

EGYPT-USSR: IVAN GO HOME

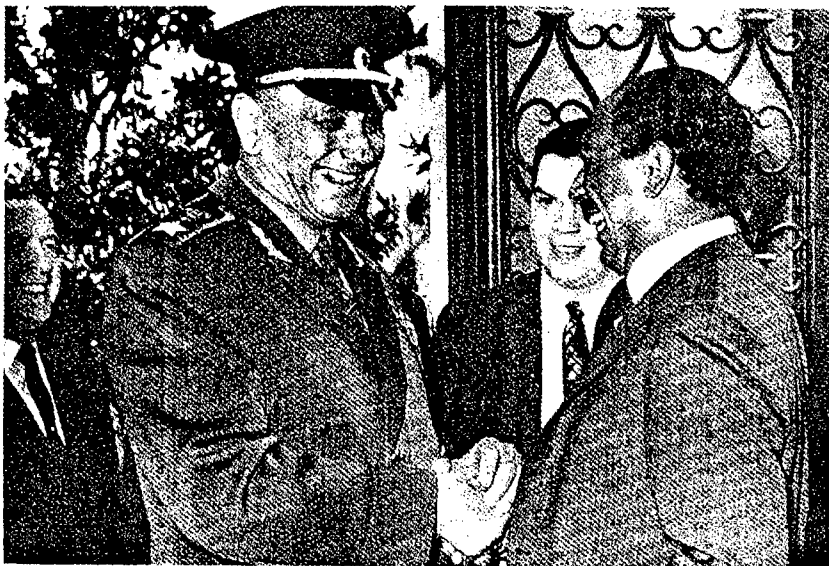
President Sadat startled most of the world on 18 July by publicly announcing that he was asking the Soviet Government to withdraw its training and advisory personnel from Egypt. He added that Egypt would take control of Soviet installations and equipment. TASS, using some of the same terminology, the next day acknowledged that the USSR was indeed withdrawing its personnel, that the Soviets had "completed their functions," and would "shortly return" to the Soviet Union. Moscow explained that these forces were to remain in Egypt for only a "limited period" and that, following an exchange of opinions, both sides had "deemed it expedient" to bring them home. Moscow had nothing to say on the issue of Soviet equipment in Egypt.

Almost as soon as the news was out, the Egyptian press began waffling on the extent of the Soviet withdrawal. Statements have ranged from flat predictions that all Soviet military personnel are going home to reports that those ad-

visers whose skills are vital to Egypt will remain. The semi-official *al Ahram* quickly noted that Cairo did not want to damage Egyptian-Soviet relations and was eager for the bilateral treaty of friendship and cooperation to continue in force, it being the "faithful expression" of the great cooperation between the two countries.

The number of Soviet military personnel in Egypt is estimated at about 13,000. Some 1,000 are with the Soviet naval air squadron, 6,500 in Soviet air and air defense units, 200 in the Foxbat reconnaissance detachment, 800 attached to Egyptian air defense units, and 4,500 advisers to Egyptian air, army, and naval units. About 2,000 personnel associated with SA-3 battalions are believed to have left Egypt since late 1971.

President Sadat said his action was taken in order to facilitate consultations on a "new stage" in the Soviet-Egyptian relationship. Sadat's

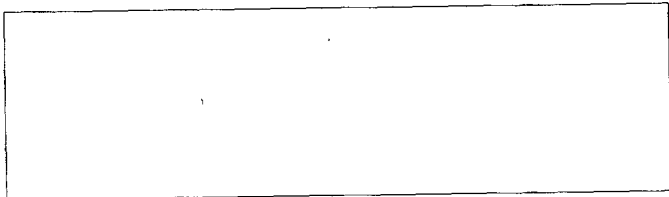


Still laughing?

SECRET

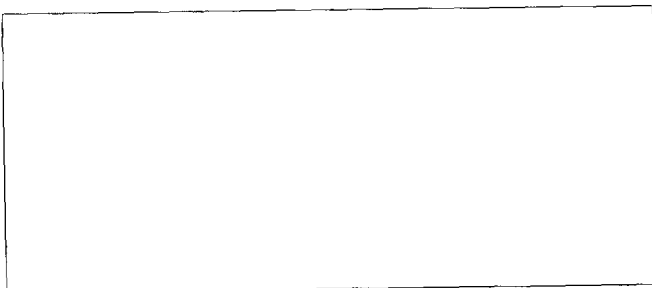
25X1

argument, which follows that of a series of articles by *al Ahram* editor Haykal, was that Egypt now requires complete freedom of action in dealing with Israel. Sadat alluded to a disagreement with Moscow over the supply and control of Soviet weapons, and he said that he could not accept restrictions on Egypt's ability to make its own political decisions. Sadat observed that Cairo did not want "friendly advisers" to fight Egypt's battle, and he implied that by taking over missions and equipment formerly controlled by the Soviets, he would free the USSR from responsibility for Egypt's future actions.



Many factors went into Sadat's decision, but Soviet refusal to release new advanced weapons to his armed forces, Soviet reluctance to endorse military action against Israel, and the abrasive relations between some Egyptian officers— notably Defense Minister Sadiq—and their Soviet advisers clearly weighed heavily. Both the Soviets and Egyptians in their public statements have gone to some lengths to emphasize that the friendship and cooperation between the two countries remained unaffected by the termination of the mission. Given good will on both sides, this may turn out to be more than a pious hope, but much remains to be sorted out between the two countries and among the Egyptians themselves.

25X1



25X1

CHINA: TAMPERING WITH THE IMAGE

For some time now, efforts have been under way in China to de-emphasize the cult of Mao,

A *People's Daily* editorial on 6 July seemed to go beyond this earlier limited objective. In calling repeatedly for party cadre to acquire a thorough knowledge of the "Marxist stand, viewpoint, and method," the editorial seemed to be saying that Mao's thought was no longer the focal point of political study in China. Broadcasts to the home audience have reinforced this impression.

In playing down Mao's theoretical contribution, the regime could be laying the groundwork

for a China without Mao, a notion that was suggested by a *People's Daily* article of 11 June. While clearly preserving Mao's historical position, the article went to unusual lengths to explain that no leader is irreplaceable. Surfaced in the midst of a month-long series of leadership meetings in Peking, the article may indicate that the succession question was on the leaders' agenda. In any event, the deliberate way in which the regime is moving on this score does not suggest any particular urgency at this juncture.

The declining attention given to Mao's ideological utterances could also signal another phase

25X1

SECRET