CHAPTER 6

EGYPT AND THE ARAB WORLD AFTER 1967
The death of Nasser on September 28, 1970 formally marks the end of the Nasser era. However, the six day Arab-Israeli War in June 1967 marks a new phase in the history of Egypt and Nasserism.

The post 1967 war period witnessed significant changes in the region. International relations, power equations within the Arab World and the ideological processes all underwent important changes. The period coincided with the emergence of new international realities, the change in the role of superpowers, the decline of pan-Arabism, increase in the economic and political influence of the oil-producing Arab states, eclipse of progressive radicals, and the resurgence of Islam.

The post 1967 period can be broadly divided into three phases. The first phase, 1967-70, covered the efforts to mitigate the effects of the defeat and bring forth reconciliation between the radical and the conservative Arab states. The second phase, 1970-73, witnessed the complete reversal of radicalization process. Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia found themselves as allies in waging the war of October 1973. The third phase, 1974-80, saw the emergence and crystallization of a new order in
the region that initiated the peace process leading to the Camp David Accords. Greater American involvement in the region's war in Lebanon and the Islamic resurgence inspired by the Iranian Revolution are some of the aspects of this phase.

The process of decline of Nasserism started in Nasser's lifetime and completed itself in 1970-73. In some areas, like the foreign policy, the process continued throughout the 1970s.

The change in the overall strategy of the two superpowers, particularly in their West Asian policy, and in their bilateral relations constitutes the most important international factor in the present context. For the USA, who supported the victorious Israel, the 1967 war brought more prestige and offered new chances. Before the war, the strategic objectives of the USA in West Asia were dominated by such priorities as the military presence, control over the oil-resources, safeguarding the profits of the oil companies, settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict under the American aegis and in accordance with American interests, driving back the radical, anti-imperialist currents within the Arab World and reducing the influence of the Soviet Union and her allies. The new strategy was based upon the perception that
maintaining the exclusive alignment with Israel would obviously have an alienating and isolating effect upon the US' relations with other strategically important Arab countries. Therefore the new American endeavours, while preserving traditional preference, were directed at establishing the network of such moderate countries which could become model for modernizing market economies, attractive to their neighbours and could be influenced to perform regional monitoring functions. US strategists, after some years of reluctance, accepted Egypt as one such regional model, after Saudi Arabia and Iran. Evidence corroborates that American concern for Egypt increased after the fall of the Shah of Iran.

Like her superpower partner, the Soviet Union also pursued traditional objectives in West Asia, vigorously resorting to new methods. In the Soviet global strategy, West Asia occupied an important place because of its geopolitical location and proximity. The Soviet efforts were mainly directed at maintaining the status quo and equilibrium. However, support to the regimes considered progressive or "of socialist orientation" was also an


important aspect of Soviet policy. Thus Soviet desire to build close relations with countries in the region was based not only on ideological considerations but also on compulsions of security.

The prestige and influence of the Soviet Union, however, was adversely affected by the Six Day War. As was interpreted by many analysts, the defeat of the Arabs proved, among other things, the inadequacy of the Soviet military assistance and the inferiority of the Soviet military technique. In the period between 1967 and 1973 the Soviet image further deteriorated on account of the 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia and other international failures as well as of Soviet and East-European stagnation. All this encouraged the forces already hostile to the Soviet Union in the Arab World to advocate the loosening of contacts with the Soviet Union and consider the USA and the West as natural allies. The intellectual elite too, so far considered anti-imperialist, shared the anti-Soviet feelings. Fuad Ajami wrote: "The same... talent, the same eloquence and resourceful media that once condemned foreign pacts and security doctrines, was now hounding those who failed to stand up to Soviet adventurism, who were too squeamish to identify themselves with American power and American interests".  

The process of gradual lessening of tension in bilateral relations of the two superpowers in the second half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, was termed detente. Detente was a tacit understanding between the two superpowers that they would exclude military confrontation from international conflicts as the West put it or from the international class struggle, in Soviet terminology. Detente as an ideology and strategy was not limited to the global issues but had an impact also on regional conflicts. Contemporary Soviet and Warsaw Pact documents reflected the unambiguous stand that the policy of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, would promote the positive solution of the problems of developing countries. The Eastern Bloc called for removing the regional hot spots including the Arab-Israeli crisis, diverting the conflicts to political sphere and extending detente to all regions. 4

It is not within the scope of the present work to analyse the intentions and calculations of the USA and the Soviet Union with regard to West Asia in the period of

detente. But it is significant to underline Arab reaction to detente and the prospects inherent in it. Mohammed Sid-Ahmed, a Nasserite political analyst and foreign policy editor of the Al Ahram till 1975, interpreted Arab anguish over and aversion to detente and its possible consequences. In Sid-Ahmed's view, "the transfer from Cold War to peaceful coexistence in a way implies the abolition of international contradictions.... Detente was the outcome of a deliberate and conscious effort by the leaders of the capitalist and socialist worlds to 'freeze', 'isolate', or 'limit' the effects of a given set of contradictions", especially those, "that threaten to annihilate the whole human race". 5 Detente has introduced a new element in international relations, since "for the first time in history, intervention from the very summit of the international community is required to brake, control and freeze the spontaneous outbreak of certain conflicts". 6 Sid Ahmed believed that the leaders of the Arab World cannot avoid to define their approach to the new situation and to recognize that the USA has positively changed her attitude to West Asia. It has to be taken into account also that the Soviet Union, whose primary motive in the region had been social change, after the defeat seemed to realize the significance of

6. Ibid., p. 47.
the national problem and supplied Arab front countries with military, economic and political aid. However, detente has led to a complete deadlock in the Arab-Israeli crisis for "the Soviet strategy had placed rapprochement with the US, detente and peaceful coexistence before the Arab liberation movement and...the Soviet Union was not prepared to upgrade its military assistance to Egypt to the extent of endangering mutual confidence with the USA".7

The Egyptian reaction to detente was sceptical. As early as 1965, Nasser had realized the need for a fresh study and appraisal of the new conditions after the "basic shift in global configuration of power" and, characteristically, concluded that due to detente "the sources of foreign financing have become strained".8 In his memoirs, Sadat recalls that the Egyptian leadership found the joint US-Soviet declaration on detente "a violent shock".9 In Heikal's reminiscences: "...in the Middle East there were two local powers which could not make peace and two superpowers which could not make war". Nasser foresaw the danger and was "determined to make use of the detente in Egypt's interests and do not let the detente use him".10

7. Ibid., p. 60.
8. Arab Political Encyclopaedia, UAR Information Administration, July-December 1965, Cairo, pp. 64 and 67.
9. Sadat, Ch. 3., n. 10, p. 229.
Nasser seems to have softened his attitude from 1968 onwards. This was indicated by a series of compromising gestures. His first major concession was the acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution No. 242 of November 22, 1967. The Resolution, besides calling for Israel's withdrawal from territories occupied in the war, in return of the right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, handled the Palestinian issue as a refugee problem and the issue of borders as a matter of discussion between sovereign states. The formulas of the Resolution enabled Israel to make her own interpretation. It was the acceptance of the Rogers plan in 1969-70 that brought about concrete consequences. For instance the pressure of the War of Attrition on Israel eased. Feelings against the USA abated, her role in resolving the crisis came to have precedence over that of the Soviet Union. The acceptance of the Rogers plan meant also to neutralise Palestinian radicalism and to accept a deeper division in the Arab World.

Nasser by accepting the Rogers plan, reached a point on his path of abandoning his anti-imperialist position beyond which he would not go without repudiating his past, his personality and his beliefs. It remained for his

11. Out of these, the most important were: his cordial contact-building with Nixon, W. Scranton, Deputy Defence Secretary Sisco; his support to the Jarring-mission.
successor to complete the process of changes in foreign policy.

In the post-1967 years important changes also took place in the internal situation of the Arab World. The Nasserite categorization of progressive and reactionary states seemed less suitable for understanding the region. Alliances based on the attitudes of the participating countries to the separate peace settlement as the so called Rejection Front, or Steadfastness Front did not prove to be lasting either. There arose, therefore, the need for a new approach based on economic considerations and the policentric character of the Arab World.12

The rise of conservative oil producing states and the decline of Nasserite pan-Arab and socialist thought constitute two important landmarks in the Arab World after 1967. Egypt's acclimatization to the new situation is another landmark and would be dealt with separately.

Islam assumed a new role in the post-1967 Arab

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12. One such categorization was suggested by Anis Salem. In his five-group scheme the first group consists of oil-producing republics with high per-capita income and one-party system. The second group includes oil-producing monarchies with small population. Non oil-producing countries with relatively favourable economic conditions form the third group, while the fourth one consists of poor countries which need external aid. In the fifth group there is Egypt, alone. Mohamed Anis Salem, "Arabische Differenzen in der achtziger Jahren: eine alte Geschichte oder eine neue Ordnung?" (Arab Differences in the 1980s: Is it an Old History Or a New Order?) Europa Archive, 1982, no. 9, pp. 187-96.
World and its influence spread widely. The Arab countries with Islam as state religion, paid attention to the propagation of social, political and legal principles of Islam. The Muslim organizations which had been banned or pushed aside in the heydays of Arab socialism renewed their activities. Islamic revivalism found willing followers among the intellectual elite and the use of terms like Islamic economy, Islamic state and Islamic cooperation became the vogue.

The phenomenon of Islamic reassertion in the 1970s was termed by many writers as "renaissance" of Islam. Others pointed out, that in history Islam has always been unifying in itself both political and religious functions. Since the latter was never challenged in the Arab World, its "renaissance" is connected with the rise of its political function. 13 The emphasis on the political dimension of Islam owed a good deal to the historical conditions of the post 1967 period. Islam in the manner of other world religions 14 was basically filling up an ideological, political and moral vacuum created by the failure of modernizing experiments.

The June 1967 defeat drew public attention to the


14. See as an example, the rise of socio-political principles of Christianity in East Europe, in the vacuum created by the failure of socialist experiment after 1989.
relative economic failure of Arab Socialism. The Kuwaiti Economist Yusif A. Sayigh in his comprehensive study showed that during 1970-72, more industrialized countries like Egypt, Algeria and Iraq did not increase their GDP as rapidly as the other Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia in the same period. The gradual then explosive overvaluation of oil in the world market resulted in a parallel political overestimation of the oil-rich monarchies. Without attempting to trace an easy reductionist link between the economy and the religious factor, it can be stated that the economic and political advancement of these countries upheld the validity of their legal, political and ethical model based on Islamic principles. Saudi Arabia in particular, as the guardian of the holy places of Islam, champion of the struggle against Westernization and standard bearer of Islamic values had a good chance to fill the vacuum created by Egypt in a situation wherein, to use Nasser's metaphor, the role was again "wandering about in search of an actor to play it". While earlier the heroes were politicians, described as revolutionary democrats, the new heroes after 1967, were oil-Sheikhs, oil-ministers and inter-Arab entrepreneurs who held the key to economic affairs.

The intellectual elevation of the oil-rich monarchies was facilitated by the ideological and moral crisis that followed the defeat in 1967. In the Six Day War, not only the Soviet military techniques but the prevailing nationalist theories also proved to be inadequate. As discussed in the previous chapters, Islam and nationalism have always been inseparable in Arab history; the unity of the religious and national aspect are an immanent part of the history of Arab political thought. Therefore, the resurgence of Islam as a political force can be regarded as a reassertion triggered off by the failure of secular nationalism and imported Western and socialist theories.

In the accounts critical of Nasser and in praise of Islam the June defeat does not appear as a consequence of Israel's technical superiority over the Arabs. These accounts suggested that Israel's victory was due to her faith, her being more religious than the Arabs and her ability to combine faith with modernity. The Islamists thought that the Arabs were defeated for they had turned away from God, given up Islam, were beset with ideologies and relied upon atheistic Western and Soviet schemes. The 1967 war, in their view, was a third Crusade against the Arab people and the latter lost the battle because of the lack of will and lack of religious devotion and because of estrangement between the individual and society. Deprived of their faith and will, neutralized and paralysed
by liberal and Marxist doctrines, the Arabs easily fell victim to the self-confident enemy. Had the Arabs followed their religion they would have won. Therefore, they should rid themselves of barbarism and unbelief, the Bolshevized Islam, the twin-va ils of Communism and Zionism and the imported doctrines. They should adopt Islamic economy and political structure rather than the vulnerable secular system and should restore the Caliphate under the leadership of a new Caliph, King Faisal. 17

This argument seemed convincing and meant to restore Arab self-respect and to prepare the public opinion for revenge against Israel. There was no counter-attack against the revi valist tendencies in the post-war period. Nasser accepted the new realities. His relations with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan and Morocco were now characterized by reconciliation. Differences with King Faisal began to narrow down at the Khartoum Summit in August, 1967. On Nasser's side, the process of normalization was facilitated by the radicalization in the Palestinian movement. Their extremist image made it easier for Nasser to distance himself from them and reconcile with conservative Arabs. The conservatives now were spared of Nasser's sharp and permanent propaganda attacks.

In the spirit of the rapprochement Nasser refrained from any active interference in the events of September 1970 in Jordan which dealt a crushing blow to the Palestinian movement. It may be interesting to note that his biographers related his death to the tension caused by those happenings.

Finally, the Nasserite idea of pan-Arabism had created a kind of vacuum. The idea held away for so long due to Nasser's personal stature. The Six Day War proved to be, as Ajami termed it, the "Waterloo of pan-Arabism" and with it the epoch of romantic Arab nationalism ended. "After 1967, there was a widespread sentiment that unity was no longer the issue", he wrote "It was not a frontal attack against pan-Arabism, but a deeper agnosticism that saw no utility in banding together so long as the fundamental issues of Arab society were unresolved". 18

The radical line of the Palestinian movement signified an attack on pan-Arabism even in Nasser's lifetime. Failure of bids for union between Libya, Egypt and the Sudan in the beginning of the 1970s and separate peace talks between Egypt and Israel dealt further blows to pan-Arabism. The inter-Arab cooperation during the 1973 October War was not an exception in this context, because it was limited and ended soon after the war.

The vacuum created by the eclipse of pan-Arabism was partly filled by Arab nationalism. The reversal of roles continued even during the Iraq-Iran war. To some extent the pan-Arab idea gave way to pan-Islamism. Thus, the third of Nasser's three circles, Arab, African and Muslim, became more important. The Muslim loyalty was ostensibly more compatible with national interests of individual Arab countries than the pan-Arab idea which necessitated inter-Arab coordination.

In the 1970s the traditional fora of international Islamic cooperation such as the Muslim World Congress and Muslim World League became active. New organizations like the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), the Islamic Development Bank, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, the International Union of Islamic Banks and the Islamic Council of Europe, gained in influence. The most prestigious among them, the OIC, became an important international forum, taking independent stands on international issues and criticising the policies of the two superpowers and the power blocks.

Apart from the Islamic response to the challenge of the 1967 defeat there came about other types of reactions. The Palestinian resistance movement aspired to take the place of Nasserite Revolution. While Nasser responded to detente with caution the Palestinian movement assumed a more radical position. It subsequently split into two
groups: the radicals and the moderates. The radicals rallied together under George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine led by Nayef Hawatmeh. The movement distanced itself from the defeat by attributing it to the manoeuvres of international imperialism and Zionism, and to the impotence of the petty-bourgeois Arab regimes. They advocated resistance, popular war and class struggle against Israel, imperialism, Zionism and Arab exploiting classes, which they expected to turn into a revolution. In their theoretical literature names of Mao, Fanon, Guevara, Debray and Giap often occurred. Their political objective was to create a united, people's democratic Palestinian state with Arab and Jewish cultures, which they wanted to achieve through a popular revolutionary movement.

The moderate wing was generally associated with the Palestine Liberation Organization and al-Fatah, led by Yasser Arafat and Farouk Kaddumi. In their documents, terms like class struggle or world revolution are virtually absent. They propagated a united democratic Arab-Jewish Palestinian State, without a state religion. They did not consider guerilla warfare as the only method to achieve their goal.

As a result of the heavy blows that the Palestinians suffered in September 1970 in Jordan, and during the 1970s
in Lebanon, the radical wing appeared to have lost its influence. Arafat's policy which focused on Palestinian nationalism rather than social and ideological issues, proved to be more realistic and found broader acceptance within and outside the Arab World. Both the radicals and moderates were up against Nasserism. Both had given up pan-Arabism, the former for social revolution, the latter for Palestinian nationalism. However, both groups evinced anti-imperialist and socialist stances of Nasserite tone. 19

The other major political and ideological stream of the Arab World, the Baath, had been in a crisis situation prior to the 1967 war as evident in the retirement of its founders, Michel Aflak and Salah el-Din Bitar. The remnants of the Party ruling in Syria and Iraq, reacted to the defeat with no self-criticism, neither did they analyse their miscalculations regarding the outcome of the war and their chances to become the leading force in the Arab World. Instead they explained the failure in terms of backwardness of Arab societies and stressed the need for its eradication as the most important task of the national movement. Aflak and other ideologues of the

Baath maintained that the solution to the Palestinian issue could be possible only through a protracted armed and anti-imperialist popular struggle.

In the post-1967 pronouncements of the Baath, there are references which reflect Nasserite socialist and pan-Arab inspiration. In the documents of the Iraqi Baath Party one comes across the Nasserite political terminology with criticism of separate peace initiative of Sadat. But these references are of peripheral nature. The Baath Party in both countries lost its theoretical originality. Its main political function was to vest the ruling military regimes with revolutionary legitimacy. The nationalist aspirations of the two regimes were more accurately reflected in Syria's actions in Lebanon in the 1970s and Iraq's wars in the 1970s and 1980s. Here a distinction has to be made between the more realistic Syrian and violent, hege-monistic Iraqi leadership.

Finally, it would be worthwhile to underline the experiment of Muammar al-Qaddafi. Qaddafi explained the defeat in terms of the Westernization of Arab systems and the lack of Arab unity. He suggested pan-Arabism as a course of action and initiated measures for its realization.

In the period 1969-77, he proposed a union with Tunisia and Egypt several times. These efforts however appeared anachronistic in an era of separate nationalism. Egypt, in the late Nasser era, was not in favour of such a union. Subsequently, Sadat found no attraction in the idea of union after the October 1973 war. Qaddafi too, gave up his attempts in view of the conflicting Arab interests.

Qaddafi, in his early years proclaimed himself Nasser's heir. But his claim to Nasser's heritage seems non-organic and based on power calculations. The crux of his "Third Universal Theory", published in his Green Book was a natural, socialist society, based on the principles of Islam, wherein all individuals are equal and participate directly in power. Qaddafi's ideas aim at merging the economic, political and social prescriptions of Islam with a particular, self-governing model of socialism. Qaddafi's idea of direct democracy without parties and parliament as guarantee for Islamic egalitarianism, rejection of exploitation and capitalism, popular "takeover" of public administration and economic units all appear superficial and formal. The policies carried out in the 1970s and 1980s, resulted in confusion. The foreign policy seems to lack an ideological basis. Thus Qaddafism as

political thought and practice cannot be regarded as continuation of Nasserism.

2. During the 1967 war Egypt suffered heavy losses. Almost its entire air force and a considerable part of its armour and artillery were destroyed. After the war, due to the closure of the Suez Canal and the Israeli occupation of the Sinai, Egypt was deprived of half of its oil production and the revenues from tourism. In the period 1967-73 the Egyptian economy had been burdened with nearly a total of 10,000 million LE. on account of direct military expenditure and losses in profit. The enormous defence expenses, amounting to one third of the annual national income in the post-war years, made it impossible to continue the ambitious economic and social projects. On the contrary, in order to avoid rapid inflation and to implement the recovery and reconstruction programmes, the government was compelled to introduce emergency measures and to ask for more foreign assistance. Besides economic losses the country had to contend with the deep political and moral shock of the defeat as well.

In internal politics several trends emerged to meet the post-war challenges. Some of the trends were reflected in student demonstrations in 1968-69. The students

identified the causes of the defeat in the mistakes, subterfuges and distortions of the regime and demanded a sincere reevaluation of the past. They attacked the arbitrary power of the state, the privileges of the military and demanded parliamentarism, equal opportunities, free expression and participation in the political life. A second current saw the way out of the crisis in further development of Nasser's earlier policy, mainly as regards the public sector, planning and industrialization, and in an anti-imperialist foreign policy, Arab unity and deepening the friendship and cooperation with socialist countries. These ideas were advocated by Ali Sabri and other A.S.U. leaders and a number of representatives of the state apparatus, the press and employees of the public sector. A third group, represented by Zakaria Mohieddin, Abdel Moneim Kaysouni and others, suggested large-scale privatization, limiting public sector, an open economic policy, transforming the political system and building friendship with the West. The group had strong following in the ranks of bourgeoisie as well as among managers, technocrats and intellectuals. A wing of this group led by Abdel Latif El-Boghdadi demanded an immediate end to the alliance with the Soviet Union and return to the secure area between the two superpowers. 23

Nasser from 1967 onwards, attempted to strike a balance between different groups by introducing different, sometimes controversial policies. Such was for example the policy of "no peace no war" with Israel which, in final analysis, benefitted other powers, not Egypt.24 Another example was the 30 March 1968 declaration in which Nasser emphasised the role of work and workers on the one hand and used technocratic terms like efficiency, productivity on the other to please the management.25

Nasser's successor, Mohamed Anwar el-Sadat was not a casual choice as was broadly suggested by contemporary analysts but a well-thought one. Egypt needed a leader who could carry out the necessary changes.26

However, Sadat, as will be seen later, did not just effect some changes but managed to bring about a political, economic and ideological transformation and almost dismantled the edifice of Nasserism. Sadat was able to accomplish the transformation due to two factors: first, the changed Arab and Egyptian realities; second

24. See results of the computer-analysed survey made by the Al-Ahram in 1972, in Mc Dermott, n. 23, p. 45.
26. For Nasser's hints regarding this, see his talks with President H. Boumedienne and the Sudanese M. Mahjub in the Khartoum Summit, August 1967, in Ajami, n.3, pp. 86-7.
his own political past, contacts, personal characteristics and ambitions. In this respect, one should not simply rely on Sadat's self-image or the comments of his friends or adversaries, but rather look into the facts of the matter and the appraisal of his biographers. According to his biographers, Sadat possessed the necessary qualities for accomplishing the task. He had a revolutionary past, and was a member of the inner circle of the Free Officers and the Revolutionary Command Council. In the first two decades of the revolution, he was not assigned a key-position though he always commanded public attention. (It was only in December 1969 that he was appointed as Vice-President). His name was not as closely associated with Arab Socialism nor was his Soviet connection as pronounced as of other leaders. He had wide experience of struggles and intrigues within the state apparatus which was underestimated by his opponents. He was an energetic politician and a good orator. And lastly, he never criticised Nasser openly, despite his disagreement with Nasser's approach to various issues.

The process of abrogation of Nasser's legacy or de-Nasserization in the period of Sadat can be studied in the context of three ideas of Nasserite thought namely anti-imperialism, Arab Socialism and political power. The first years of Sadat (1971-73) were marked by action
rather than thought. The *October Paper* of April 1974 outlined the new policy which took shape in the period 1974-81.

a. In the first period the new leadership did not break with Nasser's foreign policy totally. The writings in this period promised continuity, used anti-imperialist terminology and emphasized friendship with the Soviet Union. The declarations of the 1971 A.S.U. Congress condemned international imperialism and Zionism and hailed the "glorious and unique relation" between Egypt and the Soviet Union".27

The declarations bore no practical value but were the outcome of international power-relations and tactics. The memoirs of Sadat and Heikal make it fairly clear that the external reorientation of foreign policy was on the cards from the very beginning. Now, Egypt's contacts with the USA and her allies, Egypt's participation in the rightist coup in the Sudan in July 1971, exchange of high ranking delegations with Saudi Arabia and Iran, and finally the expulsion of nearly 20,000 Soviet military advisers in July 1972 seem to be the strands of the same pattern. Put against these measures,

27. "Documents of the Session of the National Congress of Arab Socialist Union" (in Russian transl.), *Foreign Policy Information*, No. 153, August 5, 1971, Moscow, TASS, pp. 3-4.
the signing of the Soviet-Egyptian friendship treaty on May 27, 1971 or dismissal of defense Minister Sadeq, known for his anti-Soviet stand, seem to be rather insignificant.

The expulsion of the Soviet advisers, the first step of the "electric shock diplomacy" of the President, marked the beginning of a new image of Egypt as free, independent nation. The second, similarly unexpected event, the starting of the 1973 October War, signified a further step to that image.

The aims of the Egyptian leadership in starting the war were: to break the deadlock in the situation with a limited but successful military action; to counterbalance the political, economic and moral effects of the protracted conflict; to demolish the myth of Israel's invincibility to challenge the post 1967 fait accompli, to prove the striking power of Egyptian Army; to ensure more advantageous negotiating positions in the future peace process and finally to strengthen the legitimacy of the new ruling group in Egypt and the Arab World. These objectives were not fully realized. The psychological and military successes of the first days shook the invincibility of Israel and generated hopes for the prospects of a future equilibrium between the

28. Heikal, Ch. 3, n. 6, p. 723.
Arabs and Israelis. As a result of the courageous and partly successful military action Sadat's prestige increased. During the war the Arabs were able to show a measure of unity hitherto thought to be impossible and used the oil-weapon successfully. However, the outcome of the war was not regarded as a total victory and the exclusive achievement of Sadat. Heikal has clearly stated that principal decisions regarding the war preceded Sadat's takeover and were a part of a long term strategy. During the course of war, it was observed that the unity of the Arabs was fragile and they differed on the issue of settlement. Egypt adhered to her own viewpoint and seemed ready for a solution involving mediation of the USA.

Sadat presented his new priorities in The October Paper. He underlined the importance of new realities for the Arab Nation and gave precedence to the role of Egypt in the Arab World. In his view, Egypt's "geographic position, human potential, civilisational heritage and national bonds place it at the vanguard of peoples who are struggling for freedom, progress, peace and prosperity". The moral and material support of the Arabs contributed to the victory, but Egypt owed it mainly to its people who took pride in their 7000 year old civilization. The document overtly criticises the past when "the Arab nation has been dragged


30. The October Paper, pp. 3-4.
into war with Israel several times... without any calculations based on realities or definition of exact goals to be achieved". As a result, Israel "was free to fight us at the time it selected, within the framework of the political circumstances it designed, and amid the world's psychological atmosphere it created". But "the October war was the first war which we started on our own initiative, without fear of Israel's superiority, the inclinations of foreign countries and considerations of the international balance of power".\(^\text{31}\) According to the paper, the war removed the illusion about Arab weakness for ever, halted Zionist expansion, resulted in a comprehensive reappraisal in Israel and a change in international opinion of the region. Now, the Arabs have begun to experience a new dignity.\(^\text{32}\) In the future the country's foreign policy should be based upon new realities the most important of which is that "Egypt is an economic, political and military power to be taken into consideration and reckoned with.... Egypt with what it has achieved so far... stands as a principal economic lode-star in Africa and the Middle East" and proposes cooperation with a position of confidence.\(^\text{33}\) Regarding Arab unity, Sadat proposed possible practical measures instead of enthusiastic slogans since "the road

\(^{31}\) Ibid., pp. 17 and 25.

\(^{32}\) Ibid., pp. 11-14.

\(^{33}\) Ibid., pp. 41-42.
to political unity may be long and unity should be based upon interrelated economic interests".\textsuperscript{34}

The October Paper lays great emphasis on the new world order. It adds that while in the post-Bandung period the main objective was to gain and preserve political independence against imperialism, the present stage "requires solidarity to face the strong and rich of this world".\textsuperscript{35} African, Islamic and Third World bonds are important for Egypt but the global changes, namely the end of the cold war and Soviet-US confrontation is of vital significance. Egypt has to define her role within the new international order because "the most lethal danger threatening a country under such circumstances is to fall within the spheres of influence".\textsuperscript{36} It must be noted that in the entire document the Soviet Union is mentioned only in this context and is not even counted among the factors contributing to the October victory.

The new international links of the regime evolved in the second half of the 1970s. They were based on special relations with the USA, a new strategy in the Arab-Israeli conflict and anti-Sovietism.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., pp. 43-44.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p. 44.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., pp. 44-47.
Diplomatic relations with the USA and major Western powers were either restored or their level was raised by the end of 1973. In the separate peace talks with Israel, Egypt initially offered mediating role to the USA than upgraded it to full participating status. Economic relations with Western countries were gradually expanded in the framework of "open door policy" and credit and aid agreements were concluded with them. Egypt also encouraged joint ventures and foreign investment. By the end of the decade imports from the USA had increased nine times while imports from Britain, France, FRG and Japan increased three times as compared to the imports from the Soviet Union.37

After 1974, Egypt's military relations also expanded. In tune with the slogan of diversification of arms supply, Sadat purchased military items from the US and its allies and invited a large number of US military advisers to train Egyptian armed forces. Following the second disengagement agreement, Sadat permitted American observers in Egyptian territories. During and after the Camp David Accords, Egypt received a regular military aid of 1 billion US dollars. There was a revival of cultural and technoscientific cooperation, with the USA and a marked increase in the import of films and books. A sustained propaganda in favour of the USA and induction of pro-US persons into

prominent positions followed. The process that ended in separate agreement with Israel was a long-drawn one. It started with the opening of the Suez Canal on June 5, 1975 and continued with the second Sinai disengagement agreement which meant giving up the policy of armed liberation of Arab territories and opening of the Suez Canal for Israel in return of the economically viable parts of the Sinai.

Sadat's declaration and pronouncements were sometimes in sharp contrast to what he actually practised in the course of the separate peace process. His visit to Jerusalem offered the most striking example of this anomaly. In his speech to the Knesset Sadat declared, "I have not come to you to conclude a separate agreement between Egypt and Israel, for this has no place in Egyptian policy... The Palestinian cause... is the heart and crux of the conflict... Peace cannot be achieved without the Palestinians... Complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 is... an undisputed matter". But the Camp David Accords, signed a year later, settled only the timetable for Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai and

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38. In 1973-75 e.g. Saba Habashi, Zoheir Garrana and Abdel Moneim Kaysouni, Hamed el-Sayeh returned to the political and economic leadership and the Amin brothers became editors of influential dailies.

diplomatic relations between Egypt and Israel. The Accords envisaged merely a limited and gradual autonomy for Gaza and the West Bank of Jordan and did not care to even mention Israeli withdrawal, Palestinian statehood, Jerusalem and the Golan heights. 40

As a corollary of the separate peace process, Egypt's relations with the Arab World and the countries of the region, changed. Pan-Arabism became the first victim of the shift in foreign policy. Relations with Syria, Iraq and Libya deteriorated. Egypt broke ties with the Palestinian movement though claimed to represent the interests of Palestinians. The shift was further evidenced in Egypt's attitude to the events in Lebanon, Iran, Angola, Afghanistan. However, the Camp David process isolated Egypt temporarily. Her membership in the Arab League, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of Islamic Conference was suspended.

Finally, anti-Sovietism, the third basic feature of Sadat's foreign policy, deserves elaboration. In Egypt's relations with the Soviet Union between 1967 and 1973, elements of friendship were dominant, at least on

40. For a detailed analysis of the documents of the Camp David Accord see the "Letter of the members of the Revolutionary Command Council of the Free Officers to President Sadat", signed by A.L. Boghdadi, Z. Mohieddin, H. as-Shafii, K. Hussein, Pravda, October 14, 1978, p. 4. (Russian translation made on the basis of the original text in Arabic, published on October 13, 1978 in Beirut).
the surface. The expulsion of the Soviet advisers in 1972 signalled a new turn in the relations. Further Sadat ordered the cessation of the use of military harbour of Alexandria by the Soviet Navy, followed by the expulsion of Soviet industrial experts and termination of supply of cotton to the Soviets. The crisis between the two countries deepened when Egypt unilaterally abrogated the Egyptian-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation on March 14, 1976. It reached the climax in 1978-80 with the drastic reduction in the staff of the Soviet diplomatic mission and degradation of diplomatic relations to be restored only in 1983-84.

In order to justify the deterioration in relations, with the Soviet Union, Sadat started a campaign in 1974, focusing on the inadequate quantity, variety and speed of Soviet military aid. Later, Sadat questioned the adequacy of the Soviet economic aid. He also criticised the detente in general and the Soviet motives behind the detente in particular. The campaign against the Soviet Union assumed new dimensions in 1976 and in the following years culminating in total rejection of Soviet objectives, ideology.

41. "Speech by President Anwar El-Sadat at the joint meeting of the A.S.U. Central Committee at the People's Assembly, Cairo, April 18, 1974", in n. 39, pp. 194-6.

domestic and foreign policies. Sadat in his memoirs concluded that the Soviet connection had been basically inefficient and artificial and all gestures to her were tactical moves.

Ambivalences which characterized Nasser's anti-imperialist, pan-Arab and pro-Soviet attitude faded away in the Sadat era. In the beginning Sadat tried to present the shift in foreign policy as a means to correct the bias in foreign relations. But Heikal interpreted the change as part of a conscious strategy based on the realization that, by the beginning of the 1970s, the equilibrium between the Arab system and the Middle East system had changed in favour of the latter. As the Arab system was collapsing Egypt had no alternative but to merge with the Middle East system, precisely with the Cairo-Riyadh-Teheran axis.

The Egyptian ruling group believed that in the Arab-Israeli conflict, "100 per cent of the cards are in the hands of the USA", since USA alone could convince Israel to accept peace. As for the USA, it had

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43. See for instance, "Is Marx Dead?" The Egyptian Gazette, April 22, 1977, p. 2.
44. Sadat, Ch. 3, n. 10, pp. 144, 227-28, 260 and 284-87.
46. Heikal, Ch. 3, n. 6, pp. 721-6.
positively changed her attitude towards Egypt. Therefore, Egypt had first to strengthen its ties with the USA. Secondly, Egypt would need Soviet friendship only as long as the new war was waged but could dispense with it in the time of peace. Sadat adopted his strategy in pushing further the separate peace process and dropped the proposal for Geneva Conference as the forum for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the crisis on the basis of UN resolutions. However, he never rejected the idea of Geneva Conference but stressed its importance.

b. The internal policy and the economy also underwent transformation. Sadat, who was elected President one month after Nasser's death, consolidated his power through the "Corrective Movement", which in Sadat's interpretation

48. "Speech by President Anwar Al-Sadat at the joint meeting of the A.S.U. Central Committee and the People's Assembly, Cairo, April 18, 1974", in n. 39, p. 199.

49. Heikal, Ch. 3, n. 6, pp. 723-27.

50. Sadat, Ch. 3, n. 10, p. 306.

51. The "Corrective Movement" later termed as "Corrective Revolution", commenced in May 1971 with dismissing and arresting Sadat's opponents. Vice President Ali Sabri, A.S.U. Secretary General Abdel Mohsen Abu el-Nur, Interior Minister Sharawi Gomaa, Minister of Presidential Affairs Sami Sharaf and 87 other top functionaries were purged and sentenced in December 1971. The "Corrective Movement" also covered various measures aimed at rectifying Nasser's line in internal and economic policies, such as the cessation of the activities of the Socialist Vanguard and the first laws against sequestration of private property.
was aimed at eliminating the "centres of power" within the state apparatus and rectifying the distortions and "deviations in the revolution". Sadat himself interpreted the changes as not an ideological split but only the removal of "a handful of individuals" responsible for the mistakes of the past. He projected himself as a true preserver of Nasser's legacy and as one who wanted to terminate emergency measures and restore law and order. 52

Important changes in the internal and economic fields were initiated in 1971-73. The new Constitution, adopted on September 11, 1971 paved the way for private ownership and capital, allowing nationalization only in exceptional cases and that too, against indemnity. New decrees and regulations sought to dismantle state industrial centres, privatize small and medium-scale industries and rehabilitate about 12,000 landlords and capitalists deprived of their political rights in Nasser's time. Relevant laws and decrees enacted during Nasser's regime were revoked. 54

However, documents published in 1971-73 reflect a measure of adherence to Nasser's principles. The new

54. Ansari, n. 52, pp. 158, 172 and 179-84.
Constitution described the Arab Republic of Egypt as "a state with democratic and socialist structure". It defined the economic system of the country as socialist which forbids exploitation. The Constitution continued to provide for 50 per cent representation for workers in companies. It supported the cooperatives, recognized only the "non-exploiting ownership" and declared that "the protection of socialist achievements is the duty of every citizen". The declaration of the Congress of the A.S.U. held in 1971 hailed Egypt as the "pioneer in industrial development", whose public sector was a "pillar of socialist development". The declaration went on to take pride in the glorious Egypto-Soviet relation and friendship.

The October Paper spoke highly of the 1952 Revolution and its contribution to social freedom achieved "without a violent class struggle". It portrayed in bright colours such aspects of the Revolution as the nationalization of the Suez Canal, the agrarian reform, the setting up of the public sector, the creation of a socialist state, social insurance and medical care. However, it also took note of some negative aspects of Nasser era revealed by the 1967 defeat such as the "centres of power", their "tutelage imposed on the

55. The 1971 Constitution, Articles 1, 4, 32 and 59, n. 53, pp. 1, 4 and 7.
56. N. 27, pp. 2-4.
57. The October Paper, pp. 7-8 and 31.
people", the "lack of sovereignty of the law", which called for correction. 58 Sadat, therefore, emphasized that one should understand the present phase of social change and look forward to the future instead of clinging to the past. 59

In Sadat's view, losses caused by the 1967 war could be made up for only by increase in production which would require planned and outward-looking economic policy. The public sector as a leading force of national economy, had been an effective instrument of development. As an experiment it proved positive but then began to show signs of distortion and over-bureaucratization. It was the public sector which "paid the price for full employment and stable prices". The public sector needed further encouragement and new direction to be a fundamental part of economy. The private sector in the past, was beset with contradictory decisions which fostered "parasitic investments and extravagant consumption". Now it needed patronage and stability. 60

The October Paper underlined open policy, favoured foreign capital and joint ventures specially with oil-producing Arab countries. It envisaged further industrialization, scientific and technological progress. 61

58. Ibid., pp. 11-14.
59. Ibid., p. 33.
60. Ibid., pp. 56-61.
61. Ibid., pp. 63-77 and 100-101.
The post-1973 economy was dominated by the open door policy (Infitah). A number of laws granting concessions to foreign capital were passed. The inflow of foreign capital, mainly in the tertiary sector, proved to be a long process. By the end of the 1970s, direct capital investments from the USA, Western countries and Arab states amounted to 2 billion US $, which fall short of Egyptian requirements by 8 billion US $. In terms of financial aid oil-rich Arab countries and the USA gave Egypt an annual amount of 1 billion US $ each. Aid from the USA almost doubled in post-Camp David years. 62 Despite the massive foreign aid and the revenues of the four main national resources, the Suez Canal, tourism, oil-production and transfers from non-resident Egyptians (amounting annually to more than 1 billion US $ each), the annual deficit of the budget was between 0.5-1.3 billion LE and the gross debt reached 16 billion US $ by the end of the decade. The biggest creditors were the USA and the World Bank. 63

In terms of internal politics, Infitah signified revocation of laws enacted in Nasser's time and which checked private capital. This process was completed with a decree in 1981 which rendered all socialist laws illegal. Restrictions on private ownership of the land

62. Ansari, n. 52, pp. 185-8.
63. Ibid., p. 185.
were lifted. The share of the private sector in the production of GDP reached 45 per cent by 1978. A new rich group of middlemen, agents, merchants, contractors and farmers had emerged, the situation of broad masses deteriorated. 64

Infitah, which, in a way, aimed to unite Arab capital, Western know-how and Egyptian labour, proved to be a failure due to reluctance of foreign investors, unsuccessful efforts to meet IMF requirements regarding rationalization of economy and deterioration in relations with the countries of the region caused by Sadat's peace initiative. The failure ultimately led to labour unrest in 1975 and food-riots in 1977.

After 1974, Sadat and official propaganda usually avoided the use of the term socialism. Finally in 1980, the term was consigned to oblivion and replaced with the term social democracy. The new social democratic theory sought to strike balance between individual and society, support social solidarity against class struggle and egoism, and promote religious outlook. The new concept permitted multiparty system and sought to put an end to

64. According to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture of A.R.E. the area of holders of 10-50 faddans dropped from 44.5 per cent in 1961 to 18 per cent in 1975. The small-holders lost 1.7 million faddans. There was a 100 per cent increase in rents effective from 1979. Ansari, n. 52, pp. 185-93.
the dominant role of the public sector. 65

c. The October Paper contains new elements regarding political power, too. Sadat criticised the old order for lack of rule of law and failure of democracy. In the past, democratic institutions were curbed on the pretext of protecting socialism or state security. It was therefore necessary to liquidate the old centres of power, to restore order and sense of stability and to abolish press censorship. The October Paper rejects the idea of "breaking up national unity... through creating parties" and having "one party which imposes its tutelage on the people and takes away freedom of opinion, depriving the people of actually exercising their political freedom". The document suggests the preservation of "the alliance of the working forces" as a suitable framework for national unity which would allow all segments to look after their legitimate interests and express opinions. 66

In the subsequent years, the principles of the October Paper were partly implemented. Greater freedom of expression was first allowed within the A.S.U. by setting up three "platforms", right, left and centrist in


66. The October Paper, pp. 36-38 and 99.
1975. The platforms functioned as "political organisations" from 1976, and then as regular political parties from 1977 onwards. The Arab Socialist Party was established as a pro-government party under the leadership of Prime Minister Mamduh Salem. The Socialist Liberal Party was led by Mustafa Kamal Murad, who was behind the May 1971 transformation. The party embarked on a programme to switch over to market economy. The National Progressive Party was also set up and headed by Khaled Mohieddin, a left-wing Nasserite. Pre-world-war Wafdist, Fouad Seregeddin and Helmi Murad revived the Wafd Party to restore the prior 1952 order. A.S.U. ceased to exist formally in 1978, Wafd and the leftist party had to face various restrictive measures. In the same year Sadat founded his own party, the National Democratic Party with a social democratic programme. The Party won three-fourth majority in the National Assembly elections in June 1979, and two-thirds of the seats in the Supreme Consultative Council (Shura). The Nasserite Party founded by Heikal and Nasser's widow could not gain considerable support.

However, Sadat failed to fulfil his promises to restore the rule of law and enforce legal security. Measures for the suppression of the riots of 1975 and 1977 caused many casualties. Sadat, especially after the Camp David Accords, blamed the Nasserites and the
Communists for the state of affairs accusing them of misusing freedom of the press and of hatching a criminal plot against the nation. Sadat promptly resorted to retaliatory measures such as the purges in the Army, unseating of left leaning members of Parliament, ban on leftist journals, restrictions on the National Progressive Party and arrest of prominent Nasserite personalities including Heikal and Nasser's family members.

From 1974 onwards, Sadat made deliberate attempts to consolidate his personal power and to forge his own image as a charismatic leader. In this aspect he first tried to undermine Nasser's image. Sadat portrayed Nasser as a vain, emotional, egoistic, distrustful and hypocritical person who suffered from many complexes and exploited the sentiments of the masses. Nasser, in Sadat's view, turned into a "living corps" after the debacle of 1967 and left an unmanageably controversial heritage. 67

Sadat made it a point to present himself as a cool-headed, far-sighted politician, the real founder of the Free Officers Organization and as one whose advice Nasser sought in critical situations. 68 However, these distortions failed to make an impact since there was

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68. Ibid., pp. 76-77, 100-102, 182 and 206.
nothing charismatic about Sadat. Nonetheless, his personal power increased in the years 1980-81. He was then the Head of state, the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces and the President of the majority party.

Finally, crucial changes took place in respect of religion. The Constitution of 1971 (Article 2) states: "Islam is the religion of state.... The principles of Islamic Sharia constitute one of the main sources of the legislation". Article 11 conforms equality of men and women "without violating the provisions of Sharia". The constitutional amendments in 1980 make Sharia "the primary source of legislation". The October Paper does not go farther in the matter than The Charter. It repeats the relevant passages of the Constitution and contains some phrases like "the State of science and faith" and "education, labour and just human treatment are compatible with the tolerant Sharia".

No doubt Sadat assigned greater role to Islam, not only in the traditional cultural and ethical fields but also in politics. Sadat's aim was to direct the massive

70. Ibid., p. 152.
72. The October Paper, pp. 77 and 97.
discontent to broaden his narrow base and to use the religious activism to isolate the leftist movements. In the process of de-Nasserization major part of the sequestred properties of the Muslim institutions was restored. Islamic activists, imprisoned in the Nasser era, were freed and given responsible positions. In official publications, religion appeared as "the inalienable feature of the Egyptian man". In building up his political image, Sadat laid great emphasis on his own religiousity.

Sadat's relations with "official Islam" were based on mutual concessions. The Ulema reciprocated the concessions to Islam with refraining from criticism of the regime and endorsed Sadat's separate peace with Israel.

The attitude of the militant religious organizations was far more critical. The Muslim Brotherhood criticised the moral deterioration, corruption and the harmful influence of the West. It also made target of criticism the bureaucracy, policy of co-existence with

73. The Egyptian Personality, The Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Culture, Cairo, 1975, p. 12.

74. He always began his speeches with reciting the First Sura of the Koran, made numerous references to his old links with Muslim Brotherhood and to his adherence to Muslim belief. See Sadat, Ch. 3, n.10, pp.23-24, 69, 76-9.

75. In the Ulema's Fatwa (ruling) of May 1979, it was stated that "conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty was in accordance with Islamic judgement". Cited in Derek Hopwood, Egypt: Politics and Society 1945-1981, (London, 1982), p. 119.
Israel and Egypt's isolation in the Arab World. The Brotherhood strongly advocated that Islam should be the state religion and the primary source of law. Its demands included a series of concrete legislative changes, an Islamic economy with private ownership, a democratic party system, without the "dictatorial" (leftist) parties. It called for Arab unity on the basis of Islam.76

Another group known as al-Jamiat al-Islamiyya represented a different trend in Islamic resurgence. Its best organized unit, al-Takfir wal-Hijra took responsibility for the attack on the Cairo Military Technical College in 1974, kidnapping and murder of Sheikh Mohamed Hussein al-Dahabi, former Minister of Wakfs and Sadat's assassination.

The group rejected the existing social order and pleaded for return to pristine Islam. It also criticised Muslim Brotherhood for its conciliation with the existing regime. The other important militant group al-Tanzim al-Jihad openly called for sabotage.

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and violence.  

The history of relationship between the government and the Muslim militant organizations can be divided into two phases. The period 1970-78 was a time of peaceful coexistence between Sadat and the Muslim Brotherhood. Non-violent activities of other groups were also tolerated. As a result of the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty and the Iranian Revolution these groups accelerated their clandestine activities and resorted to attacks on the Coptic minority. The regime adopted strong measures to which the groups responded with the assassination of Sadat on October 6, 1981. The policy adopted by Sadat in relation to religion and religious organizations ended in a failure for it was not in tune with other aspects of his policy.

77. For details of political ideas and actions of militant groups see Gilles Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh (Berkeley, 1987), pp. 130-222, Olivier Carre, ed., Islam and the State in the World Today (New Delhi, 1989), pp. 2-7. For their concepts of Islamic society, state and economy see Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, eds., Islamic Perspectives, Studies in Honour of Mawlana Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi (Delhi, 1987), pp. 171-264.