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CHRONOLOGY

US-EGYPT MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP

The United States security assistance relationship with Egypt is markedly different from that with Israel. Whereas the latter is well-defined and rooted in experience, the Egyptian relationship has only really existed since 1977 when C-130 aircraft were approved for sale to Egypt. These 17 C-130s still represent the extent of US deliveries to Egypt, although other systems have been approved for sale since.

Between 1953 and 1977, the United States provided virtually no military equipment to Egypt on any basis. During that period, the Soviet Union accounted for nearly all of Egypt's equipment acquisitions.

In 1974, Egypt ejected the last of its Soviet advisers and the following year, abrogated its treaty with Moscow. This resulted in the end of the Egyptian-Soviet military supply relationship and left Egypt with no source of spare parts for its Soviet-made equipment.

Since the reestablishment of diplomatic relations in 1974, Egypt has periodically presented military equipment request lists to the United States. Until 1977, these lists were modest in scope, the most significant request being for F-4 aircraft to replace Egyptian MIG-21s. Prior to 1977, all such requests were disapproved, due both to Egypt's still-significant military arsenal and to the uncertainty of Egypt's future role in the Middle East.

During Sadat's April, 1977 visit to Washington, he put forward a relatively small list containing C-130s, F-5s, RPVs, and armored personnel carriers. Upon review, the President decided to approve the sale of the C-130 aircraft and the RPVs. It was determined that these systems would pose no threat to Israeli security. However, this did represent the beginnings of the US-Egypt relationship.

The Sadat peace initiative which began in October, 1977, changed the US perceptions of Egyptian intentions and led to a reassessment of the F-5 request. Further contributing to this reappraisal was the increasing evidence that Egypt's MIG-21 and MIG-23 aircraft were experiencing significant degradation problems, due to the lack of spare parts. In an historic 1978 decision, the President, with the concurrence of Congress, approved the sale of 50 F-5 fighters to Egypt. Although this sale represented but a marginal enhancement of Egyptian capabilities, it also signaled a fundamental turning point in the relationship.

In the context of the peace treaty negotiations, President Sadat presented another list to Secretary Brown during the latter's 17 February 1979 trip to Cairo. This list included such items as advanced fighter

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aircraft and extensive land forces equipment and would have cost some \$10 billion. Sadat was informally told that this list was excessive and that the United States was not prepared to sell Egypt advanced fighters.

On 28 February, Egypt presented a second list which modified the first and eliminated some of the controversial items. However, this list was also determined to exceed Egypt's legitimate needs and this was communicated to Cairo.

After the treaty signing ceremony, Egypt presented a third list to Secretary Brown. This list was approved in the Secretary's 23 March letter to MOD All and amounted to nearly \$2.3 billion in equipment. Major items on this list include: F-4 aircraft, C-130s, APCs, destroyers, I-HAWK air defense missiles, submarines, and radars.

A close examination of this list reveals that, although the United States has now agreed to sell Egypt a great deal more than it has in the past, the systems represent virtually no threat to Israel. All the approvals are designed to meet Egypt's announced goal of a smaller, more modern defense force.

The US-Egypt relationship is developing and evolving in response to both Egypt's legitimate defensive needs and the increasingly important role Egypt is playing as a moderating influence in the Middle East.

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