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The Egyptian Military: Its Role and Missions Under Mubarak

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An Intelligence Assessment

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July 1987*

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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by [] Office of
Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis. It was
coordinated with the Directorate of Operations.
Comments and queries are welcome and may directed
to the Chief, Arab-Israeli Division, NESA, []

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**The Egyptian Military:
Its Role and Missions
Under Mubarak**

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Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 8 July 1987
was used in this report.*

Peace and shifting national priorities since the 1970s are altering the role and missions of the Egyptian armed forces, but these changes probably will not alter Cairo's dependence on the United States over the next several years. The military sees no acceptable way of replacing the large volume of aid supplied by the United States. Moreover, the military sees Egypt's strategic interests as closely linked to those of the United States.

The military under President Mubarak is Egypt's single strongest institution, the ultimate arbiter of political power, and the key to the regime's survival. When the country's paramilitary units—the Central Security Forces—cannot or will not keep order, the military is tasked with protecting the regime. The armed forces are loyal to Mubarak and will respond to government calls to reduce public tensions and suppress civil disturbances. Even so, if public disorder began to seriously threaten Egypt's stability and the regime failed to act decisively to restore calm, the military almost certainly would seek to replace the regime with another it believed would be more competent and stable.

In defining its external mission, the military has assumed a much more defensive posture in comparison with its offensive orientation during the 1960s and early 1970s. Moreover, Cairo does not appear overly worried about near-term threats to national security:

- The military continues to regard Israel as its most important adversary, but it does not see the threat as immediate.
- Concern about Libyan capabilities has declined in the wake of the US air raid in 1986 and the Libyan military debacle in Chad.
- Cairo appears resigned to dealing with Sadiq al-Mahdi's government in Sudan even though it will remain wary of Libyan interference.
- The military probably believes near-term threats to the Red Sea approaches to the Suez Canal and from expanding Islamic radicalism will be countered by US actions.

Over the next few years, Egypt's limited finances most likely will prove the most serious challenge to the military leadership in maintaining morale and carrying out the military's assigned tasks. In an attempt to insulate the military from shortages, to protect its elite status, and to reduce criticism of military outlays as a drain on the national economy, the military has assumed a much more active role in the domestic economy. It is involved in massive building projects and in running farms, food-processing plants, factories, and many other ventures.

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Slow absorption of new equipment, maintenance deficiencies, declining military prestige, and weaknesses in overall military planning will pose additional challenges to the armed forces in the years ahead. The variety of equipment in Egypt's inventory is causing problems for maintenance personnel. Training, although improving with US assistance, is hindered in part because many troops are illiterate. Many in Egypt consider military service an interruption in their lives to be passed as quickly as possible, obliging the armed forces to turn to less skilled candidates from poor, rural backgrounds.

A desire to reassert Egypt's political and military prestige in the Arab world over the next few years might prompt Cairo to expand its regional involvement. Cairo probably will consider using its military as a mercenary force to earn foreign exchange, to protect Egypt from instability in the Persian Gulf, and to improve its relations with other Arab states. The military leadership probably would resist committing Egyptian forces to combat in behalf of another country, but declining threats along Egypt's immediate borders would diminish the military's concern about diverting resources for small-scale assistance to the Arab Gulf states to strengthen their defenses.

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The Egyptian Military: Its Role and Missions Under Mubarak

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The Egyptian military under President Mubarak remains what it has been since the revolution in 1952: the country's strongest institution and the ultimate arbiter of political power. We believe its continued loyalty to and support for Mubarak in the face of economic and political troubles will be the key to the regime's survival. []

Nonetheless, the sequence of war with Israel in 1973, the break with the Soviets, and the peace with Israel meant wrenching changes for the Egyptian armed forces. We believe their role and mission have shifted considerably. The military has moved from its extensive political involvement in the 1950s to become the far less politicized institution it is today, and from its central role in the Arab-Israeli confrontation to its current strong focus on defense and deterrence. []

Internal Role of the Military

Power and Political Loyalty

Under the Mubarak regime, the military continues to exert pervasive influence over Egypt's political life, and it has the ability to protect or replace the current regime. The Army's rapid action in February 1986 to suppress the Central Security Force riots in Cairo reaffirmed its loyalty and ultimate importance to Mubarak's troubled government. Continued political strains and economic hardship leading to widespread civil disorder quite likely would oblige the military to intervene again. []

Nonetheless, we believe the military prefers to remain above politics. []

[] efforts begun by President Nasir after 1967 to foster professionalism in the armed forces succeeded in reducing the military's interest in running the government. Defense Minister Abu Ghazala has repeatedly stated that the armed forces are a professional body with no role in politics. For example, following the riots in February 1986, the Defense Minister adjured commanders that



Figure 2. Egyptian Army tanks patrol the streets during the riot by members of the Central Security Forces in February 1986. []

the military's role is to obey and defend the civilian government, expressing Mubarak's appreciation for their help during the riots and warning them not to try to exploit the situation. []

Even though Abu Ghazala overstates the case, we believe the military is continuing to move away from a politicized role. Egyptian leaders since Nasir have sought ways to dilute some of the power of the military:

- Nasir tasked senior commanders with preparing a professional and strong military for the next war, reduced the number of military men serving in the Cabinet in favor of civilians, and emphasized competence more than political connections when choosing senior commanders. He also created the Central Security Forces, decreasing the direct responsibility of the armed forces for maintaining domestic order.¹

¹ Egypt's Central Security Forces—probably at least 350,000 men—are responsible for maintaining internal security in Egypt. []

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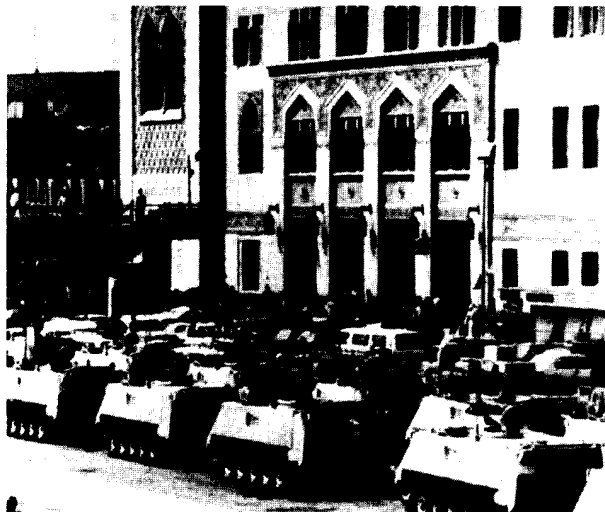


Figure 3. Army armored personnel carriers are parked in the courtyard of the main railway station in Cairo during the relaxation of the curfew imposed after the Central Security Force riots in February 1986. [redacted]



Figure 4. Egyptian riot police beating students during a demonstration at Ayn Shams University in October 1985. The Army does not become involved in quelling civil disturbances unless other public authorities will not or cannot do so. [redacted]

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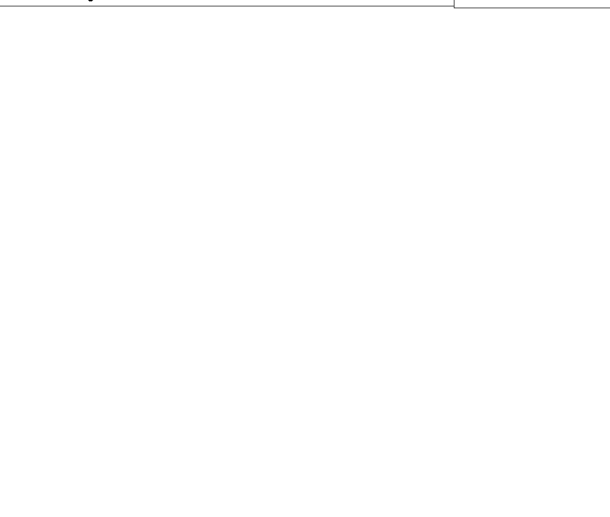
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- Sadat expanded Nasir's efforts to curb the influence of the military, declaring that "the Army has no political role." Soldiers were denied the right to vote, and the military presence in the Cabinet continued to decline. The Camp David agreement—accompanied by massive US assistance to help rebuild the Egyptian armed forces—also made a highly visible political role less attractive to the military.
- Mubarak has focused on keeping the military loyal and out of politics by ensuring that military benefits are protected and supporting improvements in the conditions of service.

We believe these efforts have fostered a degree of professionalism that has kept the military largely content with its role of a "behind-the-scenes" power. Moreover, the military's emphasis on modernization, absorption of Western equipment, and protection of its status by pursuing economic self-sufficiency probably will continue to reduce its interest in political issues. Although a crisis in the regime—if it proved incapable of reversing a downward spiral of administrative paralysis and widespread civil unrest, for example—probably would oblige the military to take an active role in Egyptian politics, we believe it would prefer to again fade into the background once it restored stability. [redacted]

Civil Defense

The military is tasked, as part of its internal mission, with stepping in to restore calm and to protect the regime in times of civil disorder when the Central Security Forces cannot or will not do so. [redacted]

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Defense Minister Abu Ghazala



Abu Ghazala

Field Marshal Mohamed Abdel Halem Abu Ghazala, Minister of Defense and Deputy Prime Minister, is popular with the armed forces and has emerged as one of the most charismatic and effective leaders in Egypt. The 57-year-old artillery officer is a veteran of four wars. Between 1976 and 1980 he served as defense attache in Washington, where he was an advocate of US-Egyptian defense cooperation. He became Minister of Defense in 1981 and was made Deputy Prime Minister and promoted to Field Marshal in 1982.

Molding the Military

Abu Ghazala, in our view, is the key person shaping the military's understanding of its current role and missions. In July 1986 he publicly described the military's charge as:

- Confronting possible hostilities against Egypt.
- Defending the security of the Nile sources, especially in Sudan.
- Assisting friendly Arab states.
- Safeguarding Red Sea shipping.
- Assisting civil authorities during disasters.
- Conducting civil defense.

- Defending constitutional legitimacy in cooperation with Egypt's internal security forces.

Abu Ghazala sees his highest priorities as Defense Minister to be meeting the military's needs for munitions and consumer goods and making the armed forces as self-sufficient as possible by involving them in the civilian economy. He also has continued to emphasize the military's need to improve its deterrent capabilities and has consistently backed military modernization through cooperation with the United States.

Strong Support of the Military

The Defense Minister's dynamic style and his ability to protect the military's institutional interests have gained him broad support in the military.

officers respect Abu Ghazala because of his efforts to keep them informed, his extensive social and personal contacts with officers and their units, and his constant efforts and successes in increasing military benefits.

Abu Ghazala would be reluctant to accept the position of vice president because he would be drawn into too many nonmilitary matters affecting the Egyptian Government, which would detract from the time and effort he could devote to managing military affairs. Despite his protests about the demands of political life, we believe Abu Ghazala would quickly step into power if Mubarak stepped aside or died.

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Despite the military's reluctance to become involved in civil disturbances, we believe military leaders are concerned about new internal threats and will follow orders to commit regular forces to keep order. []

[] during a strike of Egyptian railroad engineers in July 1986, Military Intelligence went on full alert, and the Defense Minister dispatched buses and trucks to the central railway station to transport stranded passengers. Some trains were staffed by military personnel in order to ease tension. We believe such activity—designed less to respond to strikes and other antigovernment actions than to prevent massive popular support and participation in them—will continue as economic problems and public dissatisfaction increase. []

The government, however, will act cautiously in using the military to break up riots. We believe that, for the most part, the armed forces have neither the equipment nor the tactical doctrine designed specifically to counter civil disturbances. The military can send large numbers of men into the streets with small arms and move them rapidly with trucks and armored vehicles, but units are not normally supplied with nonlethal riot-control gear such as tear gas, water hoses, batons, and shields. Troops also do not receive instruction in crowd control, because the Army trains to protect Egypt from external rather than internal threats. []

Growing Economic Power

An increasingly significant aspect of the military's role is its contribution to Egypt's economic progress. The Egyptian Government estimates that between 1980 and 1987 the armed forces have been involved in some 300 projects in the civilian sector. Apparently believing the military stands a much better chance of increasing its prestige by the scythe than by the sword, Abu Ghazala has said publicly that "Egypt cannot afford to look for foreign adventures" because "the main mission we must have . . . is to solve the economic problem." Since 1979 the armed forces have participated in the National Services Projects Organization, established to use surplus military labor and equipment for civilian projects. It has expanded its efforts beyond this program and is involved in a variety of business enterprises. []

The Military's Agro-Industrial Complex

The Ministry of Defense has emphasized expanding its agro-industrial complex since the late 1970s, and the National Services Projects Organization, an independent agency in the armed forces that is run to make a profit, has grown substantially. It employs at least 100,000 soldiers and civilians in various projects and is headed by Defense Minister Abu Ghazala, according to US Embassy reporting. Among other ventures, military personnel are operating farms that produce a variety of meat and vegetables, building large "cities" designed to house and provide basic services to military personnel and their families, sponsoring military resorts, and running factories that produce items for defense and consumer needs. For example []

[] the military agricultural complex as of December 1986 was producing some 7 million tons of milk daily and 60 million eggs, 50,000 tons of vegetables, and 8,000 tons of meat annually as well as fodder, edible grains, and fruit, some of which it sold on the civilian market. The military also is involved in many other ventures that earn revenue, including arms and land sales. []

We do not know the full amount earned by the military, but limited evidence suggests that profits are being used to help protect the military from economic austerity by augmenting salaries and providing benefits not covered in the official budget.

[] about two-thirds of military profits from arms deals support military housing, maintenance, and purchases of spare parts. []

The military is seeking to expand its economic activities, according to US Embassy sources. Although National Services Projects Organization factories do not export any goods, they hope to broaden their market. Among other enterprises, the organization is studying the feasibility of a joint venture to produce steel bars and is interested in tapping into US Agency for International Development-funded projects. []

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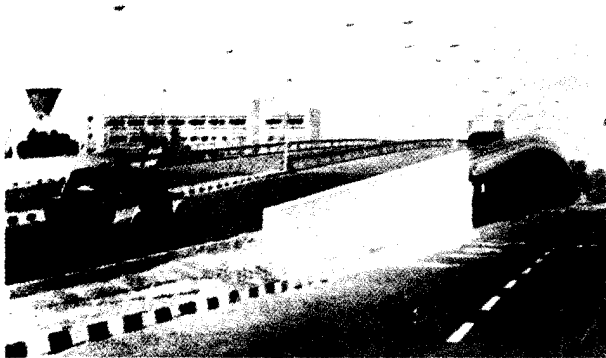


Figure 5. A military bakery and an overpass built by soldiers. The military is increasing its involvement in Egypt's economy.

By involving the military in economic ventures, military leaders probably hope to insulate the armed forces from civilian shortages, use excess military labor to complete projects quickly and less expensively than civilian contractors, and reduce possible civilian criticism of the military as a drain on scarce public resources. Abu Ghazala and other senior officers have publicly stated that the military's aim is to eventually attain economic self-sufficiency. Moreover, we suspect that senior officers also see economic activities as a means of protecting the military's elite status because the enterprises give the military access to large sums of money that are beyond the control of elected officials. According to US Embassy reporting, military ventures in some cases deprive the private sector of potentially lucrative opportunities, but, because the military is not wholly accountable in the budget process to the People's Assembly and the Cabinet, civilian regulation of military economic activities is limited.

Table 1
Egyptian Military Forces

Total	449,000
Army	320,000
Navy	20,000
Air Force	29,000
Air Defense Command	80,000
Paramilitary	350,000 to 500,000

External Role of the Military

The Egyptian military sees its external role as defensive, and it has little interest in returning to war, full-scale or limited.

Egypt's military enjoys the status quo—a relatively comfortable existence with perquisites to improve military life. Many senior officers remember the high human and economic costs of the 1967 and 1973 wars with Israel and are content with the peace arrangements. Moreover,

much of the Egyptian military believes it is unprepared for another war, especially with Israel, in terms of its weapons and training. US Embassy reporting says that Egyptian officers regret their country's intervention in the North Yemeni civil war during the period 1962-67 and oppose Egyptian military involvement in foreign adventures.

The armed forces, with massive US military aid, are trying to overcome the decline in its combat capability that resulted after the 1973 war and Soviet arms cutoff in 1975. It is continuing the process, which began following the Camp David agreement, of reorganizing and reequipping units along Western rather than Soviet lines. Official Egyptian Government documents prepared in support of Egypt's request for US security assistance during the 1988 fiscal year include a set of ambitious goals that the military wants to achieve by the 1990s:

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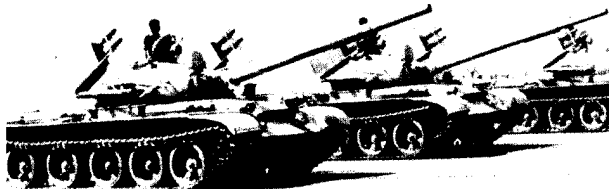


Figure 6. Soviet-made T-62 tanks in the Egyptian inventory. Egypt has been replacing T-62s with [redacted]

- The Army intends to create a smaller, high-technology force structured primarily for defense and deterrence. It hopes to reduce its forces from some 449,000 to 350,000 by 1992 while upgrading its armored, mechanized, and artillery units with comparatively sophisticated US-supplied equipment—mainly M-60A3 medium tanks, M113 armored personnel carriers, and 155-mm self-propelled howitzers.²
- The Air Force is attempting to acquire significant firstline technology and to retain a good surface-attack capability while rebuilding units with a smaller mix of US, French, and Chinese aircraft—primarily the F-16, Mirage 2000, and F-7, respectively.
- The Air Defense Command wants to replace its Soviet-origin surface-to-air missiles with US-made improved Hawk and Chaparral systems and to integrate air defense weapons into an advanced command, control, communications, and intelligence system.
- The Navy would like to upgrade all of its surface combatants but wants especially to develop its anti-submarine warfare forces to deal with long-term threats to its Mediterranean and Red Sea waters. Nonetheless, the Navy is last on the list for Egypt's limited defense money.

² Egypt also has agreed with the [redacted]

The military realizes that progress in switching from aging Soviet to more modern Western equipment will be slow, despite US assistance, because of Egypt's continuing economic difficulties. Moreover, plans to reduce the size of the armed forces, in our view, will not be realized in the near term. Cairo will continue to be reluctant to release large numbers of young men because of concerns about the economic and social dislocation such an action would cause in the civilian sector. [redacted]

Threat Perceptions Shaping External Mission

Most Egyptian officers still regard Israel as the most important long-term threat to Egyptian security.

[redacted] Egyptian military planners see Israel's military superiority—including its potential to use nuclear weapons—as a threat to the balance of power in the region. The alarmists among them do not rule out the possibility of a preemptive Israeli strike on Egypt as part of a larger conflict in the Middle East. We suspect that some Egyptian officers are concerned that a more militant Israeli leadership may emerge that will be less interested in preserving the peace and that will be increasingly tempted to take advantage of Israel's military superiority over Egypt. [redacted]

The majority of Egypt's ground and air forces are committed to protecting the eastern part of the country where the bulk of Egypt's population and economic and industrial resources are located. Cairo continues to give its best equipment to units along the Suez Canal and in the Northern and Central Districts. For example, all US armored vehicles acquired since 1982 have been delivered to units in the east. The majority of Egypt's Air Force and air defense assets also are concentrated in the east. [redacted]

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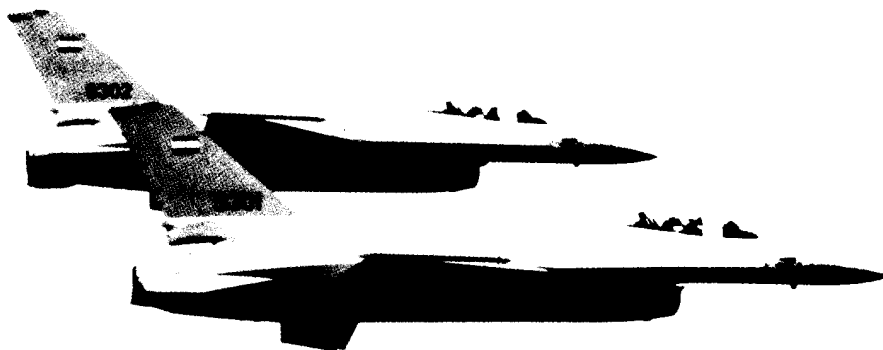
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Figure 7. Egyptian F-16s. Egypt is restructuring its Air Force and hopes to acquire 160 F-16s and 20 Mirage 2000s by the 1990s. [redacted]



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The military publicly recognizes Libya as the most important short-term threat to Egyptian national security. [redacted] commanders generally refer to Libya as the enemy when motivating their troops to perform. [redacted]

the west, believes his forces could halt a direct Libyan attack. Units in the Western District are among the last in the Egyptian military to receive new equipment. Armored battalions in the Western District, for example, are supplied with old Soviet T-62 and T-54/55 tanks at a time when units in eastern districts are being upgraded with US-origin equipment. Air defenses in the west also depend upon less effective weaponry. [redacted]

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Nonetheless, we believe that Egyptian commanders inflate the Libyan threat for domestic and US consumption and that they worry very little about a direct Libyan attack across the Western Desert. [redacted]

[redacted] after the US air raid last year senior Egyptian officers said they no longer believed Libya has the intention or the capability to mount large attacks on Egypt. President Mubarak in mid-August 1986 said that he believed the threat from Libya had declined. The Libyan military's poor performance in Chad has further reduced Egyptian military concern about a direct attack from the west, in our view. Cairo, however, will remain wary of possible terrorist attacks and Libyan efforts at subversion. [redacted]

[redacted] The military may be reluctant to reinforce units in the Western District because such moves would stretch already limited financial resources and cause significant morale problems. Most soldiers and officers regard assignment to the west as punishment, given the area's isolation, heat, and lack of facilities. [redacted]

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We believe that the military continues to see Egypt's access to the Nile River waters as a key security interest. According to US Embassy reporting, in July 1985 Abu Ghazala ordered the operations branch of the armed forces to pay more attention to threats from the south to Egyptian strategic interests. He has linked Egyptian and Sudanese military interests, saying publicly in mid-July 1986 that the armed forces are determined to "withstand any influence or hostilities" that threaten the security of the Nile sources. Cairo appears resigned to dealing with the government of Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi in Sudan.

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Cairo apparently believes its forces in the west are adequate to deter the Libyans and feels no strong urge to immediately strengthen units near its western border. [redacted] even Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Ibrahim Abdel Ghaffour El-Orabi, who occasionally complains bitterly about the low readiness rates of units in

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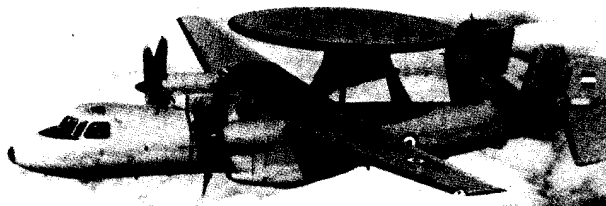


Figure 8. The E-2C Hawkeye. Egypt recently took delivery of the first two of five E-2C Hawkeye airborne early warning aircraft. Egypt plans to eventually integrate the Hawkeye into a nationwide air defense command and control system.

The Egyptians are concerned, however, about Libyan interference and a possible insertion of Libyan troops in support of a pro-Tripoli coup in Khartoum.

The military will continue to watch events in Ethiopia carefully because some 85 percent of Egypt's water comes from Ethiopia's Blue Nile and Soviet influence is strong in Addis Ababa. Diplomatic relations between Cairo and Addis Ababa are reasonably good, and comments by Mubarak suggest that Egypt will continue this course unless Ethiopia interferes with the Nile's flow.

We believe the Egyptian military, with few surface combatants, is dissatisfied with its capabilities to counter threats to the Red Sea approaches to the Suez Canal, but resource constraints will limit its ability to improve them. Instead, Egypt is likely to continue its efforts to improve its military relations with countries near the Bab el Mandeb entry to the Red Sea. The armed forces already are sending instructors to the North Yemen Command and Staff College, according to US Embassy sources in Cairo, and Cairo signed a protocol with Djibouti in March 1987 for military cooperation and limited assistance.

Most Egyptian military leaders, in our view, recognize that Egypt's small Navy can do little to secure freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, particularly against the Soviets.

we judge that Cairo

³ Egypt seems to be putting less emphasis on improving ties to South Yemen, probably because of the unsettled political situation there.

Table 2
Estimated Weapons and Equipment in
Egypt's Inventory

Equipment	Number ^a
Ground Forces	
Tanks (M-60A3, T-62, T-54/55)	2,400
Armored personnel carriers	3,400
Field artillery (100mm and above)	1,300 to 1,700
Multiple rocket launchers	200
Navy	
Diesel submarines	10 to 12
Destroyers	1
Frigates ^b	6
Missile boats	30
Mine warfare ships (oceangoing)	17
Amphibious warfare ships (oceangoing)	13
Patrol boats, Hovercraft, and support ships	72
Air Force	
Combat aircraft	430
Transports	30
Helicopters	160
Trainers	100
Reconnaissance	20
Air Defense ^c	
SA-2 launchers	360
SA-3 launchers	350
SA-6 launchers	70
SA-7 launchers	1,300
Crotales (not deployed)	16
I-Hawks	72

^a Operational rate varies.
^b Includes two light frigates.
^c Egypt is receiving 15 to 18 new Skyguard batteries, but so far none have been deployed.

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Figure 10. Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces Lt. Gen. El-Orabi.

would depend on the US Navy—since US strategic interests would be affected—to protect freedom of passage against significant threats. We believe this is a primary reason why the Egyptian Navy is the last on the list to acquire new equipment.

The military also is concerned that Islamic radicalism will spill over from Iran to the Arab Gulf states. Abu Ghazala in April 1987 commented publicly that “the security of the Gulf and Egypt is indivisible.”

Egypt is providing Iraq with arms and advice and is seeking to improve military cooperation with the Arab Gulf states.

Constraints

Egypt’s limited finances most likely will prove the most serious obstacle to the military’s fulfillment of its roles.

officers and conscripts continue to complain that their salaries are not keeping up with rising prices.

in August 1986 about 35 percent of middle-level and junior officers maintained second jobs outside the military in order to make ends meet. Problems in acquiring more Western equipment will increase as Egypt’s economy worsens. Deliveries

of modern equipment already are being delayed—as in the case of the Mirage 2000 aircraft from France—until Egypt can find the cash for payments.

Army officers must deal increasingly with obsolescent and broken-down equipment, and some believe the Egyptian military is weaker now vis-a-vis Israel than before 1973.

The Egyptian military’s ability to carry out its mission effectively will be hampered by its slow absorption of new—and in some cases, unnecessarily sophisticated—equipment. Besides that furnished by the United States, Egypt is seeking equipment from other Western suppliers, and it is reluctant to scrap Soviet equipment acquired in the 1970s because of limited finances and because older Soviet weapons often are easier for troops to operate than complex Western items. The variety of equipment in Egypt’s inventory is causing serious problems for maintenance personnel and in obtaining spare parts.

Egyptian maintenance procedures are poor, and equipment often is out of operation for long periods because the military lacks skilled repairmen and technicians. Training, although improving with US assistance, still is insufficient to bring the military up to Western standards, in part because many troops are illiterate. Egypt also lacks a sufficiently large and dedicated noncommissioned officer corps, and much of the instruction must be done by junior officers, not all of whom are skilled.

The decline in the military’s prestige will reduce human and economic resources available to the armed forces. Before 1973, supporting and improving the military were widely shared goals. Following the 1973 war and the Camp David agreements, the immediate impetus for a strong military declined. Former President Sadat’s attempts to foster private enterprise also created new and potentially more lucrative opportunities outside the military for ambitious, well-educated young men. President Mubarak and Abu Ghazala have attempted to promote and protect the military’s interests, but privileges and benefits usually do not extend to conscripts, who are poorly paid and often

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used in menial, nonmilitary tasks. According to US Embassy reporting, many consider military service an interruption in their lives to be passed as quickly and painlessly as possible. As a result, fewer highly qualified men want to remain in the military, obliging the armed forces to turn to less skilled candidates from poor, rural backgrounds who still see the military as a means of moving up in the world. []

We suspect that the Egyptians, in the absence of a clear and immediate external threat, have become lax in their strategic planning. The Defense Minister publicly stated in March 1987 that Egypt's military strategy is "a peaceful defense" based on the teachings of "Islam, the Koran, and the Prophet." He pointed indirectly to a weakness in Egyptian overall military planning, however, calling on the government to draw up a military doctrine defining "the supreme national objectives" so that the armed forces can more appropriately assess threats and develop force plans. In our judgment, at least part of Cairo's procrastination in undertaking strategic military planning stems from a belief that the United States, through the Camp David accords, has committed itself to support Egypt during future conflicts or attacks against its territory. []

Prospects for Change

Economic Austerity Measures

If economic austerity measures significantly reduce military pay, perquisites, or standards of living, senior officers will at a minimum put greater pressure on the civilian leadership to reverse the steps or provide exemptions for the armed forces. The military believes it should be exempt from economic belt-tightening by virtue of its importance to national defense, and Cairo's failure to increase salaries in order to account for inflation already is generating pressure for improvements in compensation. Even small decreases in less critical military programs, training, and nonessentials like base maintenance would cause professional officers to increase their pressure on political leaders to restore the military's budget. []

Fundamentalism

A general increase in Islamic fervor or demonstrations by other than extremist groups would not cause the military to expand its domestic role, in our view.

[] a renewal of religiosity, mainly among conscripts and junior officers, that mirrors the growth of Islamic observance in civilian society. For this reason, we believe the military would not take a stand against general displays of religious fervor among civilians but would expect the Central Security Forces to keep order. []

On the other hand, we believe the military would respond to a government call for assistance to suppress civil disturbances instigated by extremist Islamic groups. We have little evidence of support in the military for radical Islamic elements. US Embassy reporting says Military Intelligence carefully monitors conscripts to prevent the growth of militant Islamic or extremist groups in the armed forces.

[] officers suspected of radical tendencies are eventually expelled, retired from active duty, or put in positions of little influence. The military also is likely to back the regime against radicals because the adoption of a rigorous Islamic code—which at least in theory prescribes austerity, equality, and rigid forms of social behavior—would threaten important military perquisites and privileges. []

Commitments to Other Arab States

With the decline in the immediacy of threats from Israel, Libya, and Sudan, the Egyptian military may be more willing to look beyond its borders to provide limited assistance, for a price, to other Arab states. The impetus for increased involvement will come from the regime's desire to use its military as a tool to gain foreign exchange, protect itself from instability in the Persian Gulf, and improve its status in the Arab world. Cairo is likely to continue its military cooperation—especially training and joint exercises—with Jordan. The Egyptians are concerned about Iraq's ineffectiveness in the Iran-Iraq war, and additional Iranian victories that threatened Saddam Husayn's regime quite likely would cause the Egyptian military

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to consider ways to play a bigger role in the Gulf. Nonetheless, we believe that it would continue to resist committing forces to Iraq. The Egyptian military probably would be willing to send more men and equipment to assist the Gulf states to strengthen their defenses if called upon by the Gulf Cooperation Council or Saudi Arabia. Such requests would have to be accompanied by large financial disbursements and possibly commitments to resume joint defense production in Egypt under the auspices of the Arab Organization for Industrialization or a similar body. []

other countries—probably will not cause it to alter its strategy of defense and deterrence. For the foreseeable future the military will continue to have difficulty integrating new and sophisticated equipment into its inventories as well as training its troops to operate it. Weapons with enhanced capabilities, however, might make some officers more willing to recommend strikes against Libya if tensions increase or to respond to Libyan terrorism or attempts at subversion. []

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Involvement in Sudan

Barring Libyan attempts to overthrow the Sudanese Government or to attack the Sudanese Army, the Egyptian military is unlikely to dramatically expand its external mission in the south. According to US Embassy reporting from Cairo, General El-Orabi said in January 1987 that Egypt has resumed military assistance and training with a view to maintaining close links to the Sudanese military and creating a more professional Sudanese Army. The Egyptians probably hope this cooperative effort will improve the Sudanese Government's ability to engage the rebels in the south and foster stability. Since the military probably would be involved if another coup were to occur in Sudan, the Egyptian armed forces probably believe that cooperation will now improve their influence in such a contingency. Moreover, good relations with the Sudanese military would be essential if Egypt had to intervene to assist Khartoum in defending against a Libyan incursion. []

Implications for the United States

We see little likelihood in the short term that further shifts in the role and missions of the armed forces will alter Egypt's strong dependence on the United States. According to Egyptian documents requesting US assistance for FY 1988, US military and Foreign Military Sales grants accounted for some 69 percent of all Egyptian defense expenditures in FY 1986. As economic problems grow and the military focuses more of its energies on modernization and increasing professionalism, it will look to the United States for even greater assistance. Any expansion of the military's internal role arising from the instability of the Egyptian Government would prompt urgent requests for US aid to enable the military, as official Egyptian Government documents say, to "protect the social climate in which democracy can flourish." []

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Military Cooperation With Syria

Egyptian military cooperation with Syria is highly unlikely in the foreseeable future. The military, [] [] has welcomed the respite from war and has no desire to abrogate Egypt's peace treaty with Israel. The armed forces also would be extremely concerned that hostilities in an Israeli-Syrian conflict would eventually involve Egypt. We believe the Mubarak regime, if confronted with such a situation, would call on the United States to fulfill its security commitments while increasing its military readiness to defend against a possible Israeli strike. []

Although some officers resent the fact that the United States supplies Israel with more and better weapons than it does Egypt, we believe the military sees no acceptable way of replacing US aid. Egypt would welcome spare parts from the USSR to repair its old Soviet-origin equipment, but we doubt that many officers envision a return to Egypt's pre-1973 relationship with the USSR. The military would find it particularly awkward to switch suppliers now that it is committed to integrate US equipment into its inventory and to eventually phase out its Soviet-supplied weapons. []

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An expansion of the military's mission in the Persian Gulf probably would improve Egypt's access to funds from the Arab Gulf states. The Egyptian military

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Better Weapons

The military's acquisition of additional weapons with enhanced capabilities—from the United States or

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probably would use this financial assistance to purchase other Western equipment to supplement that provided by the United States—more Mirage 2000s, for example. The military would not see a stronger security relationship with the Gulf states as dramatically altering its dependence on the United States. On the contrary, the military would not want to become involved in combat in the Persian Gulf and probably would expect US forces to step in if the situation there deteriorated markedly.

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