

SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT 1970-81

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation entitled "Soviet Policy Towards Egypt, (1970-81)", submitted by Parwez Alam in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy, is his own work under my supervision and has not been previously submitted for any degree of this university or any other university.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


DR. NIRMALA JC HI
CHAIRPERSON


DR. TULSI RAM
SUPERVISOR

To

My Father

&

In the Memories of my Mother

With Love and Gratitude

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work has been made possible with the cooperation of many people.

The debts are legion.

My thanks are due to my guide Dr. Tulsi Ram, whose richness and deep understanding of phenomena gave me much insight. In the midst of vast literature that I had to wade through, it was his positive and encouraging guidance which enabled me to carve out a suitable framework for study. He has been a constant source of inspiration.

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PARWEZ ALAM

PREFACE

The present study is intended to analyse the Soviet policy towards Egypt under Sadat's regime which covered a period of over one decade (1970-81). This period was marked by many unprecedented developments through out the world, which provided an encouraging input to the Soviet Union to adopt an offensive policy against so called United States imperialism. Soviet Union found Egypt as a good base to counter the Western influences and to enhance its own influence in the region.

In this study an attempt is made to analyse the historical development of their relations. The study may be considered as an identification of the shift in the Soviet policy after the death of Nasser followed by the emergence of Sadat and his pro-western tilt which ultimately created a wide gap between Soviet-Egypt relations and led to a major shift in Soviet policy towards Egypt. Soviet policy was a mixture of success and failure regarding Egypt. The dissertation consists of five chapter.

The first chapter deals with the historical background of Soviet policy towards Egypt. The Soviet policy to support national liberation movement and the situation which emerged after the Second World War, led to the formulation of Soviet policy towards Egypt. And according discusses briefly about their relations and crisis in the Middle East.

The second chapter deals with the Soviet policy after Nasser death, the emergence of Sadat and his persuasion and signing the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Ups and downs in their relations and the expulsion of Soviet advisers from Egypt, which for a while gave a setback to Soviet interest and its policy.

The third chapter deals with many turns and twists in Soviet policy. The relations improved during 1973 war and Soviet Union enhances its military aid to Egypt. However, further, relations gradually deteriorated because of some misunderstanding between the two countries and also due to Egypt's drift towards west, which finally led to the abrogation of Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of 1971.

The fourth chapter deals with the new situations which manifested after the Camp David Accords of 1978. This secret deal of Camp David Accords side lined Soviet Union for Middle East peace process which led to a major shift in Soviet policy towards Egypt.

The fifth chapter i.e., conclusion is an over all assessment of Soviet policy towards Egypt and their relations.

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CHAPTER-I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT

Soviet policy towards Egypt was one of the basic components of its strategy to abolish colonial domination in the third world countries. It was also a part of strengthening the national liberation movement in the sensitive Middle East region. The western support to Israeli aggression against the Arab world provided an opportunity for the Soviet Union to materialise its strategy in this region.

Its policy towards Egypt was primarily influenced by post Stalin reassessment of Soviet Union foreign policy and need to combat what was perceived as American inroad in the region. Soviet Union had the capability to utilize the Arab Israeli conflict as an opportunity to improve its own position in the area vis-a-vis the Arab countries. Soviet Union always wanted to develop and maintain a cordial relations with Egypt in order to counter United States influence. Soviet Union in order to utilize Egyptian leadership wanted to form a pan Arab unity and to bring Arab World under its sphere of interest. However, it was constantly suspicious of Egypt, especially under Sadat, leaning towards West.

It is remarkable fact that initially the Soviet Union supported and recognised the formation of the State of Israel on Palestinian territory, however, the entire

situation took a dramatic turn when Israel launched aggression after aggression against many Arab countries including Egypt. Thus Soviet Union became the strongest ally of the Arab world against Israel and its patron the West. Soviet leaders had themselves acknowledged their active engagement in this region in terms of geographical proximity and their responsibility as leaders of the world revolutionary and national liberation movement. At the same time bearing in mind that the cold war rivalry had already been intensified therefore to gain maximum allies into their camp. Besides, this the primary goal of legitimising the rule of Soviet Communist ideology whereby nations of the Middle East would some where follow the road. However, Soviet influence in Egypt had been more real than any where else in the Middle East, a region Soviet Union has long aspired to dominate.

In discussing historical background one must note that Egypt's first official contacts with Soviet Union took place towards the end of the World War II. Britain then dominant power in the Egypt. Though Egypt became independent in 1922, the British under the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, retained a firm foothold in that country, both political and military. Egypt became first major Arab country to have established relations with the Soviet union. Kamil Abdul

Rahim was its first official representative to Soviet union. The Soviet Union being conscious that it was dealing with a Muslim Arab country sent Abdul Rahman Sultanova, muslim and an Arabist as its representative¹.

Britain the then dominant power in the Egypt under the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty 1936, played an important role in establishing diplomatic relations with Soviet Union in August 1943. When Egyptian Government was demanding withdrawal of British troops and the abrogation of 1936 Anglo Egyptian Treaty, Soviet Union enthusiastically supported Egypt's case in the United Nations Security Council². This policy of Soviet Union seemed to be "more anti British than pro-Egypt"³. But the Egyptian need for Soviet support vis-a-vis Soviet interest in Middle East brought both closer to each other during 1950.

However, during the first Arab Israeli conflict of 1948, Soviet position was not very clear against Israeli aggression which puzzled Egypt who found the Soviets policy of aiding Israel against the Arabs that of extreme

1. Mohamed Heikal, Sphinx and Commissar : The Rise and fall of Soviet influence in the Arab World (London, 1978), p.50.

2. Yaccovi Roi, From Encroachment to involvement : A documentary study of Soviet policy in the middle East 1945 - 1973 (New Jersey, 1947), p.41.

3. M Heikal, no.1 P.52

opportunism. This was due to the Soviet belief that Israel "could become a progressive element in the area of generally reactionary and unsympathetic government"⁴. It certainly led to misunderstanding between the two countries. Further to win over Egypt and other Arab countries, the Soviet Union bitterly denounced the infamous "Tripartite Declaration" 1950, whose main aim was to maintain an equilibrium in arms between the Arabs and the Israelis' to the disadvantage of the former. Soviet Union branded this treaty as "a document which is an act of gross interference in the internal affairs of the Near Eastern States, an unceremonious attempt on the part of the imperialist to harness their reckless military plans"⁵.

Further relations between them were very subtle, although Egypt opposed the US idea of Middle East Defence Organisation (MEDO) led to a convergence of interest between Egypt and Soviet Union and gave a new direction to their relations. Soviet Union fully appreciated the position taken by the Wafd government of Egypt on MEDO. Meanwhile, when the revolution of July 1952 overthrew the monarchy Soviet Union did not react instantly to the swift changes. But very soon Soviet leaders realized the anti imperialist

4. *ibid.*

5. Cited in Y Roi, no.2, p.88

tone of the emerging non aligned group and foresaw the immense benefits which could occur to them from close economic and political cooperation with this group. Soviet Union had by this time reevaluated its policy towards the Arabs and this became evident when for the first time in the history of Arab - Israeli conflict, it used its veto power to prevent an anti Arab resolution being passed by the United Nations Security Council on January 1954⁶.

A number of factor explains this clear shift in Soviet policy. Stalin's death and new willingness to deal with and support bourgeois nationalist regimes and their non-alignment policy placed Soviets relations with Arabs in an entirely new light. Moreover Khrushchev policy of peaceful co-existence which also formed part of the post Stalin foreign policy⁷. One of another reason to develop relation with Egypt was also because Egypt was larger, more populous, economically advanced and politically influential state, it was also espousing neutralism, while other such as Iraq was associated with the West⁸.

6. Yaccovi Roi, no.2 p.117

7. Galia Golan, Soviet policies in the Middle East from the world war two to Gorbachev (Cambridge, 1990), p.44

8. ibid - p.44

By this time in Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser emerged as the real strong man of the regime and he successfully concluded an agreement with Britain for the withdrawal of British troops. A comment in Pravda said that the agreement: " doesn't guarantee Egyptian territorial integrity, sovereignty, non interference in its internal affairs or equality in its relations with Western countries. In concluding the agreement the Egyptian Government is taking a dangerous step towards American plans for a Middle East command, which is a direct threat to the cause of peace in the Middle East"⁹.

However, first major trade agreement between Soviet Union and Egypt, a stepping stone for closer economic cooperation was signed in March 1954. Further Nasser's opposition to pro West Baghdat Pact led to head on collusion with the West, at the same time Soviet Union was more openly coming to Egypts' aid. In 1955 it gave aid to flood victims in Egypt. Soviet Union appreciated Egypts' determination not to join Baghdat Pact and also its bold anti imperialist stand.

An arms deal of 1955 was made by Soviet Union which was due to worsening situation on the Egyptian Israeli border.

9. Cited by Aryeh Y Yodfat, Arab politics in the Soviet Mirror (Jerusalem 1973) p.38

It has been claimed that the February 1955, Israeli retaliation raid on Egyptian army headquarter in Gaza was the trigger which led to this step¹⁰. The Gaza raid was an eye opener to Nasser as it was a brutal demonstration of Egyptian military weakness. This led to the \$250 million Czechoslovakia Egypt arms deal of September 1955 was a great evidence of new Soviet policy and new relationship. For the Egypt the deal with Soviet Union may have been perceived as a counter weight to the American backing of Iraq, as well as added weight in their struggle against the British.

On the eve of the Bandung conference, the Soviet Union demonstrated its policy towards Middle East and came out with an official statement on the situation in the region. The statement issued on 16 April 1955 read: "The Soviet Union can't be indifferent to the situation taking shape in Middle East, since the formation of the blocs and the creation of foreign military bases on the territory of the Middle East countries have a direct bearing on the security of the USSR. The Soviet Union will take positive action towards any step by the Government of the Near and Middle Eastern countries to strengthen the national liberation of

10 . Galia Golan, no.7, p.46

their states and to promote peace and friendly cooperation among nation.¹¹.

The arms deal which was a result of Soviet policy gave a turning point in Egypt's relations with Soviet Union. It dealt a blow to the Arab-Israeli conflict. No doubt Soviet was prompted by desire to devoid the Western influence. Soviet Union and Egypt came closer in order to fulfil their respective political and security interest, even though they were poles apart ideologically¹².

The Suez crisis was the first crisis to arise in the new Soviet-Egyptian relationship. The nationalisation of Suez Canal was a daring and bold act which had far reaching repercussion and became the testing ground for Soviet Egyptian relations. Basically United States refusal to aid for Aswan Dam led to such action by Nasser. Earlier Joneer Forter Dulles sent a message to Nasser through Eugene Black the World Bank President stating: "I want Nasser to understand that the Russians can help him with weapon for death but we alone can give him and his people life"¹³.

11. M Smolansky, The Soviet Union and the Arab East Under Khrushchev (New Jersey, 1974), p.27

12. Karen Dawisha, Soviet Foreign policy towards Egypt (London, 1979), p.11

13. Mohamed Heikal, no.1, p.64

When Nasser officially announced the recognition of Communist China, the Dulles U S Secretary of State informed Egypt that it was not feasible in present circumstances to take part in the financing of Aswan High Dam¹⁴.

The two major consideration which guided Soviet policy towards Egypt during the Suez crisis were: (a) the possibility to utilize the crisis as an opportunity to improve Soviet unions' own position in the area vis-a-vis its Arab ally and against Western interest and (b) the necessity to avoiding direct confrontation with the United States. At the time Soviets were also operating under Khrushchev's doctrinal tenet of peaceful co-existence. Meanwhile, Nasser declared the Egyptian Communist Party to be illegal and kept its leaders in prison. Indeed he made it very clear that he differentiated between the Soviet Union as a "great friend" and the Egyptian Communist Party, which he considered threat to his rule¹⁵.

Such a situation posed a painful dilemma to Khrushchev, a dilemma that he never really resolved. Nonetheless, Nasser

14. Jaan Penhar, The USSR and the Arabs : The USSR and the Arabs : The ideological dimension 1917 - 1971 (London : 1973), p.183

15. Robert O Freedman, Soviet Policy Towards the Middle East since 1970 (London : 1975) p.11

was a useful ally in the Cold war regardless of his treatment of the Egyptian Communist party. However, since Khrushchev considered himself the head of the international Communist movement he felt constrained to try to protect the Communist parties of the Middle East. On the several occasions he complained to Nasser about the treatment of the Egyptian Communists but Nasser denounced such interference in Egypt's internal affairs and relations between Egypt and Soviet Union slightly deteriorated as a result¹⁶. The role of Communist party was to prove a stumbling block in the Khrushchev's policies towards Syria and Iraq as well.

However, Soviet Union repeatedly emphasised the need and possibility of finding a peaceful settlement of the Suez problem in which it took unusual interest because of its desire to avert a military showdown with the West. Even though in terms of actual behaviour Soviet Union was somewhat slow to respond to the Egyptian's nationalisation announcement and also, to the outbreak of hostilities by Israel, Britain and France in October 1956.

At this juncture Soviet Union was neither politically nor militarily prepared to take a direct action, instead, realising the situation Soviet Premier proposed a joint

16. *ibid*, p.11

Soviet-American military intervention to bring about an end to the fighting. Surprisingly next day Britain, France and Israel ordered their troops to ceasefire. According to Heikal, what ultimately forced them to halt their aggression was American and not Russian pressure. However, Russian attitudes made significant contribution to the final results¹⁷. One of the other interpretation mustered by Soviet Union had been that the Soviet Union was major beneficiary of 1956 war. Britain and France were discredited and their influence in the region virtually ended. Even the United States was to some degree linked to its allies aggression perceived as having behaved as a poor ally to them, the Soviet Union, however, had saved the day, brought about the end to the hostilities and emerged as the Champion of the cause of the Third World in general and the Arab in particular. In fact, several elements of dissonance entered or became apparent in Soviet-Arab relations as a result of Soviet behaviour¹⁸. Although the Suez crisis may have increased Soviet prestige in the eyes of some in the region, another result of the war was the Eisenhower Doctrine which constituted a stronger commitment of United States in the area.

17. Heikal, no.1, p.72 emphasis added.

18. Galia Golan, no.7, p.53

Despite the differences owing to Soviets delay in Suez crisis the relation between Soviet Union and Egypt remained warm for another few year. At the same time the Suez War facilitated the entry of the Soviet Union in the Arab World in a big way. In January 1958 Soviet Union provided Egypt \$175 million loan, the largest it had yet granted to a Third World State as well as \$100 million for the Aswan Dam¹⁹ Meanwhile, Union of Egypt and Syria led to proclamation of United Arab Republic (U A R). Soviet Union initially supported the formation of the U A R and said that it would lead to the consolidation of peace and stability in the area and would give fresh impetus and new strength to the people in their struggle for national independence against the conspiracy and intrigue of the coloniast²⁰.

To warm up the relations Nasser made two trips to the Soviet Union in 1958 which resulted in flow of arms in Egypt. on the otherside Iraqi revolution of July 1958, drew Soviet union close to new Iraqi regime which itself opposed Nasser's policy. To Nasser it appeared that Soviet Union was shifting significantly towards Egypt's arch-rivals in Baghdad. It did expose the inherent contradiction in their relations.

19. *ibid*, p.54

20. Smolansky, no.11, p.79

Khrushchev in 21st Congress of CPSU lashed out at the treatment meted out to the communist in UAR. Further, Khrushchev concluded by saying that: We do not conceal the fact that we and some of the leaders of the U A R have divergent views in the sphere of ideology. But our position coincides with theirs in questions of the struggle against imperialism, of strengthening the political and economic independence of countries that have freed themselves from colonialism, and of the struggle against the war danger. The differences in ideological views should not impede the development of friendly relations between our countries and the cause of joint struggle against imperialism²¹. Soviet Union assured to support Egypt which was an excolony despite differences.

Relations had deteriorated when Nasser resumed his attacks on communists branding them as agent of communism. However, towards the end of 1957 relations improved between Soviet and Egypt and a cultural agreement was signed. Between 1958 and 1960 three major agreement were signed, totalling 1500 million roubles, which were quite beneficial to Egypt²².

21. Roi, no.7, pp 279-280.

22. K R Singh, "The Soviet - UAR Relations", India Quarterly (New Delhi), Vol.XXV, no.2, (April - June 1969), pp.130-52

Despite a brief rapprochement with Nasser in 1960 when he personally met Khrushchev at the United Nations, where the most of the differences were ironed out. Soviet union once again clashed with Egyptian leaders in May 1961, during a visit by an Egyptian parliamentary delegation headed by Sadat, who was then Chairman of the U A R National Assembly. Khrushchev attacked the Egyptian leaders for opposing communism and told them "If you want socialism, you should not oppose communism," since the one automatically followed the other. He also told the Egyptian that Arab nationalism is not the zenith of happiness and life itself will impose communism. The Egyptian leader responded angrily and Soviet Egyptian relations suffered another temporary set back²³.

However, Soviet Union continued its policy of cooperation towards Middle East and the impasses in Soviet-Egypt relations was broken only in 1961. For the Soviet union circumstances had change by this time. Nasser's policy of nationalization of a large portion of Egyptian industry following the breakup of the Union with Syria in the fall of 1961 encouraged Soviet Union to believe that the Arab nationalist leaders were turning towards socialism even without the help of communist parties. Consequently, the terms "non capitalist path" and revolutionary democracy

23. Robert O Freedman, no.15, page 12.

were born. Khrushchev often used the term non-capitalist path and socialism synonymously in describing the progress of such regimes as Nasser's and Ben-Bella's²⁴.

Nasser too appeared interested to improve relations, he desisted from further persecution of communists and gradually, though with restrictions released most of those who had been imprisoned. In 1962 Nasser was seeking Soviet support and even concrete assistance for the Egyptian intervention in the Yemen Civil War. Meanwhile, Khrushchev and his successors urged the Egyptian communist party to dissolve officially and join the Arab Socialist Union (A S U), which was Nasser's mass political organisation and the only one permitted in Egypt. In another policy innovation the Soviet leadership moved to establish direct party to party relations between CPSU and ASU.

By this a new cordial phase emerged in strengthening their relations. Khrushchev made a visit to Egypt which was successful one in the sense Egypt was back again in Russian favour. The visit ended with a positive note, Egypt got a \$277 million loan and Nasser became to be regarded as "hero of the Soviet Union." Soviet Union also agreed to supply more weapons.

24. *ibid*, page 13.

Though a change in leadership occurred in Soviet Union with the removal of Khrushchev in October 1964, however, Soviet interest dictated continuation of the policy towards Egypt undertaken by Khrushchev. The new leadership which came into power was headed by Leonard Brezhnev. At the time of Khrushchev's death Soviet Union position in Egypt was more dominant one. In 1965 when Egyptian Communist party decided to disband and most of its members joined the ruling Arab Socialist Union, which removed major irritant in Soviet Egyptian relations. Most of the communist joined ASU and this group headed by Ali Sabri came to be identified as Soviet's men within the ASU.

Nasser again paid a visit to Soviet Union in August 1965, to pursue Soviet leaders for military and economic aid to cope up with its involvement in the Yemen War. Later Kosygin visited Egypt in 1966. He showed keen interest in the political set up in Egypt and called for closer ties between CPSU and ASU.

All these visits brought both countries closer and cooperation emerged in several new fields. The Soviet Union referred to Egypt as a country building socialism and it sent Soviet pilots to assist Egyptian forces in Yemen.²⁵

25. See Daniel Dishen (ed). Middle East Record, Volume Three, 1967 (Jerusalem, 1971)

The major Soviet interest in Middle East in the 1960s was acquisition of naval facilities and bases including air bases and in this effort Egypt was focal point, mainly because of its relative suitability of its ports and airfields but also because of its geographical position in that part of the world and the relative stability of its regime. Thus, prior to the six day war of June 1967, Soviets sought some port facilities in Egypt but six day war proved to be a turning point for Soviet military as well as political presence. And by the late 1960s Soviet union had undertaken the development not only of these facilities but of some six air bases as well²⁶. However, at the beginning of 1967, Syria was informed by the Soviet Union of Israeli troop concentration alongside its border²⁷. Even on 11 May 1967 Soviet President Podgorny told a visiting Egyptian parliamentary delegation led by Sadat that Israel was concentrating forces on its border with Syria and planned to attack between 18 and 22 May 1967²⁸. This showed a deep interest of Soviet Union in the development taking place in the Middle East.

26. Kurt London (ed), The Soviet Union in World politics, (London : 1980), p.107

27. Galia Galan, no.7, p.54

28. Heikal, no.1, p.174

Nasser immediately plunged into action. He proclaimed a state emergency in Egypt and with much fanfare the Egyptian military forces moved into Sinai. According to Heikal, the Soviet Union had intended their warning more to prepare Egyptian government psychologically for a crisis and to encourage closer consultations than to spur it into independent action²⁹. According to Sadat, Nasser in fact overdramatized the whole exercise, which alarmed the Israelis. He says that the Soviet Union consistently warned that the tempo of events was moving much quicker than it should move. He says "Nasser was carried away by his own impetuosity"³⁰.

Nasser requested the United Nations Secretary General, U Thant, to withdraw the U N emergency force from Sinai which he duly complied the first single most important step leading towards the war. On 22 May Nasser announced the blockade of Israeli shipping through strait of Tiran, thus closing of access to Israel's only Southern port and exit to Red Sea.

29. Ibid, p.175

30. Anwar-el-Sadat, In search of identity : An autobiography (New York, 1978), p.173

However, Soviet Union was quite alarmed at quick intensity of the crisis which assumed dangerous proportions because of the events were taking pace at lightning speed. Soviet Union issued one statement on Egyptian Defence Minister Bardan visit to Soviet Union that "It is the firm belief of the Soviet government that the people have no interest in kindling a military conflict in the Near East.... "³¹. Though the statement was primarily aimed at Israel, nevertheless it was also aimed indirectly at Egypt and Syria urging them not to go for war or any misadventure. Supporting Egypt move in Sinai, without, however, mentioning the strait of Tiran it contained real threat to Israel. Kosygin told Egyptian that you have won a political victory, so it is time to compromise, to work politically. Kosygin through his statement was making it abundantly clear that since Egypt has achieved its goal, i.e. of averting an Israeli attack on Syria, it should not resort to war and work out peacefully³². According to another writer, the Soviet Union informed Egypt and Syria not only that it would not support them if they attacked Israel and so risked confirming the US as well but also that they would not give military support in the event of an attack by Israel alone³³.

31. M S Agwani (ed), The West Asian Crisis 1967 (Meerut, 1968), P.56.

32. Mohamed Heikal, no.1, p.182

33. Robert Stephens, Nasser - A Biography (London, 1973), p.44

However, Soviet Union initially encouraged and supported Egypt; but when it became obvious that they themselves would be sucked into the conflict they unsuccessfully urged restraint upon the parties. Israel finally attacked Egypt, Syria and Jordan on 5 June 1967 which began with the destruction by Israel of the Egyptian and Syrian air forces on the ground. Kosygin and U S President Jonson contacted on the hot line. Kosygin sought United States' cooperation for a ceasefire and withdrawal of Israeli forces.

On 7 June United Nation Security Council unanimously adopted a Soviet draft resolution calling for a simple ceasefire. Both Jordan and Egypt had agreed to the ceasefire, while Israel continued to fight. On 9 June Israeli forces broke through into Syrian territory and Syria too had agreed to ceasefire. Israeli continued to fight on the Syrian forces and on 10 June held most of the Golan Height³⁴. Egypt was resentful with the Soviet Union for not having come to its rescue or intervened on her behalf against Israel. Relations during the course of war became strained between the course of war became strained between the two countries. Whereas Soviet Union asserted that Yugoslavia did not permit Soviet planes to overfly her territory³⁵. No doubt the war of 1967 had badly shaken the very existence of Egyptian regime.

34. Galia Golan, no.7, p.64

35. Heikal, no.1, p.183

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Nonetheless, war provided Soviet Union to consolidate and expand its Mediteranian presence by exploiting the Arab's need for rennovate and rebuild their armed forces. Immediately after the June war, the Soviet Union sent President Podgorny to assess the magnitude of disaster which had engulfed their ally. The more immediate purpose of his visit was to demonstrate the support to Egypt in her hour of need. Meanwhile Nasser chalked out his strategy to deal with the situation arising from defeat. According to Heikal, Nasser formulated a three pronged military strategy. Firstly, that Egypt would have to remain essentially on the defensive; secondly, it would continuously move to achieve deterrence; and thirdly, the ultimate recovery of the captured lands³⁶. Nasser concentrated all its effort towards rebuilding and strengthening the military. Following the Podgorny visit Soviet Union launched a massive unprecedented airlift of arms to fully equipped and rebuild Egyptian military. To improve its tarnished image, the Soviet Union mounted an immediate and passive resupply effort while pretentiously display increasing of their own fleet. Soviet military advisor were sent, reaching approximately 4000 in Egypt by the end of the year and presumably to solve the problem of control. Soviet Union used advisors, sympathisers and others to penetrate the Egyptian army, police, security, political and governmental bodies.

36 Heikal, no.1, p.117

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However, Soviet Union favoured international negotiations, that to be between two superpowers, additional powers, or at the United Nations, as distinct from direct talk between Israel and the Arab States. Meanwhile, in 1960 Nasser visited Soviet Union to discuss the military and political aspect of Soviet Unions' presence in Egypt. But then he fell ill seriously and on the other side Israel was penetrating and bombing west of the canal.

Nasser again flew to Soviet Union and asked Soviet leaders to establish an air base defence system manned by Soviet pilots and anti-aircraft forces and protected by Soviet troops. The cost to Egypt, however, was a high one. To obtain Soviet aid Nasser had to grant to Soviet Union exclusive control over a number of Egyptian airfields as well as operational control over a large portion of the Egyptian army³⁷.

It had the two aspect. On the one hand, failure to help Nasser might mean the Egyptian President ouster by elements in the Egyptian leadership less friendly towards the USSR at a time when United States was trying to rebuilt its position in Arab World. In addition, the air bases that the USSR would control could be used by Russian pilots, proved to be useful not only to intercept the Israel's but

37. Robert O Freedman, no.15, p.26

also to fly covering mission for the Soviet mediterenian fleet. On the other, Soviet Unions' committment to Egypt was that it would be demonstration to the Arabs World that the USSR was an ally to be counted on.

However, in January 1970 following a secret visit to Soviet Union, the Soviets finally decided to assume responsibility for the air defence of Egypt. Soviet union sent some 15,000 - 20,000 military advisors including personnel to handle a SAM - 3, air defence system and Soviet pilots who would actually man Soviet aircraft in Egyptian Air Force³⁸. The SAM-3 missiles had never before been placed outside the Soviet bloc. Brezhnev himself according to Heikal acknowledged the magnitude of this decision when he reportedly said, the Soviet Union has today taken a decision fraught with grave consequences. it is a decision unlike, any of we have ever taken before³⁹. Further, according to Heikal Soviet decisions was not easy one. The politburo was reportedly consulted and indeed there was much evidence in subsequent months of differences of opinion within the Soviet bureaucracy regarding this decision⁴⁰.

Despite the fact that the aid he was receiving from the USSR, Nasser also tried to maintain some ties with the West.

38. Galia Golan, no.7, p.73

39. ibid, p.73

40. ibid,

He continued to rely on American Oil companies to search for oil in Egypt. He also advised the new Libyan leader Kaddafi who came to power in September 1969 to turn to France and not to the Soviet Union for arms⁴¹. On the other hand Joseph Sisco, the US Assistant Secretary of State brought the Roger's plan to Nasser for the ceasefire at the Canal and the beginning of negotiations.

These developments led to suspicion among Soviet leaders. During Nasser's visit the Soviet Union expressed their need of knowing about the talks between Egypt and the United States. Nasser tried to convince but suspicion continued. According to Egyptian accounts, the very difficult talks in the Soviet Union ended with Nasser angrily proclaiming that he could accept the American proposed ceasefire out of despair over the Soviet position⁴². From this it would appear that the Soviets were opposed to a ceasefire, but it is more likely that the Soviets actually did favour an end to the war of Attrition. Nasser finally accepted the Roger Plan to a ceasefire from 7 August 1970. Even Brezhnev refused to provide new or additional weaponry to take the battle beyond defence.

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41. Robert O Freedman, no.15, p.35

42. Galia Golan, no.7, p.75

In sum Soviet Union continue and was anxious to support Egypt not out of hostility towards Israel but because of Egypt's anti imperialist policy. The foundation of this relationship rested on each party's national interest more precisely it concern for national security. Ideologically, the two countries were at variance. Soviet Union policy towards Egypt was also under the Soviet policy of national liberation movement. Further a constant U S threat on behalf of Israel to Arab nation made soviet policy extremely functional in Egypt.

CHAPTER-II

**SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT DURING TRANSITION PERIOD
AFTER THE DEATH OF NASSER, 1970 - 72**

The death of Nasser and the advent of Sadat was a turning point, albeit a subtle one initially, in the history of relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt. The cordiality and importance attached to the Soviet bloc by Nasser and ideological orientation with the socialistic philosophy had been the cementing factor for the relationship between Soviet Union and Egypt.

Considering the strategic position of Egypt, warm and strong relationship in the past and the ideological struggle against the west and imperialist powers, Soviet Union's aim was to continue the existing relationship with Egypt and to take it to further heights of mutual cooperation with the new government headed by Anwar-al-Sadat who had succeeded after Nasser's death.

The importance given to this continuity is evident from the fact that Premier Kosygin led a large Soviet delegation to Nasser's funeral and remained in Cairo for several days meeting with the new leadership ¹. The concept of Arab unity, just struggle for national independence progress and a rapid solution of the Middle East conflict was reaffirmed in the communique that followed this visit.

1. Robert O Freedman, Soviet policy towards the Middle East since 1970, (London, 1975), p.43

Sadat was elected as the President of Egypt on 15.10.1970 and he chose the team for his government resembling the one Nasser had. He took care to assure the Soviets of the continued friendship by sending Ali Sabri the Vice President, on 20th December 1970 to Soviet Union. Earlier, President Kosygin had given an explicit message of caution during one of his meetings at Egypt. He stated that "While the Soviet Union is no way questioned Egypt's right to recover its lost territory, the misuse of Egypt's readiness to do this through war would be when the Egyptian High Command could say that the Soviet advisers"². A prophecy which came true in the later part of history.

Soviet Union had the first inclination towards a definite shift when Sadat, in December 1970, lifted the State custodianship of private property, a clear departure from the Nasser's strong socialist principles.

To Soviet union, this appeared to be a move which would strengthen the hands of petty bourgeoisie and encourage ownership of private property. Although nothing was publicly decried, a note of caution to watch the Egyptian activities came to the hall mark of Soviet Union's policy towards Egypt.

2. Mohamed Haikel, Sphinx and Commissar : The Rise and Fall of Soviet influence in the Arab World (London, 1978), p.2/7.

The successful completion of Aswan Dam in January 1971, saw the visit of Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny to Egypt to inaugurate the Dam. His main purpose was to have a first hand experience of the functioning of the Government of Sadat and to assess the Egyptian President in the manner he managed the affairs. This was another step towards the policy of watchful waiting"³ in the Middle East adopted by the Soviet leaders following Nasser's death. The emphasis of their policy was to consolidate the existing relations with the new regime rather than embarking on new policy initiatives⁴.

On 4th February 1971, Sadat recommended only one month extension of the ceasefire i.e. upto March 1971, and not for three months as he had done earlier much to anxiety of Soviet Union ⁵. He also proposed to open the Suez Canal on conditions of Israeli withdrawal Egyptian advance on East Bank and implementation of UN resolution # 242. He also declared to restore diplomatic ties with the United States and to sign an agreement of peace with Israel.

Soviet Union was concerned with these developments which caught him by surprise. The lesser extension of ceasefire meant that renewed hostilities in the Middle East

3. Robert O Freedman, no.1, p-45

4. Ibid.

5. R Petrov, "New Move Towards a Middle East Settlement," New Times, no.8, 27 January 1971, p.11

would involve Soviet Union which was not acceptable. Again opening up of diplomatic ties with the US would involve the US in the Middle East and this caused great anxiety to the Soviet Union, whose leaders wanted to meet Sadat. Accepting the invitation, Sadat secretly visited Soviet Union on 1st March 1971⁶.

The causes of concern of Soviet Union over the gradual de-Nasserization in the field of Egyptian economy of privatization, increased contacts with Saudi Arabia, Libya and other Arab States, etc., all figured in the talks between Soviet leader and Sadat during this visit. It was then that Sadat proposed a treaty between the two countries⁷. Anxious to the involvement of United States and concerned over the limited extension of the ceasefire, Soviet Union, continued her friendly cooperation towards Egypt and Sadat returned home striking an optimistic note.

The concern of Soviet Union over the affairs of Sadat were shared by a group of leftist political supporters, who were influential during Nasser's period and who were retained by Sadat with key positions in his government. The main leader of this group was Ali Sabri, the Vice President.

6. See President Sadat's Speeches, September 1970 March 1971 (Cairo, 1971), p.45

7. Heikal, no.2, p.222.

The plot to remove Sadat from his position to retain and perpetuate the socialist principles of Nasser. Soviet Union came to view this group as "their special friends and allies inside the government"⁸.

Sadat moved swiftly and sacked Ali Sabri on charges of planning a coup⁹, on 2 May 1971. Immediately following this, the U S Secretary of State paid a call to Egypt and these events increased the suspicion of the Soviet Union over Egypt and the intensions of Sadat. The request of Sadat for weapon from Soviet has also turned down at this juncture¹⁰.

Faced with the situation of a Soviet American delente and an ultimatum of Sadat to support him to move towards war or losing Egypt to American mediation, the Soviet leaders finding both unacceptable, entered into a formal treaty with Egypt to protect their interests¹¹. This proved to be a major shift in the policy of the Soviet Union towards the third world. With this as a precedent, it is interesting to note that the Soviet Union finalised more than twenty treaties with different third world countries in the next decade and half. In any case, this tactical change was in response to the developments that taking place with in Egypt under the leadership of Sadat.

8. Ibid, p.225

9. Galia Golan, Soviet policies in the Middle East : From World War II to Gorbachev (Cambridge, 1990), P.77.

10. Ibid,

11. Ibid, P.78

The treaty of "Friendship and Cooperation" between the Soviet Union and Egypt signed on 27 May 1971, was not a new one but was under discussion for long between the two countries. There were no new and different proposal in the treaty. It was merely a codification of the existing Egyptian - Soviet relationship¹². The Egyptians, as per the treaty were to consult the Russians regularly. This they were already doing. Egypt also agreed not to join any alliance hostile to the Soviet Union. Considering their position and the reliance they had on Soviet Union, the Egyptians cannot anyhow join an antagonistic party to the Soviet Union. So, the Egyptians had committed themselves only to the extent they had their relationship with Soviet Union.

Soviet Union on their part restricted their military involvement to "assistance in the training of UAR military personnel and in mastering the armaments and equipment supplied to the UAR with a view of strengthening the capacity to eliminate the consequences of aggression"¹³.

Further according to article 11, provision was made for the extension of the treaty by a period of five years beyond 15 years and later, every time if neither of the contracting

12. Robert O Freedman, no.1, P.51

13. TASS, 27 May 1971

parties declares a year before the expiry of the Term, its desire to terminate the treaty¹⁴. From the position of Soviet Union, such a clause in the treaty was a clear indication of her attitude towards Egypt, that of benevolence and friendship in spite of the different contradictory moves taken by Anwar-Al-Sadat.

The Soviet union's endeavour in embarking on the cause of adopting socialism and the aim of the U A R on similar lines is also evident from Article 2 of the said treaty that "... will cooperate closely in all fields in ensuring conditions for preserving and further developing the social and economic gains of their peoples"¹⁵. It was probably the action of Sadat in lifting the custodianship of the State on private property, an action not suiting the taste of the Soviet Union, which guided her to include this article in the treaty.

However, the treaty itself had an impact which was, far less significant¹⁶. To the Soviet Union, the greatest importance of the treaty lies in the demonstration which has been clearly brought out by Podgorny in a speech in Egypt following the conclusion of treaty with an obvious

14. Ibid,

15. Ibid,

16. Robert O Freedman, no.1, P.51

indication at the United States: "The treaty between the Soviet Union and the UAR signifies a new blow to the plans of international imperialism which is trying in every possible way to drive a wedge into the relations between our countries, to undermine our friendship and to divide the progressive forces".¹⁷

All in all by signing the treaty the Soviet Union was guided by the following ideas and policies:

- Limited commitment towards military efforts of Egypt to retain the friendship.

- an halt to the American move to gain foothold in the Middle East, when the President of Egypt had in earlier occasions had given clear indication of a tilt towards U S.,

- proper consultation between the two countries in all matters which concern each other and thus providing a chance to the Soviet Union in assessing the situation of Middle East before hand,

- to protect and safeguard their interest in region,

- to get a commitment from the Egyptian state to adhere the socialist principles,

- to silence the critics with in the Soviet Union for her continued military and economic aid to Egypt despite Sadat's action,

17. Pravada, May 29, 1971.

- to avoid Egypt from entering into local and international alliances without having consulted the Soviet Union.

Although Egypt viewed this treaty to be a guarantee for supply of offensive arms in her struggle against Israel, the Soviet Union viewed it as a limitation on Sadat's attempt in distancing Egypt from Soviet Union.

The commitment of each country towards the treaty of 1971 was according to their expectation from it.

The contention of Soviet Union was, in the words of Brezhnev, "The aim of our policies is that the Afro - Asian Countries should, through their strengthening friendship with the Soviet Union, ensure that their independence is consolidated along an increasingly progressive path"¹⁸.

They wanted to consolidate their position in the world particularly in the Middle East. The American influence, particularly amongst the Arab nations, as Israel was completely siding towards America, was to be put a stop too. They wanted to be the sole champion of the third world countries. They also wanted to spread the socialist principles across the world which was a major ideology of -----

18. Heikal, no.2, p.245

socialism. All these played a vital role in influencing the policies of the Soviet Union towards Egypt. In the Middle East, Egypt had a special place for Soviet Union considering her strategic position to control the Suez Canal and Egypt's position in having a say on the affairs of the Middle East. The Soviet Union found a strong ally in Nasser who chartered the path of Egypt" after the Egyptian revolution had broken free from the restrictions imposed upon Egypt by the imperialists and had marched firmly forward to build up its relations with Soviet Union ¹⁹.

It is amply evident that Egypt had enjoined in the treaty purely on opportunistic reason. The ideological differences continued to exist, albeit, behind the screen. Sadat wanted to make Egypt powerful and chose all possible way to achieve it, with or without the assistance of Soviet Union. A clever politician, Sadat, brought Soviet Union to a point where to consolidate their position and also to avoid Egypt from moving closer to the United States the Soviet Union accepted to the treaty - Soviet - Egyptian treaty, a document which had been under discussion for several years ²⁰. It was a clear case of appeasement by the Soviet Union of Egypt, inspite of several measures taken

19. Ibid.

20. Robert O Freedman, no.1, P-51

by Sadat, contrary to wishes of the Soviet Union. Signing the treaty was a clear endorsement of the Sadat regime by the Soviet Union ²¹.

The opportunism of Egypt made it to overlook the treaty and act in an unilateral manner, much to the concern of Soviet Union, as the succeeding events clearly showed. The Sudan crisis, announcement of the year of decision by Sadat and finally the expulsion of the Soviet experts clearly showed the drift between Soviet Union and Egypt.

Article 2 of the treaty had the firm commitment of Egypt for reconstructing society along the socialist lines. They were also to consult each other in matters of mutual interest. Violation of the treaty was to first take place through a breach of Article 2.

Sudan had one of the best organised Communist party in the whole of Arab world under the name of Sudanese Communist Party²². Soviet Union was in support of this communist party considering the ideological similarities.

Colonel Jafar Nimeiry, the President of Sudan was enjoying the support of most of the Sudanese Communist party but wanted them to dissolve themselves following the

21. Ibid.

22. Heikal, no.2 p.229

Egyptian party's examples. The leader of the SCP led by Abdul Khalek Mahgoab, were unwillingly to do so. Differences cropped up and Nimeiry arrested Mahgoub and other leaders. Nasser who was the President of Egypt at that time, was requested by Nimeiry to keep the arrested under custody. When Soviet Union gave indication of annoyance on this detention, Nasser, respecting the sentiments of Soviet Union had allowed Mohgaub to leave Egypt with assistance²³. Mahgoab chose to return to Sudan at Khartoom where he was rearrested.

In the first half of 1971, the conflict at Sudan took a turn by the arrest of Nimeiry by the communist coup. Sadat's request for the safety of Nimeiry was not acceded to²⁴. Soviet Union, however, supported this communist coup and were relieved to see the exit of Nimeiry, for his action against communists. The other leaders of the communist party under exile were arrested by Libya enroute to Sudan and handed over to Nimeiry.

Nimeiry regained power with active help from both Libya and Egypt. Sadat played an important role in the return of Nimeiry to power within three days of being overthrown in the leftist coup²⁵. Sadat airlifted Sudanese military

23. Ibid, P.230

24. Ibid, P.231

25. Robert O Freedman, no.1, P-54

contingent from their base at Suez Canal Zone to Khartoum. This timely airlifting of the troops played a vital role in the collapse of the communist coup. There was a severe reprisal on the communist leaders after the reemergence of Nimeiry. Sadat in a major speech on July 30 after the executions, publicly praised Nimeiry and denounced the Sudanese Communists²⁶. This open defiance in a matter so important to the Soviet Union was a great shock to Soviet Union.

Sadat even went to the extent of claiming that "Arabs will never be Marxists. That is why we cannot allow a communist regime to exist in the Arab World"²⁷. Here Sadat showed his true intentions and made it clear that he offers only lip service to the treaty under which his country was committed for the spread of socialist principle.

Soviet Union watched this action with disappointment on Sadat's role. In addition to this dissatisfaction over the foreign policy of Sadat, they were also concerned over the arrest of various communist sympathizers. Sadat's encouragement of foreign and domestic capital was also a blow to the socialist stand supposed to be taken by Egypt.

26. Ibid, p-54

27. Jaan Pennar, The USSR and the Arabs : The Ideological Dimension (New York, 1973), P.49

Inspite of this widening gap, Soviet Union maintained its earlier position of adherence to the treaty and continued to have an appeasing stand towards Egypt for some more time.

Following the Sudanese imbroglio, on August 8, 1971, Egypt, Libya and Syria entered into an alliance by signing the constitution of the Federation of Arab Republics. The Federation appeared to be moving in an anticommunist and anti soviet direction as a result of the event of Sudan²⁸. The Soviet union which initially was in support of this Federation, for it was to be anti imperialist, now started to have its own fears particularly when the communists of these countries, were excluded from the scheme. These action of Sadat, made Soviet Union to sit back and make a fresh appraisal of its foreign policy and that too particularly for Egypt.

Sadat, on 4 February 1971, came out with a peace initiative. This he made, disillusioned with the Roger Plan which he felt was being used by Israel and U S to maintain Status quo whereas his primary aim was to recover the captured Arab territories. He proclaimed that the year 1971 was the year of decision and wanted to have the battle between the Arab and Zionist to be decided in 1971 itself.

28. Robert O Freedman, no.1 p-56

He became convinced that only force can find a solution to the tangle between Arab and Zionist Forces.

Side by Side, he entered into the treaty with Soviet Union. Article 7 of the treaty clearly envisages that the countries will regularly consult each other at different levels on all important questions effecting the interest of both states to ensure peace and security of the peoples. The announcement that 1971 is a year of decision was an unilateral one, though it was made earlier to the treaty, Soviet Union, it felt was not obliged to side Egypt on this issue.

To have his announcement any real meaning, Sadat visited Soviet Union to seek political and military help in making the announcement a reality. He made it abundantly clear that he seeks military help for his battle against Israel. He tried to make clear and gave his stand on every issue that because a sore point in their relations in the past. He sought immediate supply of arms of offensive weapons to gain an upper hand over Israel.

As a result of this meeting a joint communique stated at the end, that "measures were agreed for the further

strengthening of Egypt's military might"²⁹. This made Sadat happy because he believed that the promised weapons were under way.

The events which unfurled were to be quite different from the one expected by Sadat. The Soviet Union did not deliver the weapons to Egypt. Soviet had many reason to do so, viz.,

- Visit of US President Nixon to Soviet Union in May 1972. The Soviet leaders hinted that rapid progress was made towards detente.

- It was committed to develop its ties with United States.

- Sadat's contradictory stance of taking anti Soviet measures in many fields and at the same time, seeking aid from the Soviet Union was not to the taste of Soviet leaders.

This clearly shows a shift in the Soviet policy in a practical assessment of its foreign policy as far as Egypt is concerned, avoiding the appeasing policy. Further the involvement of Soviet Union in the supply of arms to India

29. The Policy of Soviet Union in the Arab World : A Short collection of Foreign policy documents : The USSR and the third world (Moscow, 1975), PP-177-78

in the Indo Pak war, even diverting them from Egypt is said to be a ploy to prevent Sadat from launching a war on Israel, particularly when the relations between Soviet Union and Israel was warming up by the permission of Lemigrants from Russia to Israel, granting visas to Israelis etc³⁰.

The immigrants from Russia were to the tune of 3000 per month and they were mainly of military age, and relatively a significant proposition of them were professionals who could contribute immensely in the war efforts of Israel³¹.

So with this shift in the policy and fresh look on foreign affairs, Soviet Union was supplying Egypt with advisers and weapons, they armed Israeli with manpower and skills. This resulted mainly from the actions of Sadat himself because of which there was no longer any real foundation of trust between the Soviet and Egyptian leaders³². No doubt Soviet Union adopted such policy towards Egypt was basically a carrol stick policy to have a check on Egypt.

However, because of differences shown by Soviet Union, the "year of decision", announced by Sadat, passed off peacefully; only to have more repurcussions, in the relations between the two countries.

30. Robert O Freedman, no.1, p-59

31. Ibid.

32. Heikal no.2, p-238

The accumulated grievances from Egypt unearthed on July 6, 1972, as a surprise move to the whole of the world, Sadat decided and announced the move to withdraw Soviets' military personnel from Egypt. The Soviet Ambassador was informed on July 8th about the decision and Soviet Egyptian relations were virtually frozen³³. However, the reasons for this action may be found in three major related areas of disagreement between the Soviet Union and Egypt. Soviet arms supplies, the renewal war against Israel and super power dentete. It was then Sadat announced publicly on 18 July to expel the Soviet military advisers. He asked them to leave with in one week, taking their equipment with them or selling to Egypt.

According to Heikal, from the outset, the Egyptian calculation had been that the Middle East conflict had been operating at two levels - one local and the other international, the 1967 war tilted the balance in favour of Israelis at the local level. Egypt, therefore, took the conflict to international level. Soviets were encouraged to negotiate with the American for Egypt. This was more to the suiting of the Soviet Union who wanted to establish herself in the region, act as a Champion of the third world and to reduce the influence of the United States in the area - their policy target.

33. Galia Golan, no.9, p.78

Gradually Soviet Union became more and more involved and sent many of its experts armed forces³⁴. The task was slowly completed in 1972, the apprehension of Soviet forces in Egypt came to the fore, slowly accumulating over the years.

In May 1972, Marshal Gretchko was requested to replace the Soviet missile crews by fully trained Egyptians. This was turned down quoting the Nixon's visit to Moscow. Egypt remained unconvinced adding another grievances against Soviet Union to its tally³⁵.

The non availability of the Soviet offensive weapon, inspite of the view of Egypt of Article 8 of the treaty between Soviet and Egypt the fizzling out of the "year of decision" for want of the offensive weapons and the mistrust developed by Sadat over Soviet Union for their dealings with United States through Nixon's visit wherein Egypt considered that a decision has been reached to freeze the status quo, thus at the cost of the lost territories of Egypt and other Arab countries, made Sadat to decide that something drastic has to be done to impress upon the Soviet Union, the gravity of the situation. He ordered explusion of 21000 Soviet

34. Ibid, no.2, P-243

35. Ibid, P-244

advises from Egypt. Ten days time was given for their expulsion.

Soviet Union withdrew her men in good order. They withdrew in a weak³⁶. However, Brezhnev, the President of Soviet Union wrote a letter seeking the reasons for such a unilateral move by Sadat while expressing that their "friendship for Egypt is not a short term objective but an essential element of our international policy"³⁷. Brezhnev's letter shows him again convinced that the Soviet Union's behaviour had been beyond reproach, that its concerns for the third world is real, it does not have a policy for superpower calculations and what had gone wrong must be the fault of the imperialists and the "intrigues of rightist elements" from Egypt³⁸.

Sadat replied that two main principles were his consideration that:

- Egypt wanted to fight with her own forces.
- That battle should not be an occasion of confrontation between Soviet Union and United States³⁹.

36. Ibid - 244

37. Ibid

38. Ibid

39. Ibid, p-247

Further he did not want Soviet Units stationed in Egyptian territory without under Egyptian command. He also alleged that secrecy within the Soviet Union stopped it from sharing the developed arms with Egypt.

He however, sought for good relations between the two Countries.

Thus ended a turbulent phase in the Soviet Egyptian relations and made Soviet Union reassess its policy towards Egypt. This expulsion did not effect the Soviet policy to a great extent as the events that followed continued to prove. The decision of expulsion was an expression of the accumulated Egyptian grievances over Soviet Union. This clearly identified by the Soviet Union and through a slight change in policy gave both military and economic aid to the Egypt in the way that followed.

CHAPTER-IV

CHAPTER-III

ARAB ISRAEL CONFLICT AND SOVIET POLICY DURING 1973-77

Despite the major loss of Soviet Union with expulsion of Soviet advisor by Sadat, the initial Soviet reaction was relatively mild. Although by this time Soviet - Egyptian relations began to deteriorate. However, Soviet union, outwardly continued to view its policy with Egypt as that of cooperation. As politburo committee was reported to have recommended: Let the Egyptian have sufficient arms to enable them to risk a battle ... should this happen and should the Arabs win, their victory will have been achieved thanks to Soviet arms. Should they be defeated or the fighting reaches a settlement, it is still the Soviet Union that they will have to look for rescue in the aftermath of the battle.¹

This led a change in Sadat's tone towards the Soviet Union. The Egyptian leader declared that Sadat had sent a teller to Brezhnev that was friendly and cordial in spirit². Further, with the initiation of Syrian President Assad, Sadat sent Premier Sidki to the Soviet Union to sought weapon and for further cooperation. In addition Egyptian leader called the Soviet - Egyptian friendship as strategic and not tactical. The Soviet Union responded to Sidki visit

1. A K Pasha, Egypt quest for peace: Determinants and implications, (New Delhi, 1994), p. 211.

2. Robert O Freedman, Soviet Policy towards Middle East since 1970, (London, 1975)

by returning SAM 6s to Egypt along with a few hundred advisors and the Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov³. Simultaneously from Egyptian side with the replacement of Egyptian war minister Sadek a person known to be relatively anti Soviet led to rumours of Soviet-Egyptian rapprochement⁴. Soviet Union outwardly continued to view its relations with Egypt coolly as Soviet Premier Kosygin's message said: "The Soviet Union has always stood and will always stand beside the Egyptian people in their struggle for progress, freedom and the liquidation of the consequences of the Israeli aggression⁵. At the same time Podgorny told the visiting parliamentary delegation, that the Soviet Union would remain Egypt's first friend⁶.

During the month of February and March in the year of 1973 relations improved substantially. On first February 1973 a Soviet military allegation arrived in Egypt and had extensive talk on various issues pertaining to Egyptian request for arms. This phase inaugurated a new phase in their relationship. Shortly afterwards, a high power Egyptian delegation headed by the new war minister Amad Ismail, visited Soviet Union and had talks with Brezhnev.

3. Galia Golan, Soviet policies in the Middle East from the World War two to Gorbachev (Cambridge, 1990) p.78

4. Ibid

5. Indian Express (Delhi), 24 July 1972

6. Arab Report and Record (London), No.15, 1-5 Aug 1972, p.371

A Joint Communique issued repeated opposition to any partial settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, adding that the Soviet Union had undertaken to facilitate and strengthening the Egyptian military potential had again affirmed the right of the Arab states to use "any form of struggle against Israel"⁷. It was indeed a significant change in Soviet policy especially in view of Soviet's commitment to the policy of detente and earlier flat refusal to supply arms asked for by Sadat.

Soon after a joint communique it was said that the development of cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries had been the main theme of the Ismail - Brezhnev - Gromyko talks which were reported to have taken place in "warm and friendly atmosphere". According to Sadat the biggest ever arms deal with Soviet Union was concluded during this visit and Egypt started getting some of the arms it wanted promptly and in record time⁸.

Though Soviet decision to arm Egypt enabled the latter to enhance its military capability to launch an attack on Israel. Sadat was able to acknowledge confidentially that Soviet Union is with everything they can. I am completely satisfied⁹. However, the Soviet decision to supply arms in

7. Ibid, No.3, 1-14 Dec 1972, p.596

8. Foy D Koheler, Leon Goure and Mose C Harvey, The Soviet Union and the October 1973 Middle East War : The implication for Detente (Washington, 1974), p.36

9. Newsweek, April 9, 1973.

large quantities to Egypt should not mean that it wanted to solve the Arab Israeli dispute through military means. In reality it was not so. It started supplying more arms with the intention of retaining its friendship and preserving its stakes and investment in Egypt. Soviet policy may have been merely tactical, designed to avoid further deterioration of its position in the Middle East, and to avoid ever present possibility of an Egyptian turn to the United States. Soviet Union continued to emphasize their preferences for a political settlement.

The Soviet Union by this time was preoccupied with the summit between Soviet Union and United States and detente had by now become the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy. The crucial reason for their emphasis on a political settlement to the Arab Israeli dispute was to persuade Sadat not to renew hostilities and complicate their bilateral ties with the U S just before the summit ¹⁰.

Here we find a contradiction in Soviet policy towards Egypt. On one hand it was supplying most, if not all, of the weapons which made it extremely tempting for Sadat to go for war. On the other hand they emphasised the need to solve the problem through political means at least out break of a conflict might disturb the detente.

10. See Galia Golan, the Arab Israel in Soviet-United States relations in Yaacoi Roi (ed), The Limits of Power : Soviet Policy in the Middle East (London, 1979), PP.7-31.

Meanwhile the summit meeting between Brezhnev and Nixon took place in Washington in last week of June 1973. Both parties simply expressed their deep concern with the situation in the Middle East and exchanged opinion regarding ways of reaching a Middle East settlement. Each of the parties set forth its position on this problem¹¹. Brezhnev pointed in his farewell broadcast that tensions in West Asiad were acute and that a solution was necessary for the maintenance of universal peace. ¹²

However, Soviet Union almost, certainly knew about Sadat's plan of war. They were not informed of the exact date and time, they did little to prevent it and once both Egypt and Syria had demonstrated their military ability in the first days of the war, that is 6 October 1973. Though Soviet Union activated after 3 days of war, the Soviet leadership reinforced the Arab War effort with a major airlift and sealift of weaponry as well as diplomatic support in the United Nations. ¹³ In taking such action the Soviet Union was stepping back from its highest point at the time of the Moscow summit of 1972 and which seemed to be reconfirmed by the Washington summit in June 1973. There -----
11. Kissinger Contemporary Archieves, (London) Vol.XV (July 23-29, 1973), p.26002.

12. A R R No.12, (16-30 June 1973), p.284

13. Robert O Freedman, Moscow and the Middle East : Soviet Policy since the invasion of Afganistan, (New York, 1991) p.50.

was of course the moment of peril, when it seemed that superpower collaboration had broken down and Cuba-style confrontation might be on the point of developing.

Soviet Union was also aware about the fact that if it intervene directly would invite similar, American action which will endanger detente and prolong the war and increase the risks of super power confrontation.

However, Soviet Union with regard to Egypt tripled the air lift in size after 15 October, that is, after Egyptian forces initially suffered a reversal in the Siani. Thus, it may be the case that Soviet Union resupply oppression was intended not so much to prolong or extend the war but rather to shore up Arab armies and prevent their defeat until a ceasefire could be achieved.¹⁴ Even as the resupply effort was getting underway, the Soviets were in contact with both the United States and Egypt for the purpose of arranging a ceasefire which was rejected by Sadat. On 12 October, the day before the renewal bid for a ceasefire, Soviet Union issued its first official warning of the war to Israel.¹⁵

The Soviet Union was also engaged in continuous communication with United States through "hot line", each pledging to the other that it work towards a quick

14. Galia Golan, no.3, p.88

15. Ibid

ceasefire. Soviet leaders sent Kosygin to Egypt on 16 October to persuade Sadat to accept a ceasefire. It is necessary to add that when Kosygin was in Egypt the Israelis penetrated on the West Bank of the Canal and establish a foothold. Kosygin was unsuccessful in getting Sadat's support for a ceasefire.¹⁶ Though Kosygin returned without getting Sadat's approval for a ceasefire, but he had presented numerous proposal which became the basis for future ceasefire arrangements.

Sadat realized the gravity of the situation that the United States had mounted a massive airlift of arms to Israel and his own air defence system was getting destroyed. So, he quickly decided on 19 October to accept the ceasefire and so informed the Soviet Union.

Brezhnev insisted upon meeting with Kissinger immediately upon the arrival in Soviet Union of the United States Secretary of State and within hour the Soviets abandoned their demand for Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines and accepted a ceasefire in place. The joint Soviet American proposal brought to United Nation becoming security council resolution 338 called for a ceasefire as of 22 October.

16. Heikal, Road to Ramadan (London, 1975), p.246

On 23 October the Security Council noted to send observers to enforce the ceasefire, but by 24 October Israeli forces virtually occupied the town of Suez and surrounded the 20,000 strong Egyptian army.¹⁷ In a desperate attempt to halt the Israelis, Sadat urgently requested the Soviet Union and United States to send in their own force to ensure the ceasefire.

This request was not accepted by United States but supported by Soviet Union. Now Soviet Union openly backed the Arabs. Therefore, the Soviet leaders decided to pressure Israel and United States by alerting Soviet air born division and despatching Soviet transport planes to the airborne troops bases. At the same Brezhnev sent a stiff note to United States President Nixon that reportedly stated: I say it straight that if the United States does not find it possible to act together with us in this matter, we should be faced with the necessity urgently to consider the question of taking appropriate steps unilaterally.¹⁸

The Soviet Union evidently adopted this militant posture in pursuance of Brezhnev's assurance to Sadat and also to prevent the Egyptian army from being destroyed. However, such a stand from Soviet Union, alarmed the United

17. Galia Golan, no.3, p.90

18. Robert O Freedman, no.2, p.130

States which immediately ordered a world wide alert of their forces including the nuclear ones. ¹⁹ No doubt United States equally unwilling to see the conflict develop any further, and brought pressure on Israel to scrupulously honour the ceasefire. It is evident that Egyptian army was saved due to Soviet diplomacy.

It must be said that through out the October war the Soviet attitude towards the Arab was impeccable. They identified themselves wholeheartedly with the Arab cause and did what they could to bring assistance to Egypt and Syria both at the local and at the international level.

Sadat's diplomatic strings were pulled when in realising the gravity of the situation in the war of October 1973, accepted the ceasefire as proposed by Soviet Union but effected a major reorientation of his attitude towards United States. Sadat argued that the Arab Israeli conflict must be resolved through diplomatic means with United States playing a prominent role, hence drawing close towards United States at a speed which provided Soviet Union to reconsider its supports to Egypt.

In the post 1973 era relations were primarily characterised by mutual distrust and hostility. Disagreement between the two countries converged a broad

19. Ibid, p.131

range of issues: Political, diplomatic, military and economic.

The Soviet official co-chaired the Geneva conference held in December with the United States, but Heikal reported that they were relegated to the role of spectators.²⁰ Meanwhile, Soviets too felt uneasy about the developing Egyptian-United States relations. They did not like Kissinger's monopoly with Egyptian consent of the negotiation process, which resulted in the first disengagement agreement between Egyptian and Israeli forces on January 20, 1974. Soviet Union expressed grave concern over these developments. Sadat sent Egypt's foreign minister Ismail Fahmy to Soviet Union for the period of 21-25 January 1974 to pacify the agitated Soviet leaders and to discuss Soviet Egyptian relations. The visit resulted in a joint communique which stressed the importance of close coordination between the two countries in the peace efforts. It emphasised that a very important factor in the struggle for a just settlement in the Middle East is close coordination of action, of the Soviet Union and Egypt at all stages of their struggle, including the work of the peace conference on the Middle East in all its working bodies that may be informed.²¹

20. Heikal, Sphinx and Commissar : The Rise and fall of Soviet influence in the Arab World (London, 1978), p.219

21. The Policy of the Soviet in the Arab World. A Short Collection of Foreign Policy Documents, The USSR and the Arab world (Moscow, 1975) p,192

The impact of Fahmy visit to the Soviet Union was quite visible in Brezhnev's guarded and cautious statement on 29 January: The agreement between Egypt Israel on the disengagement of troops reached at the beginning of the Geneva conference is a positive step, but it represents only a partial measure of a purely military character and so far efforts only of the Arab countries involved in the fighting. But, of course, they must not stop here. The Geneva conference must carry out its main mission: achieve a basic political settlement and establish a lasting peace in the Middle East. 22

Although Soviet Union was criticalical about its exclusion from the peace process, it was not prepared for an open rift with Egypt at this juncture. Soviet Union sent Anderi Gromyko to Egypt. The Soviet unions displeasure with Egypt was quite visible during Gromyko's visit as he had first visited Syria then came to Egypt. The talks between Gromyko and Fahmy which were held in a business like atmosphere indicated the presence of acute differences between the two side.²³ Gromyko used every opportunity to highlight the need for close coordinations and frequent consultations and for rebuffing the attempts made to drive a wedge between the two countries.

22. Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After : The Soviet Union and the Middle East crisis (Cambridge, 1976)

23. Amrit Bazaar Patrika (Calcutta) 14 March 1974

The joint communique once again reemphasised the point of Soviet participation in Geneva conference and close consultations with each other. The two side expressed the view that it was important and necessary for the Soviet Union to participate in all stages of the settlement in Middle East, including the working committees which the Geneva conference forms.²⁴

However, Soviet Union was feeling irritant against Sadat policy of close contact with US. One of the editor of Soviet Press accused Sadat for pursuing an "anti Soviet policy". Sadat was accused for engaging in material contacts with the US and accused him of trying to balance between two poles in order to collect dividens from the US and West European countries on one hand and the Soviet Union and the national movements on the other.²⁵

After the resignation of US President Nixon, United States showed anxiety to restore working relationship with the Soviet Union, he at the same time made it clear that the new relationship should be on the basis of equal footing. A high level delegation under Ismail Fahmy made a visit to Soviet Union from 14-18 October. Although the Soviets were not pleased at Sadat's friendship with the West and

24. Alvin Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet Egyptian Relationship since the June War (New Jersey, 1977), p.295.

25. Cited in Forqus Mckenzie, "The Bear in Chains", Middle East International (London), No.43, January 1975

especially with US, they nevertheless welcomed the Egyptian attempt to reconcile their differences with Soviet Union. Ismail Fahmy said both should exercise greater vigilance against machinisations and manoeuvres to prevent friction arising between them. He further said that Egypt was convinced that any differences that had arisen in Soviet-Egypt relations had not affected the success of friendship between the two countries.²⁶

One of the positive outcome of this visit was that Brezhnev accepted to visit Egypt in January 1975. Egypt however, conceded that a complete and final settlement of Middle East crisis can be achieved only within the framework of Geneva conference.²⁷ Sadat expressed the hope that Brezhnev's forth coming visit will undoubtedly be a turning point in the friendship between the two countries. ²⁸

However, Soviet Union claimed that ill health caused the postponement of Brezhnev's January visit. Whatever may have been the reason for the postponement it led to further deterioration in their relationship.

In the aftermath of October war no doubt the relation continuously deteriorated. Egypt requested Soviet

26. Guardian (London) 17 October 1974.

27. Robert O Freedman, P-179.

28. Ibid

compensation for the arms lost in the war, just as the U S had compensated Israel and Soviet Union and done for Syria. Basically Soviet Union objected to check the Egyptian tilt towards West. Some improvement in Soviet Egyptian occurred because in March 1975 Sadat confirmed that Egypt had taken delivery of MIG23s and that Egypt pilots were trained in Soviet Union. This was however, in fulfilment of a pre 1973 contact. Meanwhile, Sadat declared in June 1975 that if the Soviet Union continued to ignore Egypt's demand and took no notice of its economic situation, he would have to do something about it. In particular Sadat was critical of the Soviet massive armament of Libya, whose relationship with Egypt were deteriorating. He perceived this as an avenue of Soviet penetration in the area and a potential threat to Egypt.²⁹

As the Soviet Union followed its policy under Brezhnev doctrine. The crux of Brezhnev doctrine was that Soviet Union was prepared to reshoulder Egypt's defence requirement if Egypt would toe Soviet's political line instead of US line. However, President Sadat said: The era of the Soviet experts is over once and for all. His message was clear. He was willing to accept Soviet weapons but not Soviet

29. Ali E Hillal Dessouki, Egypt in Samuel F Wells, Jr, Mark Brazonslay, Security in Middle East : Regional Change and Great strategies. (London, 1987) p.76

personnel on Egyptian soil.³⁰ The strained relation further got worsen when Egypt turned towards France for weapon. However, Egyptians felt that more intimate relation with France and other European countries will help to establish more balance relation with Soviet Union and US.

Due to Kissinger step by step approach for Middle East peace with Sadat's consent, Geneva conference became his secondary option. As Sadat improved his relation with Ameircan and began to side line the Russians. Side by side there was a deep on going denasserisation compaign and economic openess towards traditional Arab state and the US. At the same time, Soviet facilities in Egypt presented another touchy issue for the Egyptian military. The Soviet had exclusive control over a number of airfields that provided a cover for the Soviet fleet. Soviet ships obtained facilities in several ports as - Alexandria, Port said and at Salloum³¹. From 1974 to 1976 Sadat continually reminded his people of the Soviet legacy in Egypt. He played on the sentiments of the military by remaining them that Soviet bases were breach of Egyptian sovereignty and commentators emphasised the theme of liberating Egypt from Soviet influence and demonation.

30. Times (London) 31, December 1974.

31. Ali E Hillal Dessouki, no.29 p.76

As when Kissinger failed to bring a second disengagement agreement between Egypt and Israel, Egypt formally asked the US and the Soviet Union the co-chairman to reconvene the Geneva conference. Soviet Union welcomed the Egypt call for recommencing the Geneva conference. At the same time Brezhnev wrote to Sadat saying that more consultation and preparations were needed to ensure its success.³²

Ismail Fahmy made yet another visit to Moscow in April 1975. Welcoming Fahmy Gromyko said the Soviet Union wished to strengthen and deepen relations between the two countries but obviously it is only possible to carry out these arms if the Egyptian leadership has a similar attitude to Soviet Union.³³ Fahmy replied : Our stances on international issues are almost identical. But he was quick to add that the arms supply issue and the rescheduling of debts and other economics matters had still to be settled to provide the achievements realised during the long years of cooperation and solidarity. Although, Fahmy did not touch the issue of the Geneva conference but Gromyko did. He said "We stand for earnest preparation of the conference so as to ensure its success". He also said that an early reconvoation of the conference and its earnest preparations

32. Rubenstein, no.24, p.313

33. A R R, No.8 (16-30 April 1975), p.216

are quite compatible things. He called for concertedness and said the Soviet Union was against any steps which would undermine unity and concertedness.³⁴

They issued a joint communique said, that the talks which proceeded in a businesslike and friendly atmosphere and expressed to continue to build relation between the two countries on the firm foundations of Soviet Egyptian treaty of friendship and co-operation. However, it made no mention either on debt repayment, arms supplies, or economic aid. Soviet Union continued to support Egypt in each sphere which was even spoke by Sadat in his May day speech when he said "We shall not forget that the Soviet Union stood by US during the black hours of 1967" But now Sadat was however, critical of Soviet's refusal to reschedule Egypt's debts. He made it clear that Egypt was not refusing to pay but was merely asking for a grace period and he appealed to the Soviet Union to appreciate our difficult situation.³⁵ Further, Sadat pointed out that we do not impose conditions on anybody because we do not allow anyone to impose conditions of any kind on us.³⁶ Though Soviet Union continued its guardinating policy, Pravda of 15 July publication a straight attack on the Cairo daily Al-Akbar

34. Partiot (New Delhi) 21 April 1975

35. U S S R and Third World, vol.V, No.4, (1st April 1974 to 12th March 1975), p.116

36. Rubeenstein, no.23, p.321

for depicting the Soviet Union as an enemy of Arab nations. Pravade emphasised that the Soviet Union had given Egypt substantial economic and military aid in its fight against Israel. It vehemently criticized the vicious intention to mislead millions of Egyptians. At the same time, the Soviet Union invited a high ranking Egypt economic delegation to US, to discuss the debt questions. But no agreement could be reached and no joint communique was issued implying that the differences were too acute to be mentioned in a communique.

In September 1975, the Sinai II agreement was signed. Not only was this occurred mediated exclusively by US but the Soviets were not even rendered symbolic participation.³⁷ This led to further tension for the worse in Egypt Soviet relations. However, over all Soviet policy meets fully the basic interest of the Arab people. The proof lay in the fact that other Arab States were also critical of the recently signed Egypt Israel disengagement agreement. Soviet Union also openly opposed to international mechanism being used simply as a screen for approving steps undertaken merely to abrogate in conference.

The observer concluded that the Soviet Union sought to presume all the good things achieved through Soviet Egyptian friendship and even to deeper and enrich it further on the

37. Galia Golan, no.3, p.104

basis of the community of interest in the struggle against intrigues by the forces of imperialism and aggression and for peace and the independence and social progress of nation.³⁸

However, Soviet Union also tried to put pressure on Egypt by refusing to sign any further arms contracts by adopting a firm policy on Egypt debt repayment, drastically cutting economic aid and by giving support to anti Egypt regimes in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Sadat switched over from a socialist to free market economy emphasising "Infitah" or open door and downgrading of the public sector accelerated the rift. These developments gave a further set back to Soviet policy in the Public Sector where they had mainly invested and gradually treated Egypt as liability than an asset. Then ultimately in March 1976 Egypt abrogated the treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Unions which he himself initiated and signed. Shortly after, the naval facilities enjoyed by Soviet Union on Egyptian shore were annuled and thus came to an end an era in which Soviet Union and Egypt played an important role in each others' foreign policy. Only three week before its abrogation Brezhnev had praised the treaty in his address to the 25th Congress of the CPSU as a long term basis of relations meeting both the interests of our countries and the entire world³⁹

38. Karen Dawisha, Soviet Foreign Policy towards Egypt, (London, 1979), p.76

39. Yaccov Roi, no.10, p.199

Even after such step by Sadat Soviet Union reiterated that it had pursued and would continue to pursue a principled consistent policy intended to develop a close friendly relations with Egypt and its people.

It is evident that the promotion of friendly relations with Arab countries and its people had been one of the permanent feature of Soviet foreign policy. In mid 1977 the Egyptian minister of foreign affairs Ismail Fahmy went to Soviet Union and held talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrio Gromyko. During this visit a useful exchange of opinion on the State and prospects of Soviet Egyptian relations, the Middle East situation and international problem of common interest took place. According to Sadat six relevant points were made clear to him:⁴⁰

1. Brezhnev stated that he would not allow the Soviet Union to be ignored in any Middle East settlement.

2. The Soviets requested a return of the friendship Treaty.

3. Cancellation of previous armament agreement; and

4. Refusal of the concept of replacing military losses.

5. Payments for spare parts should be made in hard currency and in advance of delivery.

6. Nothing could be delivered before the end of 1977.

40. Kauppi Mark U & Nation R Craig, The Soviet Union and Middle East in 1980s, (Toronto, 1983), p.171

However, in 1977, the USSR returned fifty out of one hundred and seventy five MIG-21 engines that were sent there for servicing . However, in August all remaining Egyptian military personnel training in the Soviet Union were withdrawn.⁴¹ By this time Egypt's relations with the U S had improved dramatically and Sadat had introduced a new economic policy that gave more opportunities to foreign and private capital, something that was severely criticised by Soviet press. Meanwhile problems had emerged because Egypt demanded a rescheduling of its debts to Soviet Union (estimated at eleven billion dollars) most of which was a result of arms supplies. In October 1977 Sadat suspended debt repayment to the USSR⁴². Even the Soviet-US effort during 1977 to reconvene the Geneva conference on the Middle East did not result in much progress.

However, it was continually emphasised by the Soviet side that the USSR is willing and had been willing to maintain and actively develop good relations with Egypt on a timed principle basis. Gromoyko had expressed profound conviction that there could be no insurmountable obstacles in the way of Soviet-Egyptian relations provided both sides displayed good will. Soviet Union had reaffirmed the

41. Ibid

42. Ibid

invariable principled policy of the Soviet Union which constantly upheld the just cause of the Arab peoples. This further shows that the promotion of friendly relations with Arab countries and peoples had been one of the permanent feature of Soviet Foreign Policy.

CHAPTER-V

SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS EGYPT AFTER CAMP DAVID ACCORD 1978-81

In the preceding discussion we have seen that the relations between Soviet Union and Egypt was not a constant one even then Soviet Union pursued its cooperative policy. There were many ups and downs in Soviet Egypt relationship which finally culminated to the abrogation of the treaty of friendship and cooperation 1971. Nonetheless Soviet Union stressed for the development of healthy relation and continued to pursue its policy of friendship and cooperation towards Egypt, though with some restrictions. At the same time Soviet Union emphasised that it will always be with the cause of Arab people.

By the spring of 1978 Soviet union's influence in Egypt was at its lowest point since 1955; and many observers were concluding that the Soviet Union's current position in Egypt marked the failure of its objective and the bankruptcy of its policy towards Egypt.¹ However, Soviet Union in the interval of time adopted caret and stick policy but under the aspiration of its ideology and to support national liberation movement it continued to support Egypt and other third world countries. In spite of this Egypt gradually shifted its preferences towards United States, which from beginning haunted Soviet Union.

1. Karen Dwaisha, Soviet Foreign Policy towards Egypt (London, 1979), p.207

Meanwhile, Soviet Union and United States issued a joint statement of 1 October 1977 calling for reconvening of the Geneva conference. Unlike his predecessor, Carter was willing to preclude the Soviet in the Middle East Peace process.² Moreover, the statement contained was essentially a reiteration of the substance of resolution 242, with the addition of the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Even Palestine representation at Geneva was also advocated in fact the intention appeared to be in the form of some kind of joint Arab delegations.³

Israel immediately rejected the statement because it was not in favour of Soviet inclusion and its concession on the Palestinian issue. Egypt too, rejected the Joint Soviet American initiative despite the fact that it had appeared to have supported the reconvening of Geneva conference. Sadat's rejection was based on his growing opposition to any Soviet participation.

Even without the knowledge of Soviet Union and apparently also to United States, Egypt and Israel had for some month been engaged in contacts, through the mediation of Morocco and Romania, aimed at achieving an Egyptian-Israeli settlement. (4) With their adamant rejection of

2. Galia Golan, Soviet Policies in the Middle East : From World War II to Gorbachev (Cambridge, 1990), p.105

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid

the Soviet proposal United States subsequently agreed to the Israeli white paper, which appeared to end the chances for Geneva conference in any case. Meanwhile Sadat made a visit to Jerusalem in pursuit of a peace agreement.

Soviet did not immediately condemn Sadat's move probably because it still harboured hopes of reconciliation with Egypt. It also did not want to appear to be opposed to peace. At this juncture, it became increasingly clear that Egypt's such move was intended to exclude the Soviet Union and was to usher in a new round of American mediation.

Later on an extreme secrecy marked the conclusion of Camp David summit in September 1978 among the U S President Carter, Egyptian President Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin⁵. This again showed the acute rift in their relationship. Soviet Policy got a major set back because in above summit of September 1978 Soviet Union was not invited which further led to the considerable change in Soviet polling towards Egypt.

The parties to camp David were determined to reach a just, comprehensive and durable settlement of Middle East conflict through the conclusion of peace treaties based on

5. Paul A Jaureidini and R D Mclaurin, Beyond Camp David : Emerging Alignments and Leaders in the Middle East (New York, 1981), p.106

Security Council resolutions 242 and 238 in all their parts showed the purpose to achieve peace and good neighbourly relations. They recognise, that, for peace to endure, it must involve all those who have been most deeply affected by the conflict. They, therefore, agreed that this framework as appropriate is intended by them to constitute a basis for peace not only between Egypt and Israel, but also between Israel and each of its other neighbour which is prepared to negotiate peace with Israel.⁶

At the Summit two documents were signed. A frame work for peace in the Middle East and "A frame work for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel". These documents constituted a separate Israeli Egyptian bargain that ignored the fundamental issues involved in a Middle East settlement and the interests of other countries involved in the conflict. Israel was still not prepared to withdraw its troops from all the occupied territories, including Gaza and West Bak of the Jordan river and Golden heights. The Palestenian people were refused the right to establish their own independent state and the Palestine liberation organisation - the only legitimate reputation of the Palestinian was not recognised.⁷

6. Ibid

7. Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol.II, 1945-80, (Moscow, 1981),p.608

However, the Camp David agreements were greeted with a mixed reception by the participants. President Carter's own standing was greatly enhanced in the U S A, where it was felt that his daring personal diplomacy had forced the Israeli and Egyptian leaders to make concessions. Government of Saudi Arabia commented that the Camp David agreements constituted an unacceptable formula for a definite peace while the resignation of Egyptian Minister of Foreign affairs showed that not even Egyptian opinion was wholeheartedly in favour of the Camp David formula⁸.

Sadat's break with Soviet tutelage and enagement in the Camp David process has effectively expelled the Soviet's from the core of the region, where their severance of diplomatic relations with Israel's 1967 has denied them effective influence over peace initiatives. Since Camp David accord, Soviet union influence had been relegated to actors standing outside the dominant regional state system and to areas peripheral to the nerve centre of Middle Eastern politics.

Soviet Union vehemently condemned Sadat's tilt towards Israel. Incidentally Arab states termed Sadat policy as sheer betrayal to their cause in joining hands with their arch enemy the Israel. The new situation provided Soviet

8. Mark V Kauppi and R Craig Nation, The Soviet Union and the Middle East in the 1980s (Toronto, 1983), p-45

Union a golden opportunity to turn the table against Egypt by aligning with Arab States who were badly against the signing of Camp David accords.

Soviet leadership was undoubtedly unhappy with the results of Camp David which seemed to indicate that Egypt and Israel were now well on their way to signing a peace agreement, Soviet could only have been pleased with a number of developments in the Arab World that were precipitated by the Egyptian - Israeli American summit, including reconciliation between Iraq and Syria, Jordan and Palestenian abration organisation and Iraq and PCO and the Baghdad conference of November 1978 which appeared to organise almost the entire Arab world against Egypt.⁹ More significantly, the sanits officially recognised the PCO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestenian people, in November 1978, by way of response to the Camp David accord.¹⁰

Soviet Union regarded that the peace as it was outlines at Camp David is fictious and illusory. If stressed that the US "guarantees" envisaging the construction of two new military airfields in Israel and increased military and

9. Robert O Freedman, Moscow and The Middle East : Soviet Policy since the invasion of Afganistan (Cambridge, 1991), p.60

10. Galia Golan, no.2, p.106

financial aid to it are not aimed at establishing peace in the Middle East. In fact, it was a guarantee of Israel territorial annexation and U S imperialist presence.¹¹

Soviet Union feared that a more formal military arrangement was not far off and that the Camp David system might expand to include such states as Jordan and possibly even the PLO. Therefore, soviet Union greeted the agreement with hostility. In a major speech at Baku on September 22, Brezhnev denounced what he termed the U S attempt to "split the Arab ranks" and free the Arabs to accept Israeli peace terms.¹² In addition he said that "any attempt to ignore the fundamental prerequisites for a real settlement of the Middle East problem to exclude or disregard one or another participant in this settlement, to sacrifice their interests or dictate one's terms to them can bring nothing but an illusion of settlement,"¹³ Leonard Brezhnev stressed "Whatever the framework of the separate deal which conceals the capitulation of one side and consolidates the fruits of aggression by another side - the aggression of Israeli it can only make the Middle East situation even more explosive."¹⁴

11. Leorid Medvedko, "Fictions and Realities", New Times, No.40, 1978, p.7

12. Robert O Freedman, no.9, p.61

13. Leorid Medvedko, no.11, p.7

14. Ibid.

Soviet Union started looking towards other Arab States because of the Egyptian response to Soviet Policy and was responded positively because they considered it as a betrayal to Arab cause. Leonard Brezhnev emphasised that there is only one way to a real settlement of Middle East conflict, that way, consist in complete withdrawal of Israel from all Arab lands it occupied in 1967, full and unequivocal respect of the legitimate right, of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to an independent state-hood, the reliably guaranteed security of all the countries in the area, including of course, Israel too. Such a comprehensive settlement is possible only with the participation of all sides concerned including the Palestine liberation organisation. The sooner this settlement is achieved the sooner will the Middle East cease to be a seat of tension"¹⁵

The Camp David agreement most decisively condemned by the Pan Arab Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation in Middle East, which was formed in December 1978, to oppose the Israeli - Egyptian bargain and which includes Algeria, Syria, Libya, the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen and also the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The agreement also failed to win the approval of such Arab States as Jordan and Saudi Arabia.¹⁶

15. Ibid.

16. Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol.II, no.7, p.609

Reinforcing Soviet satisfaction with this development, the PLO Soviet representation Mohammed Shaer stated that the Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation was the case of a future broad pan Arab anti imperialist front.¹⁷

While the Soviet Union was not the "Orchestrator" of the Rejectionist or Steadfastness Front, which on the contrary is the latest phase in Pan Arabism, its links with that group was nevertheless bound to be strengthened in the wake of Camp David Accord.

Soviet Union understandably tried to enhance its influence in Middle East, with the loss of such a core base of Egypt and to decrease that of the United States. Pravda and Izvestia too endeavour to analyse the Arabs as either "Progressive" or "Reactionary". And continuing Soviet denunciation of the Camp David accords is of course partly an expression of natural annoyance at having been excluded from a Middle East settlement, which it sees as "the intrigues of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction against the progressive forces in the Middle East".¹⁸

17. Robert O Freedman, no.9, p.63.

18. Rehana Hyder, "The view from Moscow ; After the Camp David", Middle East International, No.67, December 1978, p.13

The Soviet Union, for its part, moved to reinforce its ties with key member of the steadfastners front as first Assad then Henri Boumadienne of Algeria and then Arafat of the PLO visited Soviet Union in October. While the visit of Assad to Soviet Union could be considered a success for the USSR in its effort to prevent the camp David agreement from acquiring a reconciliation with Iraq was even more warmly endorsed by USSR. The Syria-Iraqi reconciliation and the limited rapprochement between PLO and Jordan which occurred was deemed as a favourable development by the USSR. As by this time, the Soviet Egypt relation reached at its lowest point it was essential for Soviet Union to improve its relations with other Arab States in order to counter the influence of United States as well as to exploit the anti-Egypt, Arab sentiment.

Despite these reconciliations, specific anti Egyptian measures were decided upon at Baghdad and sanction were planned against Egypt. Soviet have been pleased by the Baghdad conference formula for a just peace in the Middle East. Israeli withdrawal from the territorial captured in 1967 and the "right of Palestinian people to establish an independent State on their national soil".¹⁹ In sum the

19. Middle East and North Africa, November 6, 1978, p.13

Soviet leadership was undoubtedly pleased with the result of the Baghdad Summit, with one Soviet commentator deeming it "a final blow to imperialist intentions aimed at dissolving Arab unity and pressuring other Arab States to join Camp David".²⁰ And what the Soviet Union had long wanted became the nucleus of the anti-imperialist Arab bloc, even the Soviet Iraqi relation improved in the aftermath of the conference. Friendly relations with the Republic of Iraq are highly valued in Soviet Union.

However, Carter administration with its unilateral mediation to the two Middle East governments, leading to an Egyptian Israeli agreement at Camp David in September 1978 and the signing of formal instruments of Peace in March 1979. Throughout this period Soviet Union played a spoiler role by discouraging the extension of the Camp David process and even the execution of the Egyptian-Israeli peace terms. Through diplomacy and propoganda the Soviet Union aided and abetted the steadfastness and confrontation front of Arab states, which had been formed in 1977 expressly to frustrate Sadat's direct talks with Israel.²¹

Progressive world opinion recognised that the Camp David agreements and the signing in March 1979 of a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel only serve to distract

20. Robert O Freedman, no.9, p.63

21. Mark V Kauppi and R Craig Nation, no.8, p.16

these involved in the conflict from the search for a generally acceptable and just solution to the problem of the Middle East, which is the solution insisted upon by the Soviet Union the fraternal socialist countries and all the forces for peace and progress throughout the world who wish to see eliminated a dangerous source of tension in the Middle East.²²

Meanwhile, Sadat expressed that threat to Egypt is no longer perceived as coming from the eastern desert, where despite peaceful withdrawals Israel retains an armed presence, but from unsettled region on the African continent to the South.²³ However, Sadat assumption proved to be wrong because Israel remained an area of confrontation.

The invasion of Afghanistan, created major problems for Soviet Union in its drive to extend influence in the Middle East. It raised question not only about the future of Afghanistan but also about the potential Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, it shifted the United States attention from Arab Israeli sector to "South West Asia" the case of which was the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula.²⁴

22. Soviet Foreign Policy, Vol.II, no.7, p.609

23. International Herald Tribunals (Paris), November 30, 1979

24. Bernad Reich and Stephen H Gotowicki, "United States and Soviet Union in Middle East," (Washington, 1996), p.3

However, Soviet Union continued to condemn the policy of separate Egyptian Israeli deal concluded under the auspices of the U S A, which can only lead to new and dangerous complications in that region. As a consequences of Camp David agreements, Israel adopted a harsher position as regards the occupied Arab territories and the Palestine problem. This is revealed in the continuing colonisation of occupied territory, the claim to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and increased military activity in the Lebanon. Such a policy has led to increasing tension in the region.

The Soviet position on Egypt Israel agreement was demonstrated yet again during the visit by Andrei Gromyko to the Syrian Arab Republic in January 1980. During talk with the Syrian President Assad and Minister of Foreign affairs Abdul Halim Khaddam, both side categorically rejected the Camp David agreement and resolutely condemned the new concession made to Israel by the Egyptian leadership and the continuing negotiations on so-called autonomy for the Palestenian, under cover of which Israel is pursuing the colonialisation of occupied lands.²⁵ Soviet Union emphasised that all the countries in Middle East should have the right to a free and independent existence.²⁶

25. Soviet Foreign Policy, no.7, p.610.

26. Ibid

Following the Islamic conference in January 1980 Soviet Union and its Arab allies sought to deflect criticism regarding Afganistan invasion by concentrating their attention on Israeli actions in the West Bank and Gaza and purported Ameircn support for them. Meanwhile, two West Bank Mayors were mained by bombs and at the same time, the Begin government began to push the bill for the formal annexation of East Jerusalem through the Israeli Parliament.²⁷ Soviet Union seized on these events to claim that Egypt had capitulated to Israel and Soviet Union seized on these events to claim that Egypt had capitulated to Israel and to demonstrate that by backing these actions, the United States was, in fact an enemy of Islam.²⁸ Soviet union also proclaimed its willingness to vote sanctions in the Security Council against Israel by virtue of its solidarity with the Arab and other Islamic countries.

In addition while not formally having a base in Egypt, the US began to develop a major military relationship with that country as by the spring and early summer of 1980 Egyptian and US forces began to carry out joint maneavers. Needless to say, Soviet Union was very unhappy with these developments and used joint US - Egyptian maneavers to castigate Sadat as a traitor to the Arab cause.²⁹

27. Robert O Freedman, no.9, p.82

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

Unfortunately for Soviet Union, however, this period of anti Egyptian Arab unity was to be a brief one as a renewal of the conflict between Iraq and Syria, the Soviet invasion of Afganistan in December 1979; and the Iran-Iraq war that began in September 1980 all served to seriously divide the Arabs.³⁰ Indeed by January 1981, the Arab world was very badly split and this was to be only one of the problems facing Soviet Union in its quest for Middle East influence.

However, Soviet position was mixed one. Despite the division in the Arab World, Egypt remained isolated because of Camp David. Soviet union had close relationship with the front of steadfastness and confrontation (Syria, Libya Algeria, South Yemen and the PLO) who were the most vocal of anti Egypt nation in the Arab who also defaultly echoed the Soviet policy line in such issue as Afganisthan in return for Soviet military and diplomatic support. Even this act of invasion was denounced by some moderate Arab States, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, the UAE etc.³¹

It is possible that the Soviets even lost all interest in a peace agreement at this stage, having perhaps concluded that it would be impossible to break the American's monopoly on the peace process. Yet, even in this period, for all their condemnation of Camp David accord, they did not

30. Mark V Kauppi R Craig Nation, no.8, p.73

31. Ibid, p.83

encourage any kind of military action. Moreover, they continued to advocate convening of an international conference, remaining adamant about the necessity for negotiations atleast in their discussions with the Palestenian.³² Soviet Union demanded for a comprehensive settlement rather than a step by step approach.

Finally three weeks before Sadat's assasination, the Egyptian leader had expelled seven Soviets diplomats incuding the Soviet's Ambassador and about 1,000 Soviet advisors on ground that they were formenting sedition in Egypt.³³

In this period Soviet policy totally turned against Egypt and the relation between Egypt and Soviet Union which had been worsening steadily since the 1973 war and by 1981 the deterioration reached its low stage. Not only Sadat proclaiming himself openly to be the leading anti Soviet force in the middle east, but he had announced that Egypt was sending aid to the Afganisthan rebels and he had agreed both to the stations of U S troops in Sinai and also to use and development by U S of the Egyptian base at Ras Banas for its Rapid Development Force.³⁴

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid,

34. Galia Golan, no.2, p.107

In sum Egypt under Sadat had become a centrepiece of the anti Soviet Middle Eastern bloc the United States was seeking to create anti Soviet move. The Soviet Egyptian relation plunged to a new low as a result.

CONCLUSION

The end of Second World war led to the formation of two blocs in the world and this in turn led to proxy in influence showdown between the two ideologies of imperialism and communism in every corner of globe. The ideological battle between two superpowers namely USA and USSR and the pertinent desire on the part of the third world countries to achieve independence from colonial masters created a new world order with the persistent under currents of cold war. In this context, the Egyptian-Soviet relationship and Soviet policy towards Egypt was much more based on mutual security needs of the two countries.

The desire on part of Soviet Union to extend its ideological umbrella of communism and the emergence of Egypt as a national revolutionary state with socialistic orientation in a way proved conclusive for far extending relations between the two countries. Soviet policy became much more conducive to the needs of the Egypt in the Middle east and this earned a new alliance between Soviet Union and Egypt with far reaching consequences in the politics of Middle East.

The Soviet policy was motivated by the perceptions of western intentions in the middle east, the Soviet adherence to the policy of national liberation for colonial countries and the significance Soviet leaders assigned to changes in their own economic and military capabilities. Soviet Union

perceived the presence of Western powers as a threat to its own ideological security and a base of aggression by western influences.

The weak political states of Middle East and the emerging western influence prompted Soviet Union led to USSR turning towards Egypt for establishing foothold in Middle East. Though geo-political interests of both the countries were by and large same but on ideological grounds there were snags. In the initial stages, Soviet Union ignored the promotion of communist party in Egypt so as to have better rapport with Nasser. Also, since 1950's the emergence of Non-aligned movement and becoming much firmer in 1960s with Nasser as one of its important leaders prompted Soviet policy makers to adopt appeasement policy towards Egypt.

The formation of Israel in 1948 and the first Arab-Israeli conflict in (1947-49) led Egypt to look towards Soviet Union for arms supply so as to secure itself against Israel's offensive in the future. The Soviet Union quickly clasped the opportunity and this in a way paved way for Soviet's role in the politics of Middle East, and thus increasing influence in the region.

The large chunk of supply of weapons and economic aid to Egypt made Nasser to look towards Soviet as an ally.

Egypt with its new advanced weaponry and updated armed forces boosted confidence in Nasser to act as Crusader for Arab unity. Soviet policy towards Egypt was more of marriage of convenience. Nasser being a charismatic leader justified its security needs for the Arab cause.

The Suez canal crisis in 1956 and the need for a formidable ally forced Egypt to have better relations with Soviet. Subsequently, Nasser also adopted a bias towards Soviet Union. In the meantime, Nasser declared the Egyptian Communist party as illegal and kept its leaders in prison. The advances in Soviet military technology, the strengthening of pro-soviet and quasi-socialist trends in Egypt and pressure from leftist elements within the international communist movement prompted Khrushchev to work towards induction of communism in Egypt which proved detrimental to Soviet interests because of Egypt's irreconcilable attitude towards its domestic community party.

This in turn led to a phase of rift between the two countries and later on, this issue was kept in cold storage. Later on, Brezhnev asked the communists of Egypt to align themselves with the Nasser's socialist party. The changes that came up in Syria and Iraq in post 1957 period prompted

Khrushchev to promote communists in Syria and the overthrow of the Sishakli dictatorship earlier paved way for this purpose. The USSR policy of assisting Syria military and economically transpired doubt in Egypt's decision makers mind. Also the conflict between Arab nationalism and communism became acute with the overthrow of Nuri Said regime in Iraq in 1958. The successor Kassem wanted to promote communists in Iraq to contact Nasser's followers. This series of events along with increase in Soviet interests led to suspicion in Egypt's mind as it meant surrounding Egypt's nationalism by communism and this acted as an irritant but somehow with active Soviet support and series of discussions the tension fizzled out. Soviet policy was increasingly concerned to elicit Egypt's support for the Soviet stand on various international issues, the establishment of a Soviet proposed troika system for the UN Secretariat and disarmament. Khrushchev's obsession with spread of communism in its ally countries led to periods of tension between Egypt and Soviet Union but Soviet policy was in other ways was conducive to Egypt.

After 1961, Nasser enacted a number of progressive measures like nationalisation of banks and industries and release of communists from prison and this resulted in high degree of congruence between Soviet leaders and Egypt Soviet policy. The Egypt's non-commitment to Baghdad pact made

Soviet to rely on Egypt as a close ally and this ensued a period of supply of advanced weaponry to Egypt. It was emphasised that Soviet policy was aimed to support the Arab people struggle against imperialism.

Following Nasser's death, Sadat came to power who was more of a pragmatic leader and he categorically denied Soviet interference in domestic affairs of Egypt. The defeat of Egypt in the six day war with Israel in 1967 forced Egypt to rethink its policy to retrieve its lost territories in the War. Also in the meantime, Soviet leaders did try to achieve their maximum objective of the establishment of a pro-Soviet socialist system in Egypt. Sadat was very apprehensive about unsettled Arab-Israeli conflict. Sadat's adoption of pro-west policies so as to regain its lost territories from Israel sowed seeds of new reformulation of Soviet policy towards Egypt. Also Egypt was not very sure of Soviet support which was to an extent exaggerated prejudice Soviet with its commitment to U S for detente did not respond to Sadat's demand for offensive weapons and Sadat took it as Soviet union's cold feet approach. With Egypt's insistence on Soviet Union's direct involvement in the protection of Egypt against Israeli raid was not conducive to Soviet policy and also would have acted adversely to world peace. In retaliation of this, Sadat expelled a large number of Soviet military personnel and

experts stationed in Egypt which was perceived as Soviet as anti-Soviet policy was not antagonistic of Egypt and when Henry Kissinger proposed a peace plan for Middle East peace, Soviet Union insisted on its inclusion. But, Egypt drifted towards West to have fast economic growth as well as for long lasting peace with Israel. This change in attitude led USSR to reformulated its policy with its refusal to sign any new arms contract by adopting a firm position on Egypt's debt repayment, curtailing economic aid, by giving open support to anti-Egypt regimes in Libya, Syria and Iraq and by cancelling Brezhnev's visit to Egypt. This move of USSR was to an extent made in haste and the relations deteriorated to irretrievable lows. Also, this paved the way for abrogation of the Soviet Egyptian friendship treaty in March 1976.

Sadat ensured complete exclusion of Soviet Union from all aspects of the peace process and fell in line with Kissinger's step by step approach to solve the Arab-Israel's conflict. The signing of Camp David accord in September 1978 in complete secrecy adopted retaliatory approach with highlighting this accord as anti-Arab and Egypt as traitor of the Arab cause. This resulted in totally antagonistic situation between Egypt and Soviet Union while Soviet Union wanted to gain ground in other Arab States to extend its policy of containment of Western powers. But, in the

meantime, Soviet policy in Afganistan and Cambodia drifted Soviet to other parts of the world and relationship between Egypt and USSR severed because of Egypt's policy of retrieving its lost territory at any cost and Soviet policy was to an extent influenced because of changing Egypt's stand and increase in security concerns.

In the overall perspective, Soviet Union adopted an approach towards Egypt in order to push it totally against Western imperialism while Egypt wanted to adopt a cautious approach in this regard. Soviet policy towards Egypt proved to be a typical mixture of success and failure with Soviet granting anything the Egypt desired for. The downfall started during Sadat period because of highly ambitious policy of Sadat towards West. The signing of Camp David Accord put an end to the appeasement policy of Soviet Union towards Egypt and in the post accord period. Soviet policies were reframed in the light of new situations which was more realistic in nature. The Soviet policy towards Egypt benefitted Egypt to a large extent with Egypt gaining military assistance, economic aid, long term loans and sincere ally in the United Nations. Soviet policy was an amalgamation of success and failure because of the Egyptian leaders changing attitude and their own personal perception of the Middle East politics.

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