

[62]See William E. Hazen and Paul A. Jureidini, *The Palestinian Movement in Politics* (Lexington: Heath, 1976), Chapter 3.

ambitious stated objectives in favor of accepting the existence of Israel.[63] That the PLO could make no change to its public position is explained by intra-organizational constraints. In fact, as the U.S.S.R. was aware, the PLO leadership had already made it clear that Israel would remain even after the creation of a new Palestinian entity.[64] But the PLO could not publicly state this before negotiations, and general negotiations without the PLO created serious problems for Syria and Egypt, and even for Jordan after the Rabat decision.

Several formulae were advanced to overcome this problem, but each fell victim to Israeli or Palestinian sensitivities, and the reconvened Geneva Conference has not materialized. Between the superpowers, each is prepared to agree on informal talks to address the question of Palestinian representation, but each does so assuming this to be a method of saving face--for the other superpower. In other words, the United States is prepared to discuss informally PLO representation without the PLO, while the U.S.S.R. is prepared to discuss the same subject informally as long as the PLO can participate.[65]

As the issue of Palestinian representation has continued, the emerging situation in Lebanon may make the PLO little more than a Syrian puppet. Such an outcome would unquestionably facilitate procedural matters of the peace conference.[66] Although Soviet investments in the PLO would in

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[63]"A Crucial Phase," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, V, no. 19 (13 May 1974), p. 2; "Rewards of Success," *ibid.*, V, no. 48 (2 December 1974), p. 3; Joseph Fitchett, "Soviets Reported Urging Arafat to Adopt Peaceful Procedures," *Washington Post*, 11 December 1974, p. A15.

[64]See, e.g., William E. Hazen, *The Palestinian Movement After the October War: Security and Settlement Issues* (Washington, D.C.: American Institutes for Research, 1975), pp. 19-21.

[65]R. D. McLaurin, Memorandum of Conversation, 3 December 1975. Participants: Mr. Tarasienko, Soviet Embassy; Mr. Vikulov, Soviet Embassy; Mr. Semakis, Department of State; R. D. McLaurin, Abbott Associates, Inc.

[66]For a description of alternative Lebanese futures, see Paul A. Jureidini and William E. Hazen, *Lebanon's Dissolution*.

that case have served little use, the real cost to the U.S.S.R. would be its current course with Syria, a policy that would then adversely affect Soviet-PLO as well as Soviet-Syrian relations. The PLO has recently opened an office in Moscow,[67] but this is not expected to alter or affect Soviet policy toward the Palestinian issue.

Soviet interaction with Israel--diplomatic relations have not been restored since the break in 1967--has progressed little since the October War. In spite of some active informal talks between the two countries' representatives,[68] basic positions and interests on the Middle East question are fundamentally in conflict.

On one major point only do Soviet and Israeli perceptions agree: the Israeli state is a *fact* with which Arab governments and leaders must learn to deal. On this point Soviet policy has been very consistent. For this reason, many observers have suggested that one approach to ensuring Israeli security is the proffer of security guarantees from both the United States and the U.S.S.R. Soviet policy, too, pursued this path in 1975, when Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko indicated that the Soviet Union would be willing to provide the "strictest guarantees" to Israel.[69]

Apart from speculation concerning the renewal of Soviet-Israeli diplomatic relations, the only major diplomatic exchange between Moscow and Tel Aviv/Jerusalem concerned Israeli actions in the Lebanese conflict.

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[67] Gerard Loughran ("PLO Envoy Sets Up Shop in Moscow," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 July 1976, part IV, p. 3) gives a good account of the office and Mohammed el-Shaer, the first PLO envoy to the U.S.S.R.

[68] "Renewed Contacts," *An-Nahar Arab Report*, VI, no. 17 (28 April 1975), pp. 3-4; "PLO's Apprehensions," *ibid.*, VI, no. 20 (14 May 1975), p. 4; Bernard Gwertzman, "Soviet-Israel Talks Held by Envoys in Washington," *The New York Times*, 24 May 1975, pp. 1, 4; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Soviet Diplomatic Relations with Israel?" *Washington Post*, 28 September 1975, p. B7; Don Oberdorfer, "Russians Talk with Israelis," *Washington Post*, 27 May 1976, pp. A1, A16.

[69] "Russia Offers Backing if Israel Vacates Arab Land," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 April 1975, Dev Murarka, "Moscow Makes Dramatic Bid to Israel," *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 April 1975, pp. 1, 10.

After the Syrians entered the fighting, Israel began cooperating with the Syrians and Phalangists by "aggressive patrolling" in the waters off Lebanon.[70] The Soviet Union, increasing the visibility of its support for the Palestinians and the other "nationalist" forces in Lebanon, sent a diplomatic note to the United States to deliver to Israel protesting the "blockade" Israel imposed on the resistance. Israeli authorities claimed their patrolling was confined to Israeli territorial waters.[7.]

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[70] "Navy Hindering Arms Supplies to PLO in Lebanon," *Ma'ariv*, 9 August 1976, p. 1. See also the commentary by Ya'agov Erez, *Ma'ariv*, 10 August 1976, p. 17.

[71] Thus, Israel responded to the U.S.S.R. through the United States that Soviet vessels bound for Lebanon would not be stopped if they avoided passing through Israeli territorial waters. Nahum Barne'a, "Soviet Shipments to Lebanon Not to be Molested," *Davar*, 19 August 1976, p. 1.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

Unquestionably, the October War was a watershed in Soviet relations with the Arab countries of the Middle East. From 1955 until 1972 Soviet influence in the Middle East was on the increase: perceptions of the Soviet Union changed from that of a distant country to that of a Mediterranean superpower. In a number of countries, the U.S.S.R. was the predominant external influence, and in one country alone, Soviet military manpower approached 20,000.

The seeds of change were planted in the aftermath of the June 1967 war, the same period in which the growth of Soviet influence was greatest.

- The complete Russian break with Israel gave Moscow no leverage with which to help secure primary Arab objectives.
- The influx of Soviet military personnel conduced to inter-personal frictions and nationalist resentment against the foreign presence.
- Changes in Soviet missions and deployments and the use of Arab territory for Soviet strategic operations ended definitively the credibility of the Soviet Union's selflessness in supporting the Arab cause.
- Attempted coups led leaders in power to question the motives and good faith of the U.S.S.R.
- Arms transfers and transfer patterns, as well as crisis behavior, convinced Arab elites that the Soviet Union was an undependable ally, an inadequate provider, and an unskilled producer.

The October War and the subsequent oil embargo have materially altered conditions in the Middle East and significantly affected the circumstances of superpower involvement. The great influx of petroleum revenues has removed one of the principal reasons for turning to the U.S.S.R. for arms supplies, and Saudi Arabia as a major procurement financier tends to resist arms purchases from that source, as well.

A second result of the war has been the greater involvement of the United States in the search for a settlement and the greater balance

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Arab elites perceive in its post-October War policy. Because Israel holds the tangibles required, a major element of the American "search for a settlement" has consisted of pressure--sometimes overt, sometimes subtle--exerted on Israel.

With the death of President Nasser in 1970, a new regime much more sympathetic to the West, and particularly to the United States, reoriented Egyptian foreign policy--first, away from the previous degree of dependence on the Soviet Union, then to a new and more cooperative relationship with the West. A change in regime also occurred in Syria, but there foreign policy shifts in relations with the superpowers were less evident (and abrupt) than those relating to regional problems. In Iraq, the third of the three principal Soviet clients in the Middle East, a growing pragmatism and improved relations with Iran reduced Baghdad's dependence on the Soviet Union.

That Soviet influence in the Middle East has been reduced is beyond question. We have suggested that although the Soviet Union will continue to be an important actor in the region its influence has "peaked" and is now--in mid-1976--at or close to the level at which it will remain. Moscow has little of value to offer the region as a whole or sub-regional groupings within it:

- superpower political support--but that may be counteracted by the United States or Western Europe;
- economic resources--but Soviet resources are limited, aid is "tied," and the region has significant local resources;
- military hardware--but Soviet military technology is believed to be generally inferior to Western systems, and systems provided are usually one to two generations behind Israel's provided by the United States;
- military training--but Soviet training is also poor, and several countries are loath to even admit Soviet advisory personnel;
- a Soviet presence as "guarantor"--but such a presence has led to friction, anti-Soviet feeling, the reduction of military morale, and the use of regional states by the U.S.S.R. for the latter's strategic purposes.

Soviet interest in and support of a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict have been sincere. As the achievement of such a settlement nears realization, however, Moscow will tend to be more resistant. The United States must be prepared to offer inducements to Syria and compensations to the Soviet Union, for the latter will perceive in a near-term settlement an exaggerated likelihood that Syria and its other regional clients will turn away from Moscow much as Egypt has done.

The recent establishment of a united "eastern front" and the Levant (read Lebanon) crisis are both an outgrowth of the October War and Egypt's virtual withdrawal from the confrontation with Israel. Both developments have consecrated Syria's position as the key state in the Levant. Syria's role has placed the Soviet Union once again in the uncomfortable--but increasingly familiar--position of choosing between allies. In this case, Moscow will support the Palestinians--to a point. But the U.S.S.R. will not allow its relationship with Syria to be lost, certainly not for the Palestinians who will clearly be the losers in the Lebanon conflict and who have no territorial base. Without a settlement, good bilateral relations will continue to be important to both the Soviet Union and Syria, and will be allowed to deteriorate only for brief periods in order to realize important, near-term objectives.

Soviet policy toward the Middle East as a whole since 1967 has been characterized by a broadening to achieve relations with all countries irrespective of the ideology or personalities dominating specific regimes. The complex doctrinal rationales previously developed and expounded by Soviet ideologues are today much less common. Instead, a more self-avowedly strategic/pragmatic policy justified extending and exploiting the Soviet superpower presence throughout the region. Nowhere is this change more evident than in the Persian Gulf area, where only a decade ago Soviet leaders ridiculed the autocratic rule, low state of development, and anachronistic institutions. Today, the U.S.S.R. is rapidly improving its relations with Kuwait--whose emir was the butt of such Soviet attacks some years ago--and is still seeking to establish normal diplomatic relations with other states of the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia.

The Soviet presence in the Middle East today--as in 1973--does not constitute a threat to the United States, its interests, its allies, or their interests. (The exception is Israel.) Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean has been consistently overrated. While it is true that the U.S.S.R. is deploying greater naval resources than the U.S. in the Indian Ocean area, Soviet power there is less than total Western regional military power, and, in any case, is not a measure of the threat to Western interests. The major military contribution made by Soviet naval deployments in these areas continues to be denial--an increase in the potential costs of American (and Western) intervention.

The Soviet Union has little to offer the countries of the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf regionally. Because this large area includes a wide diversity of states, there will continue to be instances in which individual countries (e.g., Libya) benefit from Soviet support, e.g., in local conflicts. With the new financial resources available to the Arab world, the inclination to turn to the West for technology (whether economic or military) has become a reality, and the Soviet Union can only rely on a new economic and military assistance position (as one among several sources) for influence which, under such circumstances, will be very limited.

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