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The Arab-Israeli Military Balance, 1980-85

National Intelligence Estimate
Volume II - The Current Balance

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI
MILITARY BALANCE,
1980-85

Volume II—The Current Balance

Information available as of 1 May 1980
was used in the preparation of this Estimate.

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THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

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The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS.....	1
DISCUSSION	3
I. INTRODUCTION	3
A. Key Issues	3
B. Analytic Assumptions and Approach	3
<hr/>	
II. DEVELOPMENTS LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE MILITARY BALANCE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS	5
A. Hostilities in Lebanon—A Look at the Future	5
B. Turmoil in Syria—Implications for Syrian Military Capabilities	6
C. The Palestinians as a Military Force	8
D. Iraq's Increasing Military Capabilities	8
E. Iran as a Contributor to the Arabs' Military Forces	9
F. Military Assistance to Israel and the Arab States	10
<hr/>	
Syria	11
Jordan	11
Iraq	12
Egypt	12
Libya	12
Saudi Arabia	12
III. PROJECTION OF THE MILITARY BALANCE THROUGH 1985 ..	12
A. Trends	12
Operational Effectiveness.....	13
Manpower.....	15
Weapons Technology	17
Inventories of Key Weapons	18
B. Impact of Economic Trends	25
Israel	25
Principal Arab States	26
C. Overall Assessment of the Military Balance, 1985	26
IV. SPECIAL ISSUES	28
A. Autonomy Negotiations: Implications of Success or Failure	28
B. Superpower Military Presence in the Region	29

PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

With a sustained effort, and not without difficulty, Israel will maintain its wide margin of military superiority over the Arab states during the next five years and remain capable of defeating any combination of Arab forces--even if Egypt were to participate. Nonetheless, improvements in Arab military capabilities, even without Egypt, could in a future conflict make Israeli military operations more complex and costly.

Although Arab military capabilities also will improve, the Arab states face serious problems, which will continue to hinder their efforts to improve their capabilities relative to those of Israel.

- Syria probably will continue to deploy a substantial part of its Army to Lebanon, and its military capabilities will be further impaired if the Army becomes more extensively embroiled in the suppression of domestic antiregime opposition.
- Although Iraq has substantially expanded its armed forces and has the capability to send a larger force than in 1973 to a conflict with Israel, it has military requirements at home heightened by trouble with Iran. Moreover, if the war were limited to one front, Israel could assign more forces to interdiction of Iraqi forces en route to the Golan Heights.

[REDACTED]

— Any assistance that the debilitated Iranian armed forces could provide is likely to be less consequential to the Arabs and their military capabilities relative to Israel than the yet uncertain resolution of the basic differences between Iraq and Iran, which could keep large numbers of Iraqi troops from participating in an Arab-Israeli conflict.

[REDACTED]

The Arabs still have military options, even though Egypt is unlikely to rejoin Arab ranks and more particularly participate in Arab hostilities against Israel. The remaining Arab states could initiate hostilities with Israel, not with the goal of defeating Israel but with the hope of achieving limited political objectives, such as gaining negotiating leverage on such issues as the occupied territories or Palestinian rights.

Lebanon will remain an arena of Arab-Israeli confrontation and interfactional tensions with the risk that skirmishes, crises, and limited military confrontation will lead to expanded conflict, possibly even beyond Lebanon's borders.

[REDACTED]

Although several Arab states currently have a chemical and perhaps biological weapons capability, none have nuclear weapons nor are they likely to obtain them over the next five years. [REDACTED]

DISCUSSION

I. INTRODUCTION

This volume of NIE 35/36-80 provides the Intelligence Community's assessment of the likely Arab-Israeli military balance through 1985. It is intended to give US policymakers a broad appreciation of those developments which probably will influence that balance over the next five years.

A. Key Issues

1. This Estimate addresses three key military issues relating to the Arab-Israeli military balance over the next five years:

- How are military/political developments in the region likely to affect Israel's current margin of military superiority?
- What are the prospects that increases in Arab military effectiveness will pose a greater challenge to Israel's military capabilities?
- What trends in the major military capabilities of Israel and the Arab states will most affect the military balance?

B. Analytic Assumptions and Approach

2. The analysis that follows reflects our judgment of how Arab and Israeli military capabilities will develop over the next five years. Although we assume that Egypt will be a neutral party in the event of future hostilities between Israel and any combination of Arab states, the implications of possible Egyptian participation are taken into account. In view of the impact that certain events would have on analysis of the future Arab-Israeli military balance, we have assumed for analytic purposes that no major discontinuities will

occur during the time frame of this Estimate. The following assumptions are made:

- *No abrogation by either party of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.* As mentioned above, the implications of possible Egyptian participation in future hostilities are discussed even though our expectation—and therefore our basic assumption for most of the analysis—is that Egypt would remain a neutral party in a future Arab-Israeli war.
- *No major Israeli withdrawals from the Golan Heights or the West Bank.* The withdrawal of Israeli forces from significant portions of these occupied territories, presumably in conjunction with another peace agreement, would have a major impact on the overall military situation in the Middle East.
- *No major shifts in the relationship between Middle East countries and their principal arms suppliers or economic supporters.* Such a shift could significantly affect military capabilities, as demonstrated by the Soviet and more recent Arab cutoff of aid to Egypt. The cutoff of Arab funding to Egypt in the wake of the peace treaty is a condition that we assume will continue for the foreseeable future. The renewal of large-scale Arab funding would require a reversal of current Arab attitudes toward Egypt and the treaty—the likelihood of which we cannot confidently estimate during the next five years.
- *No adoption by Israel or the Arab states of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons as primary elements of combat power.* A decision by key Middle East states to rely on such weapons would radically alter the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict.
- *No major direct involvement of US or Soviet combat units on the side of either Israel or the Arab states.* The intervention of such forces in the Middle East could upset the balance of power in the region and significantly affect the course and scope of any future hostilities.

— *No major internal changes in the defense policies of the Arab states or Israel.* Although there have been changes in the policies of Egypt and Israel toward each other in the wake of the peace treaty, we cannot confidently estimate the likelihood that other Arab states and Israel will radically change their defense policies toward each other during the time frame of this Estimate.

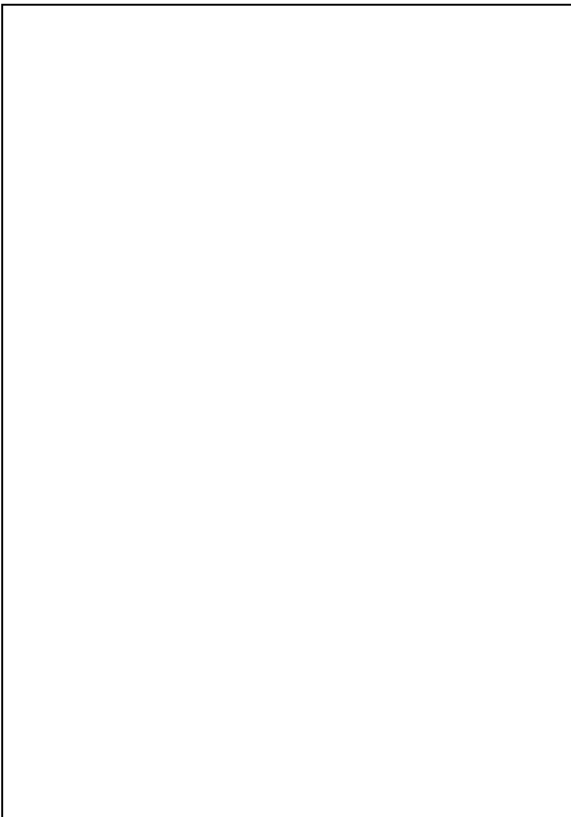
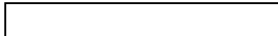
— *No military conflict between the key Arab states arrayed against Israel.* A major conflict between key Arab states, such as Syria and Iraq, would reduce Arab cooperation and overall military capabilities against Israel.

3. The analysis in this volume begins with a discussion (chapter II) of those issues of current concern that have direct military implications for the Arab-Israeli military balance during the next five years. The focus is on developments in Arab states that could complicate Arab or Israeli military operations or affect Israel's margin of military superiority over Arab forces.

4. The central portion of the Estimate (chapter III) provides a comparative analysis of Arab (with and without Egypt) and Israeli military capabilities through 1985. The chapter details the elements that comprise the Arab and Israeli military forces and focuses on trends likely to affect their capabilities. It emphasizes those qualitative factors critical to Israel's military superiority and highlights likely trends and changes that could affect the cost and duration, if not the outcome, of Arab-Israeli hostilities during the next five years.

5. The basic text concludes (chapter IV) with a discussion of three important issues that could affect not only the military balance, but could be potentially destabilizing for the Middle East on a broad scale.

6. Because of the increasing importance of Egypt to the United States, particularly as a major recipient of US foreign military sales (FMS) credits, the military threat to Egypt is discussed in some detail in the annex. As noted in the main text, Egypt is attempting a large-scale restructuring and modernization of its armed forces. We believe that Egyptian participation in future Arab-Israeli hostilities is unlikely.



Arab states—have the potential for at least complicating and making more costly Israeli military operations in a future conflict with the Arab states. Anything that could increase the intensity and prolong the duration of combat, thereby increasing casualties and equipment losses, is of importance to assessments of the relative military capabilities of the Arabs and the Israelis.

A. Hostilities in Lebanon—A Look at the Future

9. During the next five years, Lebanon will remain an arena of Arab-Israeli confrontation and inter-Arab tensions with the risk that skirmishes, crises, and limited military confrontations will lead to expanded conflict, possibly even beyond Lebanon's borders. The inherent and continuing instability in Lebanon provides a milieu for the Syrians and Israelis, as well as Palestinians and Lebanese Christians, to interact to achieve diverse and opposing goals; actions that lead to limited hostilities need be explained by the participants only as a product of the unstable conditions in Lebanon. The instability in Lebanon is likely to continue despite any efforts to re-create a central authority capable of effectively exercising sovereignty over a major portion of the country. In turn, opportunities for conflict between the principal players will remain and may even expand.

II. DEVELOPMENTS LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE MILITARY BALANCE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

8. During the next five years, the issues addressed in this chapter will be of varying importance to the military capabilities of the principal actors in the Middle East and to the Arab-Israeli military balance. They are not discussed here in order of importance, but rather are arranged to establish transition from one to the other. Although all of these issues have the potential to impact on the military balance, either singly or in combination, they are unlikely to alter that balance; that is, Israel's margin of military superiority over the Arabs will not be diminished by them. Rather, the major importance of these developments lies in their potential to affect the military capabilities of the individual states of the region. Two of the issues—hostilities in Lebanon and turmoil in Syria—diminish Arab military capabilities. The other four developments—Palestinian operations, Iraq's growing military capabilities, Iranian military support for the Arabs, and high levels of military assistance to the

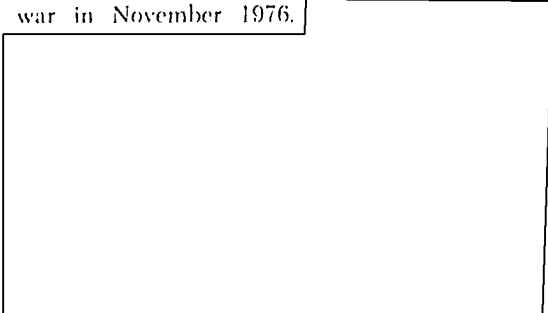
10. In this contest all four of the major participants have substantial objectives at stake. Syria, at a minimum, has sought to create a docile government in Beirut, to prevent the fragmentation of Lebanon along sectarian lines, and to secure its exposed flank along the Lebanese-Syrian border. Israel seeks to prevent Lebanon's entry into the ranks of the Arab confrontation states, avoid extension of Israel's front with Syria along the Lebanese-Israeli border, and reduce to the extent possible the threat from Lebanon-based Palestinian terrorists. The Palestinians view Lebanon as their last major theater of action against Israel, and they are determined to maintain their position and their freedom to conduct operations against Israel. The Christians would like to perpetuate their dominant position in the state, and strongly oppose domination by Syria or a Palestinian-Sunni Muslim alliance.

11. The capabilities of the Syrians, Israelis, Palestinians, and Christians to achieve their goals vary greatly and will continue to evolve during the next five years:

— Syria has rearranged its forces in Lebanon and withdrawn a few units, but it retains enough forces in Lebanon for effective control of the

internal situation. Although the redeployments still do not enable Syria to seriously threaten Israel from Lebanon, they have resulted in a consolidation of Syria's forces and enhanced its capability there to defend against an Israeli attack, particularly one through the Biqa Valley area. Barring elimination of the instability in Lebanon, a serious deterioration in Syrian internal stability, or a Syrian decision to engage in hostilities against Israel, we anticipate that Syria will have to keep major forces in Lebanon during the next few years.

- The strength, flexibility, and operational effectiveness of Israel's military forces, in addition to the proximity of major ground forces to the Lebanon border, give Israel a variety of military tools with which to pursue its goals. These range from force posturing to the projection of multi-brigade forces into the country, as they did in March 1978.
- The Palestinians have seen their freedom of action in Lebanon restricted by a combination of Syrian and Israeli moves that have left them in control of only a small band of territory in the southern part of the country. At the same time, they have been acquiring more and heavier arms than in the past, which enhance their capabilities to conduct attacks on targets along the Israeli-Lebanese border.
- Christian military capabilities have expanded considerably since the end of the Lebanese civil war in November 1976.



12. The Syrians, Israelis, Palestinians, and Christians have all demonstrated a willingness to use force to secure their objectives in Lebanon, and they likely will continue to do so. This creates opportunities for escalating violence and hence an expanded conflict, even beyond Lebanon.

13. The ongoing struggle between Israel and the Palestinians is most likely to produce open hostilities.

Such conflict likely will produce another major Israeli ground force incursion into Lebanon—probably, but not necessarily, as the result of some serious act of Palestinian terrorism.

14. Tensions in Lebanon likely also will produce further Israeli-Syrian air clashes of the type that occurred last summer. Although both sides acted in a carefully controlled fashion, any time Israeli and Syrian forces engage each other the risk of wider conflict is present.

15. Lebanon also provides a fertile area for any of the Arab states to sponsor limited military operations against Israel. The central government does not control events in Lebanon, and military action conducted through Lebanese territory is less likely to provoke retaliation against sponsoring states than action conducted from Syria or Jordan. Lebanon thus becomes a likely arena for limited attacks on Israel or in which to provoke a crisis aimed at focusing world attention on the Arab-Israeli problem.

16. Once a crisis or fighting has begun, there is no certainty that it could be confined to Lebanon. Syrian withdrawals from and redeployments in Lebanon during early 1980, for example, led to increased Israeli-Syrian tensions on the Golan Heights and Israel's reinforcement of its units there to a level unprecedented since the 1974 disengagement agreement. That situation, stemming largely from suspicions of each other's motives, demonstrated how a crisis in Lebanon could rapidly expand to the main Israeli-Syrian front. Without prior settlement of Lebanese political issues, any further substantial Syrian military moves inside or out of Lebanon, especially if precipitous, probably would cause Israel to again increase its readiness posture and possibly even contemplate pre-emptive moves.

B. Turmoil in Syria—Implications for Syrian Military Capabilities

17. In addition to its deployment to Lebanon, the Syrian Army's recent key role in suppressing domestic opposition to the government of President Assad raises important questions about its military capabilities vis-a-vis Israel. Syrian antiregime violence is likely to continue at varying levels of intensity and encompass more of the country, probably culminating in Assad's removal from office during the time frame of this Estimate. Such domestic turmoil would have an adverse effect on the capabilities of the military, at least

temporarily. Nonetheless, in the event of Assad's removal, any successor government would be unlikely to moderate Syrian policy toward Israel.

18. At this point, the turmoil in Syria probably has had less direct impact on its military capabilities than the deployment of about one quarter of Syria's combat maneuver units to Lebanon. Even so, the 3rd Armored Division and most of the Special Forces—key components of Syria's ground force offensive capability—are committed to suppressing opposition in the northern part of the country and not immediately available for the Golan front. Assad probably will continue to deploy elements of these and other military units to domestic trouble spots as he attempts to remain in power.

19. If current discontent in Syria flares into widespread violence, an expanded Army involvement would be likely. Any protracted and extensive Army deployments for internal security duties will degrade unit training, morale, and combat readiness, thereby weakening military capabilities relative to Israel. Moreover, if the violence spreads or if a coup is attempted, casualties and desertions will cut the strength of some maneuver units.

20. *Explanatory Analysis.* When violence-marred general strikes erupted in the northern Syrian cities of Aleppo and Hamah in March 1980, President Assad—surprised by the virulence of the Sunni opposition—ordered the Army to restore order and root out the dissidents. During the prior year, he had attempted to defuse discontent and increase popular support through a series of reforms and concessions. The blatantly cosmetic nature of these measures doomed this approach, which was also viewed by many Syrians as a sign of the regime's weakness. Efforts by the intelligence and security services to end a terrorist campaign, mounted principally by Sunni extremists, also proved largely ineffective. Faced with an increasing challenge to Alawite (an offshoot Shia sect) dominance of Syria, Assad's supporters pressed for harsher measures.

21. The harsh measures employed in Aleppo and Hamah had a temporary quieting effect, but have contributed to the further alienation of the Sunni community, which provides the majority of conscripts for the Alawite-dominated Army. Although President Assad clearly bolstered his internal position by the show of force, the Sunni extremists and other anti-regime elements were not seriously damaged and

continue in active opposition. A continuing cycle of terrorism followed by repression, therefore, may be what ultimately jeopardizes the Assad regime.

22. Instances of Alawite brutality and excesses, magnified by the Syrian rumor mill, almost certainly have increased disaffection and morale problems for Sunni officers and enlisted personnel. We do not believe, however, that these have yet begun to polarize the military establishment. Despite reports of wholesale desertions in April and clashes between Alawite and Sunni personnel, there is little evidence substantiating many of the allegations of sectarian unrest in the military.

23. Even if the Sunni military wished to act, a number of factors militate against a coup attempt, unless there were substantial Alawite cooperation. Key command and intelligence positions are retained by Alawites and, to a lesser degree, members of other minorities whose fortunes are now closely tied to the Alawites. For any unauthorized military activity to escape notice within the chain of command would be highly unlikely. Moreover, the pervasive nature of military intelligence and the other security organizations reduces the likelihood that an antiregime movement in the Army could grow into a threat before being discovered.

24. If a threat to Assad develops within the military, it is more likely to be led by Alawites. Although the Alawites are comprised of several antagonistic factions, they realize that their privileged position depends on maintaining Alawite control of Syria. They would balance any desire to remove Assad against the risk that a coup attempt could prove uncontrollable and ultimately lead to an end of Alawite dominance. Nonetheless, they probably would act if they judged that Assad's continuation in power was likely to result in a serious sectarian split leading to a bloody civil war.

25. The unwieldy military chain of command, in which no commander exercises direct control over a sizable portion of the combat forces, also militates against a coup attempt. Moreover, any unit in revolt would have to contend with the regime's elite forces: the division-size Defense Companies commanded by Assad's brother, an antitank regiment led by his nephew, and the five Special Forces regiments. These well-armed units, manned principally by Alawites or other minorities, are personally loyal to Assad and directly controlled by close associates.

C. The Palestinians as a Military Force

26. The Palestinians continue to stage terrorist and guerrilla operations against Israel and Israeli-supported elements in Lebanon, but have little capability to mount forceful, coordinated military operations in support of the Arab states in a conflict with Israel. The Palestinians are not a unified military force, but a composite of approximately 30,000 regular troops and commando/militia forces under the control of Fatah, Syria, and various small Palestinian factions (for details see annex C in volume I of this NIE). Fatah, the largest Palestinian military force, has a strength of at least 19,000 men, including the Fatah branch of the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA). Moreover, Fatah is the only Palestinian organization that has even a limited air and naval capability. Syrian surrogate forces in Lebanon—the Syrian branch of the PLA and Sa'iqā—total some 5,000 men. The combined military forces of other Palestinian groups that make up the resistance movement number approximately 6,000.

27. Fatah and the Syrian PLA are by far the best equipped of all Palestinian forces. Their inventory of weapons includes T-34 and probably T-55 tanks, 130-mm field guns, 155-mm howitzers, BM-21 multiple rocket launchers, ZU-23/2 and SA-7 air defense weapons, and various antitank weapons such as the Sagger and Cobra.

28. During the next five years the Palestinians hope to improve their military capabilities by integrating their forces under a single military command, by sending more personnel abroad for specialized training on newer weapons, and by upgrading their arsenal with more modern arms. The serious factionalism that exists between the Palestinian groups, however, makes it improbable that their military forces can be brought under a unified command during the next several years. Without such a command, as well as an appreciable increase in the size of their forces, the Palestinians are unlikely to be able to mount a major coordinated military operation against Israel. New weapons, plus improvements in training, however, could make it more costly for Israel to counter the Palestinian threat.

29. In the event of Arab-Israeli hostilities Palestinian units, at best, might stage diversionary or harassing operations against Israel, but these undoubtedly would elicit harsh responses and have little or no impact on Israel's ability to defeat the Arabs. A Syrian-supported Palestinian attack against Israel could widen hostilities, cause Israel to divert forces to southern Lebanon, inflict higher casualties on the Israelis, and complicate

Israel's prosecution of its war effort, but could not diminish Israel's capabilities sufficiently to improve more than marginally the military position of the principal Arab states.

D. Iraq's Increasing Military Capabilities

30. Development of the military forces of the principal Arab states is uneven. In contrast to the slow and troubled efforts of Syria's armed forces, Iraq's military forces have been embarked on an expansion and modernization program unmatched in the Arab world. Iraqi military capabilities will continue to expand during the next five years. But even now, if political and military considerations at home limited Iraq's support of future Arab hostilities against Israel to an expeditionary force no larger than the three divisions they attempted to send to Syria in 1973, such a force probably would be a more capable one—with better trained troops employing larger numbers of more advanced weapons with greater capabilities. Nonetheless, unlike Syrian forces, the Iraqi forces saw only limited combat in the 1973 war—in which they performed poorly—and have not had the experience of intermittent hostilities in Lebanon and military tensions on the Golan Heights. Hence, Iraq's soldiers, commanders, and force improvements remain untested in major conventional operations. Despite this, improvements in Iraq's military capabilities over those in 1973 could, in a future Arab-Israeli conflict, complicate and make more costly Israeli military operations.

31. Although Iraq is attempting to diversify its sources of arms, it will continue to depend on the USSR for most of its military systems, at least over the next five years. Moreover, Iraq will likely remain a recipient of new models of Soviet equipment. Moscow's control of spare parts and its refusal to export weapons with all of their sophisticated subsystems, however, has made Baghdad wary of continued reliance on a sole source of arms. Baghdad, therefore, is trying to reduce its dependence gradually so as not to alienate Moscow.

32. The Iraqi Army will experience substantial growth over the next five years, albeit probably at a slower pace than during the 1974-78 period, when the Army doubled its size. Although a potential 1985 Iraqi expeditionary force would have a tank inventory about the same size as one that might be deployed today, about half of the tanks in 1985 could be T-72s. (The T-72 tank exported by the USSR to Iraq offers

substantial advances in armor protection, armament, and mobility over older Soviet-supplied tanks.) Similarly, the number of APCs could be up to 20 percent larger in 1985, with 60 percent likely to be BMPs—double the number that could be deployed in 1980. By 1985, only a 15-percent growth in artillery is probable for the potential expeditionary force; but about 40 percent of it would be self-propelled artillery, which comprises some 25 percent at present. Finally, addition of the mobile SA-9 surface-to-air missile system will increase air defense protection for the armored units. These weapon systems will give the evolving Iraqi armored divisions a qualitative increase in offensive and defensive capabilities.

33. The Iraqi Air Force contribution to any hostilities with Israel would be about the same in 1985 as now, but more significant than in 1973 because Iraq could dispatch larger numbers of newer model aircraft. These aircraft can carry significantly larger ordnance loads for greater distances than the variants Iraq had in 1973, and could conceivably operate from bases in western Iraq. In conjunction with its greater capacity to project air power, Iraq has improved its air defense environment. It has established a network of radars, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), antiaircraft artillery, ground-based electronic countermeasures (ECM), and electronic support measures (ESM) equipment to defend key installations and facilities as well as lines of communication.

34. Despite the improvements, significant problems will continue to constrain the effective employment of the Iraqi ground and air forces against Israel. Primary limitations include: inadequate logistic support capability, particularly for operations outside the country; shortages of skilled technical personnel; and limited capability to integrate sophisticated weaponry. Although some improvements have been made, but not tested in combat, and others are probable, most of these deficiencies will not be significantly mitigated within the time frame of this Estimate. Moreover, any Iraqi expeditionary force also would face external difficulties which could complicate deployment of forces opposite Israel:

- Probable detection by Israel of any Iraqi repositioning of forces in Syria or Jordan, with the consequent possibility of Israeli military action.
- Vulnerability of Iraq's forces to Israeli interdiction while en route to the Golan Heights-Jordan Valley front.

— Difficulty in planning and coordinating combined operations with the Syrian and Jordanian armed forces.

35. The Iranian revolution has been a major disruptive influence in the area and also will have an impact on Iraq's potential commitment of forces to the Golan Heights. The lack of an effective military force in the Kurdish region of Iran has allowed the Kurds to resume guerrilla operations, which have rekindled Kurdish activity in Iraq.

36. A further complicating factor is the unrest encouraged by the Iranian revolution among the Shia Muslim majority in Iraq. Although the situation is not serious now, it remains potentially explosive, and the spillover of Shia activity from Iran into Iraq has posed problems for the Sunni minority that controls the Baghdad government.

37. If the Kurdish or Shia situations, either separately or at the same time, deteriorated significantly, Iraq would likely have fewer military forces available to send to the Golan Heights in the event of Arab-Israeli hostilities (see chapter III for detailed discussion of Iraq's expeditionary forces).

E. Iran as a Contributor to the Arabs' Military Forces

38. Although Iran continues to encourage dissident populations in Iraq and both countries are extremely suspicious of each other, some of the new Iranian leaders have made noises about providing arms and financial assistance to the Arab states in their fight against Israel. Any Iranian assistance, however, is likely to prove less consequential to the Arabs and to their capabilities vis-a-vis Israel than the yet uncertain resolution of the basic differences that have developed between Iran and Iraq. If Iran's actions pose only a limited threat to Iraq, Baghdad would be able to contribute larger expeditionary forces against Israel in a future conflict than if Iran's actions exacerbate hostilities between itself and the Iraqis.

39. Iranian military participation in an Arab-Israeli conflict would be minimal through the mid-1980s. A decision to send troops would depend on the desires of the political leadership rather than on the condition of the armed forces, but the poor readiness of their equipment as well as logistic constraints would limit a contribution to about a brigade-size force of light infantry troops.

40. *Explanatory Analysis.* Since mid-1979, the ability of the Iranian armed forces to accomplish military missions has been seriously degraded. The size of the forces has dropped from nearly 450,000 in early 1979 to less than 250,000 now. The large inventories of technologically sophisticated equipment are being degraded through poor maintenance and a lack of spare parts. Ammunition stocks also are being consumed in combat operations against Kurdish insurgents.

41. The Iranian armed forces are being reorganized and made weaker, in part because of their past support for the Shah; their identification with Western, especially US, elements; and the threat that a strong military might pose to the new government. "Islamification" of the regular forces—Army, Air Force, and Navy—has been accomplished by establishing councils to review orders of the commanders prior to implementation. The council members consist of enlisted personnel, junior officers, and clerics. This interference would further hinder the effectiveness of any Iranian effort to commit troops in support of the Arabs.

42. To return the armed forces to their prerevolutionary level of effectiveness, the Iranian regime would have to reverse decisions that have reduced the size of the forces, and would have to improve training and purchase repair parts, ammunition, and major equipment. Iran also would require an infusion of foreign technical assistance to recondition many of its principal weapon systems. Although Western equipment could be replaced by Soviet items, near-term Iranian military capabilities would be little altered by such purchases because of the leadtime required for the delivery of and training on those items not in the current inventory. Even if relations with the United States were soon stabilized, it probably would take two to three years to reequip the Iranian forces.

43. The 292,000-man Army under the Shah has now declined to about 150,000. Operational readiness has declined markedly—for tanks and APCs probably a decline of 50 to 70 percent, and 30 to 50 percent for the helicopter forces. Of all the Iranian forces, the Army has been the hardest hit by desertions, poor morale, lack of leadership, and poor discipline. In the near term, the decline is unlikely to be reversed, although the regime is aware of the Army's military weakness and is seeking spare parts and equipment. Even with new equipment and adequate repairs, the logistic problems of moving armor divisions would likely preclude their commitment to any future Arab-

Israeli conflict. The most likely commitment would come from the infantry divisions, but the size of the force would be constrained primarily by logistic considerations and its effectiveness limited by a lack of experience in conventional warfare.

44. Since the revolution, Air Force strength has dropped from slightly more than 130,000 to probably less than 75,000. Although many Iranian pilots are well trained and capable, their number has been drastically reduced by purges. Additionally, the personnel system is in chaos because of internal rifts and open confrontations between officers and NCOs, pilots and technicians, and commanders and religious committees. Overall fighter availability for combat operations is probably about 50 percent for the F-4s and F-5s and much less for the F-14 fighters.

45. The Air Force relied totally on US support, and it is unlikely that significant improvements in the near term could be made without some rapprochement with the United States. Although the purchase of non-US fighters is possible, they would likely be regarded by Iranian pilots as inferior to US equipment, and training and logistic problems would likely preclude their commitment outside Iran during the time frame of this Estimate. Iranian C-130s, however, could provide airlift capability for Army contributions to an Arab-Israeli conflict.

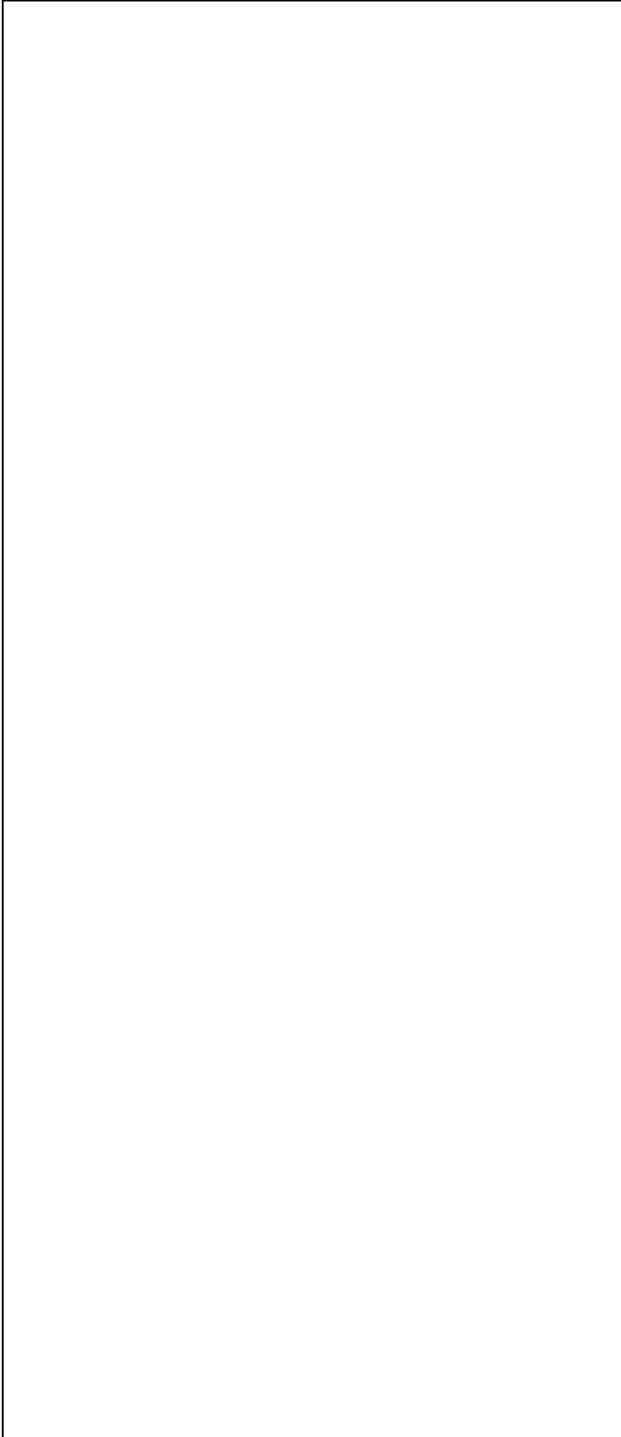
46. Any Iranian commitment of air defense equipment to an Arab-Israeli conflict probably would include only SA-7 platoons and air defense gun systems. The size and number of these forces would be minimal, however, and they likely would be an integral part of any Army unit sent.

47. The Navy's capabilities have been greatly reduced since the revolution. Its strength has dropped from 32,000 to around 20,000, and its ships suffer from lack of spare parts and inadequate maintenance. The service is currently capable of only limited coastal patrol functions and has no quick-reaction, open-ocean combat capability.

F. Military Assistance to Israel and the Arab States

48. Iran and Egypt are both examples of the degradation that can occur in military capabilities of countries dependent on foreign sources of arms when ties with major arms suppliers are severed. Foreign military assistance is critical to the armed forces of Israel

and the Arab states. None of these countries is capable of equipping its own military forces, although Israel makes a more substantial contribution toward that end than do any of the Arab states.



Syria

53. The USSR is likely to remain the source of nearly all of Syria's primary weapons through the mid-1980s. Moscow and Damascus apparently have agreed to a major new arms contract that promises deliveries of additional combat aircraft, armored vehicles, air defense weaponry, and other items of military hardware during the term of this Estimate. Some 400 additional T-72 tanks; perhaps 100 advanced aircraft (MIG-25s, MIG-23s, MIG-27s, and SU 20/22s); several hundred APCs, surface-to-air missiles, and possibly self-propelled artillery pieces are likely to be delivered before the end of 1985.

54. The increase in the number and quality of weapons delivered, however, will not be as dramatic during the next five years as it was during the preceding five. The ground and air force expansion programs that followed the 1973 war are reaching a plateau. Moreover, the only new combat aircraft likely to be introduced into Syria in the next five years is the MIG-27. No other new weapon systems are known to be subjects of discussion between Moscow and Damascus, although Syria may eventually seek other weapons such as the SA-8. Syria probably will begin receiving a new generation of antitank guided missiles, air-to-air missiles, electronic warfare subsystems, and communications equipment. Historically, the Soviets have not exported their latest versions of such equipment, and new Syrian systems are likely to remain qualitatively no better than the same types of systems fielded by Israel.

Jordan

55. During the time frame of this Estimate, Jordan probably will move further away from its close arms-supply relationship with the United States and receive major new weapon systems from France, Great Britain, and the USSR. King Hussein's interest in establishing new political relationships with Western Europe, strains in US-Jordanian relations caused by Amman's frustration over US Middle East policies, and the financial flexibility afforded by subsidies resulting from the Baghdad summit conference in November 1978 have combined to produce a marked change in the source of Jordan's arms purchases.

56. Earlier this year, the Jordanians decided to make their first purchase of Soviet weaponry. Details have not been worked out, but the purchase apparently will consist of ZSU-23/4 self-propelled antiaircraft artillery systems and possibly surface-to-air missiles.

The Jordanians have considered buying Soviet arms off and on since 1976 but had heretofore been reluctant to deal with Moscow. Jordanian forces will still be heavily dependent on US equipment and support. Because of lengthy training requirements and delivery schedules, non-US equipment will not enhance Jordanian capabilities appreciably before 1985.

Iraq

57. Barring an unexpected deterioration in relations, we expect the Soviet Union to remain Iraq's major supplier of military equipment through the mid-1980s, although its share of the Iraqi arms market will decrease. Iraq has purchased more than \$3 billion in Western arms since 1974, when Baghdad became concerned about its nearly total dependence on the Warsaw Pact states for advanced weapon systems, ordnance, and training. Most recently, it placed an order for warships with Italy early this year. Although purchases from the West have been primarily support equipment that complements Soviet and East European weapons, several major weapon systems also have been ordered. Nevertheless, Soviet willingness to sell advanced equipment and make quick deliveries without political strings likely will temper Baghdad's diversification efforts.

Egypt

58. Despite Egypt's loss of Arab funding, we still expect it to make progress, albeit slow, in modernizing its military forces during the next five years. Major factors affecting that progress will be delays in securing the necessary financing to purchase needed equipment, the long leadtimes required for delivery of new weapons, and lengthy training requirements. Whatever progress is made during the time frame of this Estimate, however, will not reverse the deterioration in Egypt's overall military position relative to that of Israel.

59. Egypt expects the West, especially the United States, to assume a large part of the lost Arab funding for equipment purchases and coproduction programs. To date, the United States has approved more than \$2.6 billion in foreign military sales credits for use by Egypt through 1982, but substantially greater funds are required before meaningful progress will be made in the modernization of the armed forces. Major US weapon systems likely to be acquired over the next five years include at least 40 F-16 fighters, possibly 50 F-5 interceptors, 300 M-60 tanks, 1,300 M-113 APCs, and 24 Improved-HAWK air defense batteries. More-

over, if current funding problems can be worked out, France could provide additional Mirage fighter aircraft and as many as 100 combat-capable Alpha Jet trainers. Great Britain still wants to sell Egypt helicopters. Egypt's military relationships with Asian countries also are likely to expand, particularly with China and North Korea.

Libya

60. The heavy flow of Soviet arms deliveries is continuing in 1980, and we anticipate that the bulk of Libya's outstanding orders will arrive this year. Although Colonel Qadhafi has purchased some military equipment (for example, fighter aircraft) and related services from the West, the USSR will remain the primary supplier of major weapon systems because it is willing to sell and able to deliver quickly large quantities of advanced weaponry. North Korea is an important source of rocket launchers, artillery, and ordnance.

Saudi Arabia

61. Saudi Arabia's principal source of military equipment continues to be the United States, nearly \$6 billion in arms purchases in 1979. Its largest non-US arms contract last year was with France—\$950 million for the Shahine surface-to-air missile system.

62. Outstanding Saudi equipment orders include 220 TOW antitank vehicles, 60 F-15 fighters, and as many as six battalions of the Improved-HAWK surface-to-air missile system from the United States; at least 50 AMX-30 tanks from France; and 15 small patrol boats from West Germany. Chronic shortages of Saudi technical expertise and skilled manpower will necessitate continued large-scale support by Western technicians to maintain Saudi Arabia's arsenal of advanced weapon systems.

III. PROJECTION OF THE MILITARY BALANCE THROUGH 1985

A. Trends

63. We do not anticipate substantial changes during the next five years in the current force trends in Israel and the Arab states. We estimate that both sides will improve the operational effectiveness of their forces but Arab gains will not be sufficient to offset overall improvements in Israel's forces, that trainable and skilled manpower will remain scarce, that weapons technology will become more complex and require

increased operating or maintenance skills, and that weapons inventories will continue to grow but at a slower pace than in the period since the 1973 war.

64. Progress will be uneven among the Arab states, ranging from modest upgrading of Egypt's inventories to significant growth in the quantity and probably the quality of the forces in Iraq, and to a lesser extent in Syria and Jordan, depending on the continued availability of subsidies resulting primarily from the Baghdad conference fund. Both Israeli and Arab forces, however, will be hard pressed to absorb greatly increased quantities of weapons through 1985, because of shortages of trainable and skilled manpower. Moreover, the impact of advanced weapons acquisition by the Arabs will be lessened by their continued inability to optimize the operation and tactical employment of the new weapon systems, and by Israeli countermeasures and development and acquisition of comparable or better weapons. Nevertheless, Arab gains in any of these categories will be of concern to Israel and open the possibility that future hostilities would be more intense, with high casualties and equipment losses for all participants.

Operational Effectiveness

65. The effectiveness of a military organization is the product of many factors, among the most important being the quality of its leadership and the motivation and skill of its basic manpower. Any trends which affect such intangible factors hold potential significance for the quality of the Arab and particularly Israeli armed forces over the next five years.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

In the face of these problems, the development of effective, professional military forces will be difficult, and even more so as long as the military remains the underpinning and source of power for the political regimes in the Arab countries.

74. We estimate that the Arab states (including Egypt) will make some progress in dealing with these problems during the next five years. By the end of 1985 Arab soldiers as a group will be better educated, more exposed to modern technology, and probably better trained than they now are.

[Redacted]

73. *Arab States.* A key factor affecting the military balance in the Middle East over the next five years will be the Arabs' (including Egypt's) ability to absorb, maintain, and effectively use the weapons in their inventories. The Arab military position relative to Israel will not be enhanced unless the Arabs are able to improve significantly in this respect. To do this the Arab states would have to make a large-scale, long-term commitment to overcome numerous problems, such as the following:

[Redacted]

76. In the case of Egypt, not only is it dealing with most of the above factors, it also will be trying to rebuild its military forces over the next five years, and their operational effectiveness will be further constrained by the relative obsolescence of and lack of

adequate maintenance for large portions of some equipment inventories, particularly the air and air defense forces. Even significant improvements in the operational effectiveness of Egypt's ground forces will be difficult because of aging inventories and few new replacement systems.

77. Greater operational effectiveness in the Arab forces (including Egypt's) also will be as much hindered as helped by the likely increase in their dependence on foreign military advisers and technicians. In addition to the continuing Soviet advisory effort, growing numbers of Western advisers will be stationed in Arab countries as new Western military equipment is received in the 1980s. Withdrawal of this assistance during hostilities, a probability in the case of Western advisers, would have a significant adverse impact on the military capabilities of some Arab states, especially if the conflict were to last more than a few days. In the case of the Soviet Union and the East European countries, however, withdrawal would be problematic and depend on the circumstances of the outbreak of hostilities and the status of the relationship between suppliers and clients. If Soviet or East European advisers were to participate, Arab operational capabilities would be maintained, particularly in air defense.

78. In view of the problems they face, Arab military forces are likely to have only marginal improvement in the next five years in their ability to manage and execute fast-moving, offensive warfare. As a result, they probably will continue to emphasize in training and planning what they do best—set-piece offensive operations and defense from static positions. A defensive posture coupled with increases in the lethality of some new weapon systems may enable the Arabs to make at least Israeli ground offensives in future hostilities more costly than in past wars.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

standing army without increasing the term of service or altering other features of its conscription procedures.

[REDACTED]

86. *Arab States.*

[REDACTED]

90. Except for Egypt, Iraq has the largest pool of males of military age, 3 million between the ages of 15 and 49. Although its program to reduce illiteracy is meeting with some success, educated and skilled manpower will remain in short supply during the next five years. Nonetheless, Iraq's relatively large population and further reductions in illiteracy will permit the continued expansion of the Iraqi military forces.

87. The key Arab states of Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt all have skilled manpower shortages more acute than Israel's, which will worsen as they add more sophisticated equipment to their inventories.

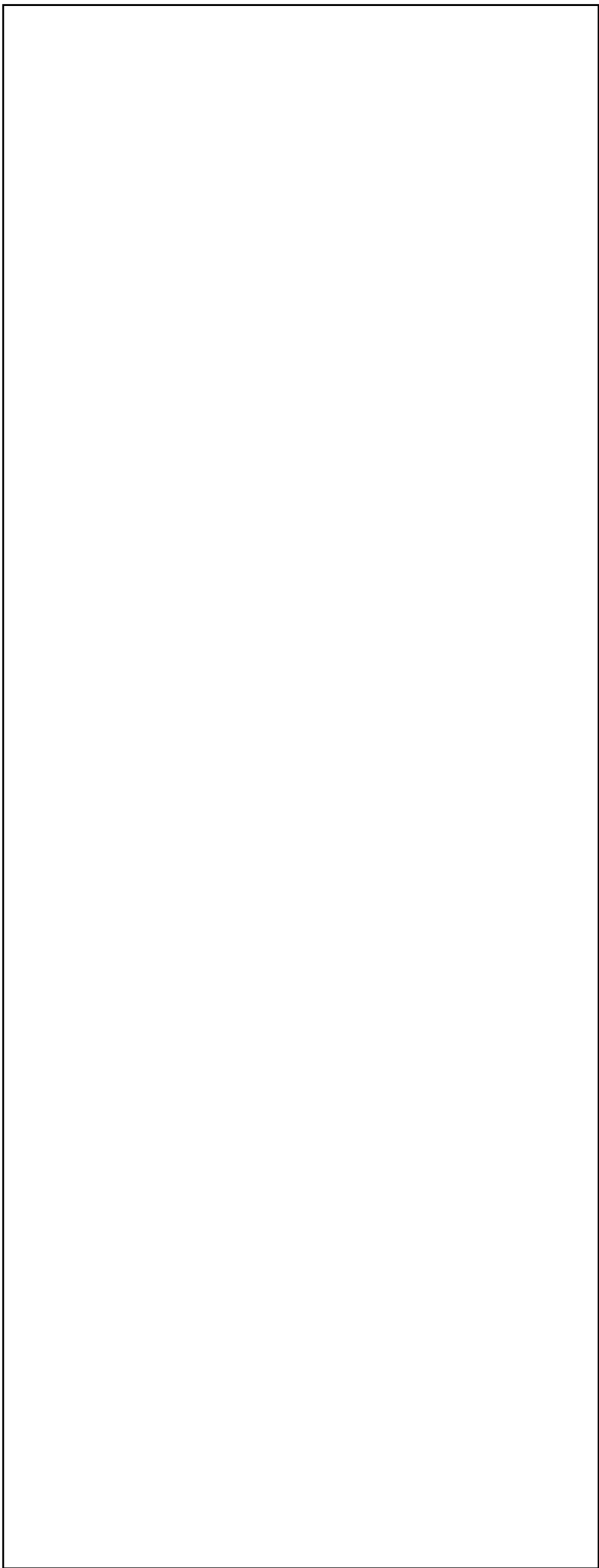
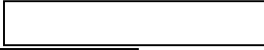
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91. Egypt's large population can provide to the armed forces a substantial supply of unskilled labor, despite low percentages of literate and physically fit males. Shortages of skilled personnel will be an obstacle to upgrading military capabilities. The armed forces have difficulty retaining skilled servicemen because of higher paying jobs in the Egyptian private sector and particularly in other Arab states.

88. Syria has a small population relative to Egypt and Iraq and could not greatly expand the size of its

92. The extent to which the Arab states can effectively use new, advanced weapons technology or even greatly increased quantities of standard weapons will be circumscribed by continued shortages of trained manpower and technical infrastructure through 1985.

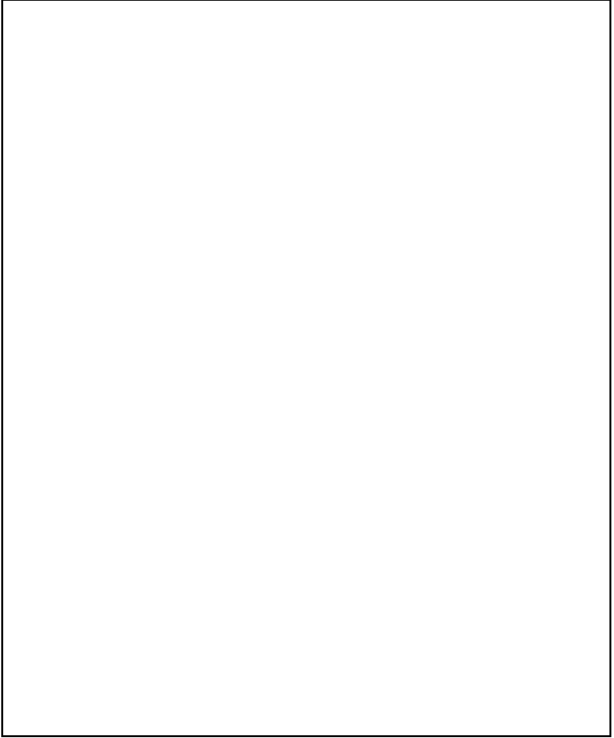
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Weapons Technology

93. Arms acquisition in the Middle East has been and will continue to be characterized by a rush for sophisticated weapons incorporating the most advanced technology. These new weapon systems bring not only the promise of enhanced military capabilities, but also requirements for new maintenance and operating skills, infrastructure, and frequently changes in tactics and doctrine. Although just the greater accuracy and lethality of some of the new weapon systems could increase aggregate firepower, realizing the full capabilities and potential of the new systems will depend on the development of innovative training exercises and tactics and on effective maintenance capabilities. These skills require high levels of competence, are sometimes difficult to develop, and take longer to acquire than merely the stockpiles of the new technologically advanced weapons.

94. The overall technology balance probably will remain in Israel's favor during the next five years, and,



[REDACTED]

99. Inherent system limitations, often ignored by a country eager to acquire high-visibility advanced weapons, can reduce the impact of new advanced technology. For example, the speed of the MIG-25 is offset to some extent by its poor low-level performance and maneuvering capability against Israeli fighter aircraft, particularly the F-15. The T-72 tank carries a relatively small ammunition load, dictating careful selection of shell type mixture prior to combat. Protracted tank battles could cause the T-72 to run out of ammunition long before Israel's tanks, necessitating the withdrawal of the T-72 for reload or requiring battlefield resupply, at which Arab logistic forces do not excel. Finally, as previously noted, even when advanced Soviet weapons are released for export, they often are not equipped with all of the sophisticated subsystems of domestic models. The absence of laser rangefinding equipment on the T-72, for example, has forced the Arabs to rely on optical systems that lack comparable accuracy and do not allow them to take full advantage of the long ranges possible with the T-72's gun.

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101. New equipment often brings new logistic and support requirements. For example, Syrian acquisition of a large number of BM-21 multiple rocket launchers generated a requirement for additional trucks and drivers to transport the ammunition; yet among Syria's most acute shortages are trucks and personnel qualified to drive them. Larger Arab military forces will exacerbate such shortages and place a greater burden on Arab capabilities for logistic support.

102. Almost without exception the new advanced technology systems cost significantly more to purchase than the equipment meant to be replaced. Although oil wealth makes the cost of new weapons manageable for Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Libya, Syria and Jordan must rely on the flow of Arab subsidies and often find cost a severe constraint. Israel and Egypt probably are more constrained by budget and financial assistance limitations than any of the major Arab states.

103. Because of the high cost and increased capabilities of the new equipment, the less wealthy countries often purchase fewer new units than the quantity of older equipment to be replaced, with the expectation that any inventory reductions will be compensated for by the greater capabilities of the new weapons. Employment of the new systems to maximum advantage, however, often takes longer than expected to achieve. Many Arab countries try to speed up this process by transferring their most qualified personnel to the new equipment, sometimes degrading the capabilities of their older weapons and reducing system capabilities, at least temporarily.

104. If Egypt were to participate in a future Arab-Israeli conflict, its important contributions would not be advanced technology weapons. During most of the next five years, its chief military assets will continue to be the size of its forces and its ability to open a second front against Israel. Toward the end of the time frame of this Estimate, however, Egypt will have acquired larger quantities of new weapons and could bring to a conflict more technologically advanced equipment, which could complicate Israeli efforts to wage a two-front war.

Inventories of Key Weapons

105. The Arabs' principal advantage over Israel has been their quantities of weapons. Israel has needed advantages in operational effectiveness, manpower quality, and weapons technology to offset this Arab advantage. If Egypt does not participate in a future Arab-Israeli conflict, however, the Arabs' superiority in quantities of weapons will be substantially reduced.

106. The Arabs cannot absorb enough weapons to compensate for the loss of Egypt's inventories. The combined forces of Syria, Jordan, and the expeditionary forces give the Arabs on Israel's eastern front less than a 2-to-1 advantage in combat units and all major categories of equipment, except artillery and SAM batteries (see table 1). This margin probably could not

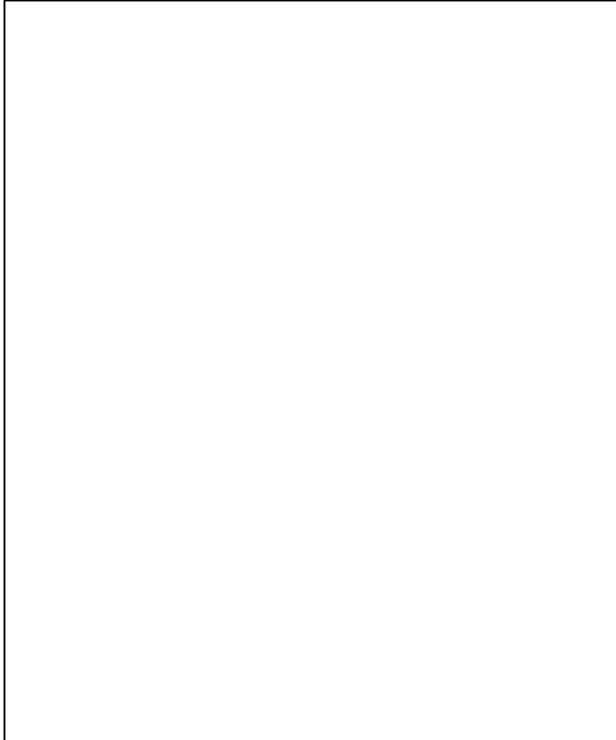
Table 1

Ratios of Arab-Israeli Equipment and Units,
With and Without Egypt, 1973, 1980, 1985

	1973			1980			1985		
	With Egypt	With Egypt	Without Egypt*	With Egypt	With Egypt	Without Egypt*	With Egypt	Without Egypt*	
Tanks	2.4:1	2.5:1	1.8:1	2.1:1	2.1:1	1.5:1	2.1:1	1.5:1	
APCs	1.4:1	0.9:1	0.5:1	1.0:1	1.0:1	0.6:1	1.0:1	0.6:1	
Artillery	4.6:1	4.4:1	2.7:1	4.0:1	4.0:1	2.3:1	4.0:1	2.3:1	
Combat aircraft	3.1:1	2.4:1	1.4:1	2.5:1	2.5:1	1.5:1	2.5:1	1.5:1	
SAM batteries/battalions	12.1:1	11.8:1	5.2:1	12.6:1	12.6:1	8.5:1	12.6:1	8.5:1	
Combat maneuver brigades	2.4:1	2.1:1	1.0:1	2.3:1	2.3:1	1.2:1	2.3:1	1.2:1	

* These ratios include those forces—probably two divisions—Israel likely would keep on its Sinai front in the event of a one-front war with the Arabs on the Golan Heights. Some of those forces, however, would be available for the Golan front in the event Israel needed them. The ratios also include Arab equipment that may be inoperable and in storage.

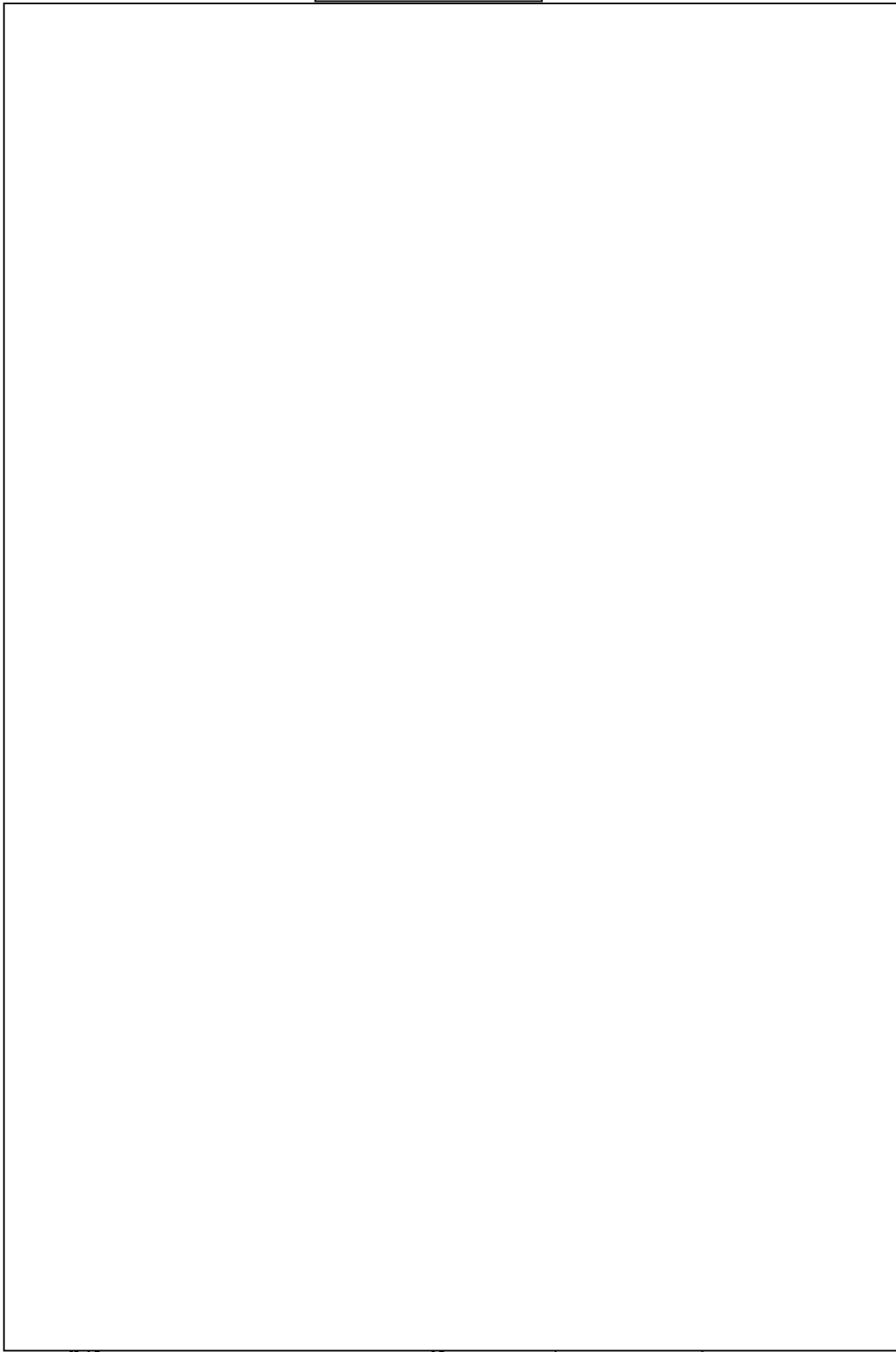
be decisive in view of the fact that in the 1973 war Israel overcame not only an Arab surprise attack on two fronts but Arab quantitative advantages of 3 to 1 in combat aircraft, 2.4 to 1 in tanks, and 2.4 to 1 in combat units. Even if Egypt were to join fully in new offensive operations against Israel, the Arabs still would have now and over the next five years an overall quantitative advantage against Israel no better than they did in 1973.



111. *Syria*. Although the Syrian Air Force is likely to receive additional fighter aircraft, such as the SU-20/22, MIG-23, and MIG-25, retirement of some older MIG-17s and SU-7s will keep the overall inventory of combat aircraft at about the current level. Syria is expected to expand its air defense system by about 40 SAM battalions to increase the depth of coverage around already defended targets as well as to bring additional areas within the SAM defense network.

112. Damascus could form the equivalent of an additional armored division, although major emphasis

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on expansion of the ground forces is not expected until the mid-1980s. Modernization of tank inventories will continue with the acquisition of additional T-62s and T-72s. Antitank forces also will be expanded with delivery of additional antitank helicopters, the addition of new antitank regiments, and the acquisition of more second-generation antitank guided missiles. In-

fantry units will be mechanized and armored division artillery units will be self-propelled. Syria's potential in electronic warfare has improved substantially since the 1973 war with receipt of large quantities of Soviet and Western electronic warfare equipment. Future emphasis will be on developing tactical doctrine and unit proficiency.

113. Some improvements in ground tactical command and control equipment and facilities probably will be accomplished. Expansion of command and control elements in infantry and artillery units may follow. Syria also will attempt to improve its air defense command and control through the acquisition of a computer-based system, possibly from France, as well as by the hardening of its facilities.

114. The major constraints on Syria's force expansion and modernization will continue to be its dependence on Soviet weapons supply, its limited financial resources, its shortage of skilled military manpower, and the continued drain on its resources from its involvement in Lebanon. Syria has few alternatives to Soviet arms because of its own limited financial resources. Although Syria's relations with the Soviet Union are still close, the USSR has shown reluctance to satisfy all Syrian requests for equipment and assistance, particularly for new advanced technology weapons. The availability on a regular basis of funds from the oil-rich Arab states would facilitate Syrian equipment acquisition, however, and be a major determinant of the pace of Syria's force modernization.

115. By 1985 Syria probably will have achieved most of its equipment modernization goals, but little significant expansion of the existing force structure is likely, except for the air defense forces. None of Syria's modest efforts to upgrade its forces, however, is likely to improve its military position relative to Israel over the next five years.

116. *Jordan.* Although the upgrading and expansion of Jordan's armed forces likely will be slow, some improvements will occur. Over the next five years, Jordan plans to continue to upgrade its existing Army units through the acquisition of more and more modern tanks and through the conversion of additional artillery units from towed to self-propelled equipment. At the same time it will improve its Air Force with the introduction of the Mirage F-1 and additional F-5E fighter aircraft and completion of new airbases. The expansion of its air defense forces (the doubling of its number of I-HAWK surface-to-air missile batteries and the acquisition of the mobile Crotale SAMs) will be the improvement of most significance in the enhancement of Jordan's overall military capabilities.

117. Financial and skilled manpower constraints will continue to cause problems in achieving the desired state of readiness for the expanding air defense system. To achieve maximum benefit from this system, Jordan will have to integrate its air defense

network with those of Syria, Saudi Arabia, or Iraq. Such close cooperation will likely be prevented by political and technical obstacles.

118. *Iraq.* If Iraq continues to expand and modernize its forces at the current pace, it may be able to contribute a larger and qualitatively better expeditionary force in 1985 than it could at present. Iraq now is capable of contributing three armored divisions, one mechanized division, one mountain infantry division, and 140 combat aircraft to Arab expeditionary forces in the event of hostilities with Israel. These forces, in contrast to those in 1973, would be equipped with more sophisticated Soviet and French weapons. By 1985, under ideal conditions for Iraq of minimal political turmoil at home or with Iran, effective logistic operations, little Israeli interdiction en route, and a protracted Arab-Israeli conflict, Iraq could provide a maximum of four armored divisions, one motorized infantry division, two mechanized divisions, and approximately 150 combat aircraft. A more likely contribution would be five of these divisions or fewer. In the air, Iraq could contribute not only a larger number of aircraft, but almost all of them would be newer models, such as the MIG 23, SU-20/22, MIG-21 L/N, and Mirage F-1. These aircraft carry significantly larger ordnance loads for greater distances than the variants used in 1973, and they possibly could operate from bases in western Iraq.

119. In addition to possibly increasing the size of its contribution, Iraq will attempt to improve its capability to move forces to the Jordanian and Syrian fronts, to provide more effective command and control, to support its deployed forces, and to defend its lines of communication against air attack. These factors, rather than attempts to merely increase force size, would make an Iraqi contribution to Arab expeditionary forces more significant than in the past. (See section D, chapter II, of this volume and annex B, volume I, of this NIE for detailed discussion of Iraq's military forces.)

120. *Egypt.* Egypt probably will be able to make limited improvements in its overall military capabilities over the next five years through the acquisition of new weapon systems, although little expansion of its force structure is likely to occur. Egypt's current force structure includes 52 combat maneuver brigades; about 565 combat aircraft; and some 30 naval combatants—destroyers, guided missile boats, and submarines. During the time frame of this Estimate, Egypt plans to modernize large parts of its inventories by

replacing or refurbishing older Soviet equipment (see table 3). Many replacements will come from the West, particularly the United States, and some from North Korea and China.

121. The greatest emphasis will be placed on the air and air defense forces as Egypt acquires new aircraft and SAM systems, such as F-16 fighters and I-HAWK missile systems. By 1985 Egypt plans to replace most

of its Soviet aircraft with Chinese- as well as Western-built aircraft. The overall number of fighters in the inventory will decline, however, as Soviet-built aircraft are phased out. The number of air defense battalions is likely to decline also, despite the planned acquisition of eight Crotale batteries from France, 24 I-HAWK batteries from the United States, and 10 Chinese-built SA-2 batteries.

122. The ground forces are not likely to undergo any significant expansion of their current structure, despite the acquisition of Western equipment. In the near term, the Army will gradually replace its older Soviet equipment with newer hardware, especially tanks, APCs, and artillery pieces purchased from the United States or Asian countries. (Egypt probably will continue to use some of its older equipment as military aid to certain African countries.) The Army also is improving its mobile antitank guided missile capability by using US jeeps, produced in Egypt, as launching platforms for MILANs, Swingfires, and Sagers.

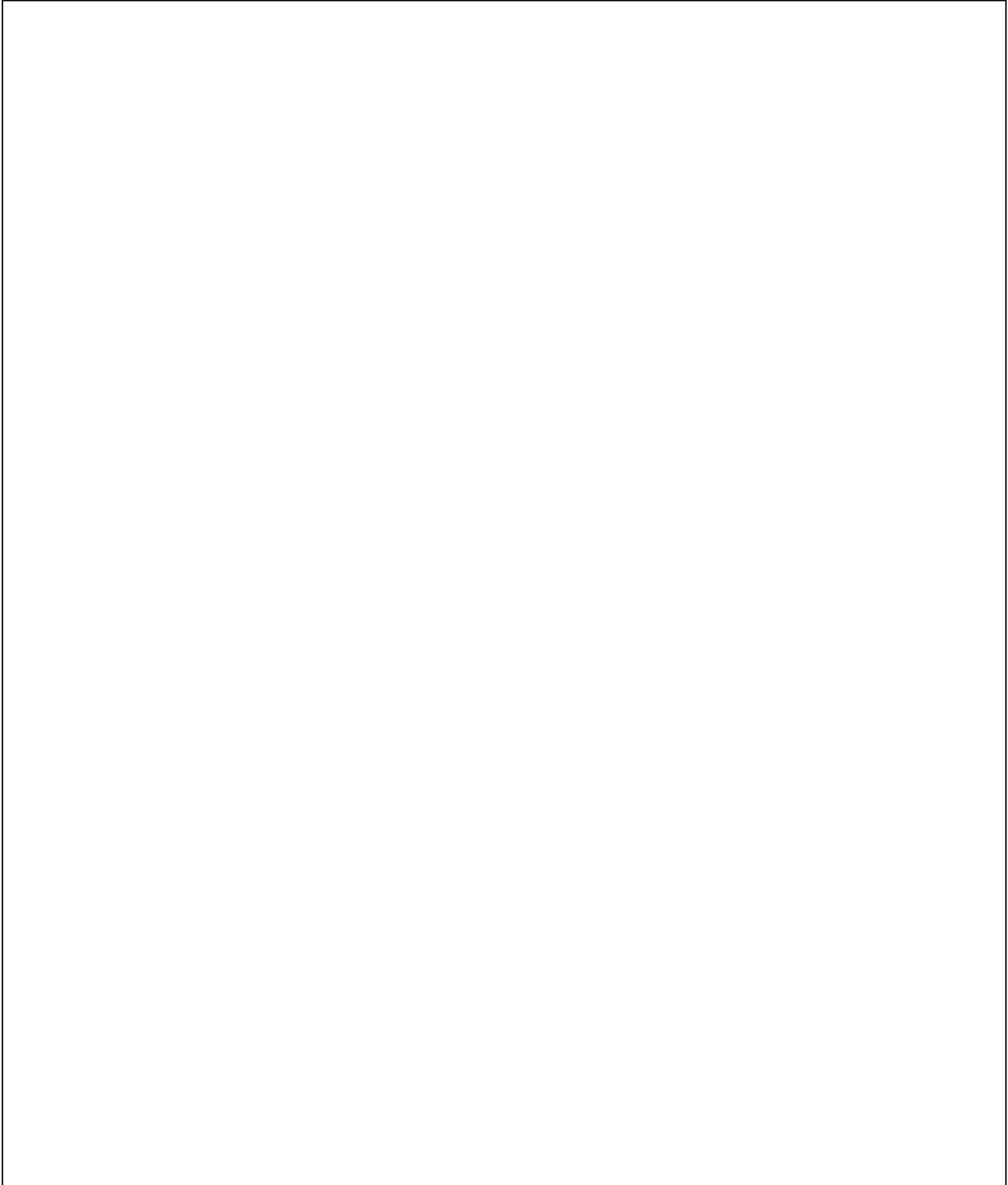
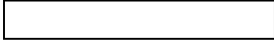
123. Naval plans call for refitting the Egyptian-built 6-October-class patrol boats with the Otomat antiship missile system and acquiring replacement surface vessels for some extremely old craft, if funds are available.

124. A major constraint on Egypt's modernization efforts has been the lack of a dependable source for military equipment. This most likely will change gradually as the new arms relationship between Egypt and the United States develops. The dissolution of the Arab Organization for Industrialization, because of Arab reaction to the Camp David accords, has hindered Egypt's plan for producing modern arms, although West European and American financial sources probably will replace some Arab funding.

125. *Other Arab States and Iran.* Through 1985, the preponderance of Arab expeditionary forces to an Arab-Israeli conflict would continue to come from Iraq. Combat aircraft would constitute the most expeditious form of force commitment from the other Arab states. Contributions by some countries would be reduced if, as we assess as likely, Egypt remained neutral during future Arab-Israeli hostilities. These more limited contributions are shown in table 4. Relaxing our basic assumption of Egyptian neutrality, we also tabulate in table 5 our estimates of Arab contributions to a two-front war.

126. In the event of Egyptian military neutrality and the absence of a Sinai front during a future

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Arab-Israeli conflict, Algeria, Libya, and Morocco would be likely to make more limited contributions to Syria or Jordan, and Sudan probably would contribute nothing. Under such conditions, these countries would be seriously constrained, or prevented from sending forces, by the distances to the front, limited transport capability, and military requirements at home. In the case of Libya, serious logistic constraints probably would make its large stockpiles of ground force equipment irrelevant, unless equipment could be prepositioned in Syria or Jordan before the initiation of hostilities. Transporting significant quantities of Libyan equipment to the front would be particularly difficult during hostilities, when movements by sea or air would be vulnerable to Israeli interdiction.

127. The only other likely Arab expeditionary forces would come from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, both of which could make limited contributions. Saudi Arabia's capability to contribute forces to a future conflict could be made more difficult by the deployment of troops and equipment to its southern border because of concern over relations with the Yemens—a concern that is likely to wax and wane throughout the period of this Estimate.

128. In addition to the Arabs, Iran might try to send forces, but any Iranian contribution would be minimal, probably at most a brigade-size force of light infantry troops. Even that would be problematic, especially through the early 1980s. (See section E, chapter II, of this volume for discussion of the constraints on Iranian participation in an Arab-Israeli conflict.)

B. Impact of Economic Trends

129. In addition to the constraints on force improvements already discussed, Israel, the Arab confrontation states, and Egypt also must operate within important economic constraints. These include budgetary and internal economic limitations, and dependence on external financial aid to equip, maintain, and operate their armed forces. (See section F, chapter II, for a discussion of military assistance to Israel and the Arab states.)

Israel

130. In contrast to its strong economic position at the start of the 1970s, Israel enters the 1980s with serious economic problems. The balance-of-payments situation is worsening; the deficit has increased by \$2 billion since 1977. The rate of inflation exceeded 100

percent in 1979, and Israel is likely to have the world's highest inflation rate this year.

131. The prognosis for the Israeli economy in the 1980s depends in large part upon implementing an austerity program. After three or four years of effective austerity, Israel could ease restrictions and enjoy moderate economic growth through the rest of the decade without serious balance-of-payments problems. If an effective austerity program is not enacted, Israel's foreign payments problems will reach crisis proportions by 1982, unless the US Government comes through with a major bailout. The political impact of inflation will be moderated by the extensive system of cost-of-living indexation, which protects incomes against inflation.

133. With US military assistance likely to increase only slightly, if at all, over the next several years and prices for military equipment rising sharply, Israel would have to increase significantly its own funds used for military imports to meet planned force expansion and improvement plans. In view of the likely scarcity of such funds, the military's plans probably will not be completed on schedule.

134. Financial considerations also will continue to affect military training. For only the second time in its history, cost considerations forced the Israeli Air Force to reduce training missions and flying time in 1979. Cuts in other training programs, such as live-fire exercises for ground forces, which consume large amounts of expensive ammunition, also have been instituted. Although training cuts generally do not affect military capabilities in the short run, the long-run impact could be substantial.

135. The absence of tensions or hostilities and the implementation of the peace agreement with Egypt are not likely to ease Israel's near-term defense burden. Despite US aid and pressure within the Israeli Cabinet to reduce government spending, Israeli defense budgets are likely to increase to cover the cost of

withdrawal from the Sinai and the construction of new facilities in Israel.

Principal Arab States

136. Several economic constraints common to the Arab confrontation states and Egypt work to inhibit improvement or expansion of their military forces. Export earnings are insufficient to cover foreign exchange requirements, and government budget deficits are supported by heavy external financing. Instrumental in providing the necessary financial underpinning for Syria and Jordan are the oil-rich Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Saudi Arabia is driven by dual concerns for encouraging Arab solidarity and for nurturing conservative political regimes in the region. Iraq also seeks Arab cooperation, but more important is its desire to be seen as the major Arab power and leader of the Arab world. The support provided by these states has been subject to considerable fluctuation, typically involving consultations between the respective states before disbursements were made. Since the Camp David accords and Baghdad's push to replace Egypt as the Arabs' leader, however, the flow of funds has been less erratic.

137. *Syria*. Despite considerable natural resources and a growing economic base, Syria remains dependent upon large foreign transfers to fund military and development programs. Recent increases in aid from Arab states under the Baghdad agreement have allowed Syria to increase its military procurement program. Over the next few years, Syria probably will be able to continue a modest arms buildup since aid flows are likely to be maintained. Although the aid will be used to enlarge inventories, low salaries still will be largely responsible for personnel retention problems as people continue to leave the Syrian armed forces for high civilian wages in the oil-rich Arab states.

138. *Jordan*. Jordan is a small country with relatively few resources, and its military capabilities are determined largely by outside funding for procurement of major pieces of equipment. Recent large aid inflows, primarily grants from Arab states under the Baghdad agreement of 1978, have enabled Jordan to increase sharply its military procurement program. Funds from the Baghdad agreement probably will cover Jordan's military equipment needs over the next few years, but absorbing and manning the military equipment will be more of a problem than financing. Continued limited domestic funds for higher military

salaries will contribute to personnel retention problems, especially retention of trained and skilled manpower.

139. *Egypt*. Egypt will be dependent on foreign funds, especially US foreign military sales credits, to finance military purchases through at least the mid-1980s. Barring a change in Egypt's leadership or a public reconciliation between Sadat and other Arab leaders, the oil-rich Arab states are unlikely to provide funds to Egypt. Although its foreign payments position is expected to continue the improvements of recent years, Egypt still will be unable to finance by itself large quantities of military imports. Furthermore, the diversion of large amounts of foreign exchange from civilian to military imports could be politically risky and contribute to social unrest in Egypt.

C. Overall Assessment of the Military Balance, 1985

140. Because we do not anticipate substantial changes during the next five years in the current force trends in Israel and the Arab states, we estimate that Israel will maintain a wide margin of military superiority over the Arab confrontation states of Syria and Jordan and the expeditionary forces of the other Arabs. Israel's advantage over the Arab states will rest primarily on the superior operational effectiveness of its forces and the quality of its manpower and weapon systems. The Israelis will continue to emphasize the supreme importance of good small-unit leadership, the value of effective command and control, and the primacy of quality over quantity. Even Egyptian participation in future Arab hostilities against Israel, coupled with Arab force improvements, still would not be sufficient to offset overall improvements in Israel's forces. Nonetheless, improvements in Arab military capabilities (even without Egypt) could in a future conflict make Israeli military operations more complex and costly in terms of casualties, equipment losses, and economic disruption.

141. Although Israel will continue to improve its military forces and be concerned about Arab force improvements, Israel's more troublesome problems during the next five years are likely to be economic and political rather than military. Israel's chief concerns will be with the troubled state of its economy; the growing unrest and political volatility in the West Bank; and the continued, or possibly increasing, attacks by Palestinian terrorists. These problems are not likely to constrain Israel militarily, but they are likely

to demand Israeli action and compete strongly with Arab military matters for Israel's attention and resources.

142. Growing unrest in the West Bank and Gaza would be particularly troublesome for the Israelis and could lead to greater use of the Army in a quasi-police role. The Israeli military government, increasingly unable to rely on Arab officials and the traditional clan leadership to maintain order and faced with the militancy of Jewish settlers increasingly prepared to take the law into their own hands, already has augmented its security forces in the region. More violence is likely to create pressure for even tougher repressive measures against the Arabs. Such measures and the use of large numbers of additional troops in the occupied territories to quell civil unrest would significantly raise the social and economic cost of the occupation to the Israelis and may eventually have more adverse impact on both training and peacetime morale of the forces involved.

143. Many factors, such as Syrian troops in Lebanon, domestic turmoil in Syria, and limited military capabilities relative to Israel, will constrain Syria and Jordan from exercising the option of large-scale military action against Israel. An outbreak of hostilities through miscalculation by the Arabs and Israelis about each other's intentions in Lebanon and on the Golan Heights probably remains a greater likelihood. Nonetheless, the Arab states still have military options, more limited without Egyptian participation, which they could implement—not with the goal of defeating Israel but with the hope of bringing international pressures to bear on Israel to make concessions on such issues as the occupied territories or Palestinian rights. Although the Arabs probably calculate that an Arab-Israeli war would not be without substantial economic costs, casualties, and equipment losses to themselves, they could reason that Israel, although militarily victorious, would bear the greater burden and damage from a war. The Arab states are aware that such a war would profoundly exacerbate Israeli economic, West Bank, and Palestinian problems.

144. Egypt is unlikely to rejoin Arab ranks and more particularly to participate in Arab hostilities against Israel during the time frame of this Estimate. Egypt's military options would be difficult and risky to effectively execute during the next five years, if only because of the increased distance of Egyptian forces from Israel, the likelihood that Israel would recapture the entire Sinai, and the adverse impact on

its military capabilities of a break with another major arms supplier, this time the United States. Maintaining and modernizing its military forces, however, preserves for Egypt the potential military option of rejoining the Arab fold. This might occur because of a change in Egyptian leadership, unsatisfactory negotiations on West Bank-Gaza autonomy, and both internal and external pressures to realign Egypt with the Arab states.

145. Although because of the peace treaty Egypt believes that it is not likely to be attacked by Israel, Cairo probably harbors some concerns about Israel's likely attitude and military posture toward Egypt in the event of Israeli hostilities with the other Arab states. Despite any residual concerns about Israel's military intentions, however, Egypt will maintain its military forces primarily for threats Cairo perceives from Libya, internal security problems, and for domestic political and economic reasons; large numbers of soldiers demobilized and released into Egypt's high-unemployment economy could be politically destabilizing.

146. To take account of the possibility that Egypt could join the other Arabs in hostilities, Israel's strategic planning will not change during the next five years despite the peace treaty. Israel will continue to plan for a two-front war, still regarding Syria as its most immediate threat while conducting holding operations on all other fronts until the Syrian threat has been neutralized.

147. Arab efforts to challenge Israel militarily will continue to be undermined by deep political differences which divide the Arab world. Despite calls for unity against the peace treaty and Israel, the steps taken by the three principal Arab confrontation states—Syria, Jordan, and Iraq—toward closer military ties have been cautious and tentative. Suspicions about Baghdad's intentions have caused Damascus and Amman to temporize rather than permit any real progress toward a unified military command or even contingency planning. Moreover, Iraq and Syria have been rivals for centuries; both aspire to leadership roles in the Arab world, and both have sponsored coup plots and assassinations against the other which are not easily forgotten. Now that Egypt is cut off from the other Arabs, its willingness to come to their assistance in the event of hostilities with Israel is problematic at best. In addition, a number of conflicts further afield—ranging from the dispute between Morocco and Algeria over Western Sahara to the conflict

between North and South Yemen—highlight Arab differences and contribute to divisiveness in Arab ranks.

IV. SPECIAL ISSUES

148. The issues addressed in this chapter have substantial potential for becoming major discontinuities altering the military and political options of the states in the Middle East. Although these issues probably will not impact directly on Arab and Israeli military capabilities during the next five years, they likely will influence military planning and, indirectly, the development of military capabilities in the Arab states and Israel.

A. Autonomy Negotiations: Implications of Success or Failure

149. Whatever the outcome of the Palestinian autonomy negotiations, the key sovereignty-related issues central to settling the ultimate status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will remain unresolved. The final status of the two territories is not to be decided until the last two years of a five-year transitional period, which would not begin until an autonomy agreement had been negotiated.

150. If the current negotiations produce an autonomy agreement that Palestinian and Arab leaders regard as inadequate, or if the talks stalemate indefinitely or even collapse, leading Arab and West European states are certain to propose alternatives to the negotiating process set forth in the 1978 Camp David accords. The Soviets are likely to try to take advantage of these situations and of Arab discontent and attempt to inject themselves into negotiations. No matter what happens regarding the autonomy negotiations, Iraq and Libya will continue their efforts to undermine the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and to overturn the peace process altogether. The West Bank-Palestinian complex of issues is certain to continue to generate serious regional instability during the next few years, and probably throughout the period of this Estimate.

151. To gain the full endorsement of Palestinian leaders and their nonrejectionist Arab allies, an autonomy agreement would have to contain far-reaching Israeli concessions concerning the political prerogatives of a Palestinian self-governing authority, West Bank-Gaza land and water resources, security, Israeli military presence, Jewish settlement activity, and the

future of Arab East Jerusalem. No Israeli government will be inclined to weaken its bargaining leverage by making such concessions in advance of negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. Even so, Egyptian leaders are unlikely in the end to insist on Israeli concessions in all of these areas as their price for an autonomy agreement. Without substantial Israeli concessions, however, Palestinian and Arab leaders will publicly reject whatever autonomy arrangements might be agreed to by Egypt and Israel and continue to prevent credible West Bank and Gaza leaders from participating in an autonomy administration. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) probably would step up terrorist operations in Israel and against Israeli residents working in the occupied territories.

152. Saudi Arabia and Jordan as well as the PLO probably would privately retain potential interest in the autonomy idea, if a limited agreement were reached containing some immediate and significant gains for the Palestinians and a firm commitment by Israel to continue negotiations over basic, unresolved issues affecting the ultimate disposition of the West Bank. The Saudis, Jordanians, and the PLO in this case probably would not foreclose their option to eventually enter or become more actively involved in the negotiating process.

153. Among the radical Arab states, any partial autonomy agreement would be regarded as an Egyptian sellout of Palestinian interests and as an Egyptian attempt to consolidate the separate peace with Israel, and it likely would provoke strong reprisals. Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, and South Yemen probably would redouble their efforts to implement harsher sanctions against Egypt, the United States, and Israel. Radical Palestinian groups, with the support of Iraq and Libya, would attempt to step up terrorist action in Israel and the occupied territories and might even begin a new campaign of international terrorism. The rejectionists and Syria probably also would endorse Soviet alternative negotiating proposals and press other Arab states for their support.

154. A prolonged stalemate in the autonomy negotiations would lead to strong Arab and Egyptian domestic pressure on Cairo to repudiate the Camp David process and return to the Arab fold. President Sadat or his successor might react to such outside pressure and growing domestic disaffection by claiming that Egypt had no choice, in the face of continuing Israeli "intransigence," but to withdraw from active peace negotiations, seek to "balance" Egypt's relations

with the superpowers, and return to its Arab responsibilities.

155. Nonetheless, a continued stalemate or eventual collapse of the autonomy negotiations probably would jeopardize US interests among the nonrejectionist Arabs less than an autonomy agreement widely perceived as a sellout of Palestinian interests. In the case of a collapse of negotiations, many Arab states would press the United States to come up with a new negotiating framework of its own or to agree to another forum favored by the Arabs. The Arabs would demand US endorsement of new conditions designed to generate more effective US and international pressure on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab lands, to accord the PLO a more direct role in negotiations, and to recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination.

156. Israel would try to confine a breakdown in the autonomy negotiations to the specific areas of dispute in order to continue business as usual in other areas of bilateral cooperation and to prevent the collapse of the peace treaty. The Israelis would use the United States' interest in preserving the treaty to gain US mediation of Israeli-Egyptian disagreements.

157. If the peace treaty collapsed anyway, Israel would undertake a wide range of precautionary political and military countermoves, including heightened military readiness. If necessary, the Israeli Government would strengthen Israel's security position in the West Bank and Gaza by increasing its military forces in both areas, stepping up antiterrorist operations and further cracking down on Palestinian activists. A conservative Israeli government would be subjected to strong annexationist pressure by coalition hardliners seeking to exploit domestic apprehensions.

B. Superpower Military Presence in the Region

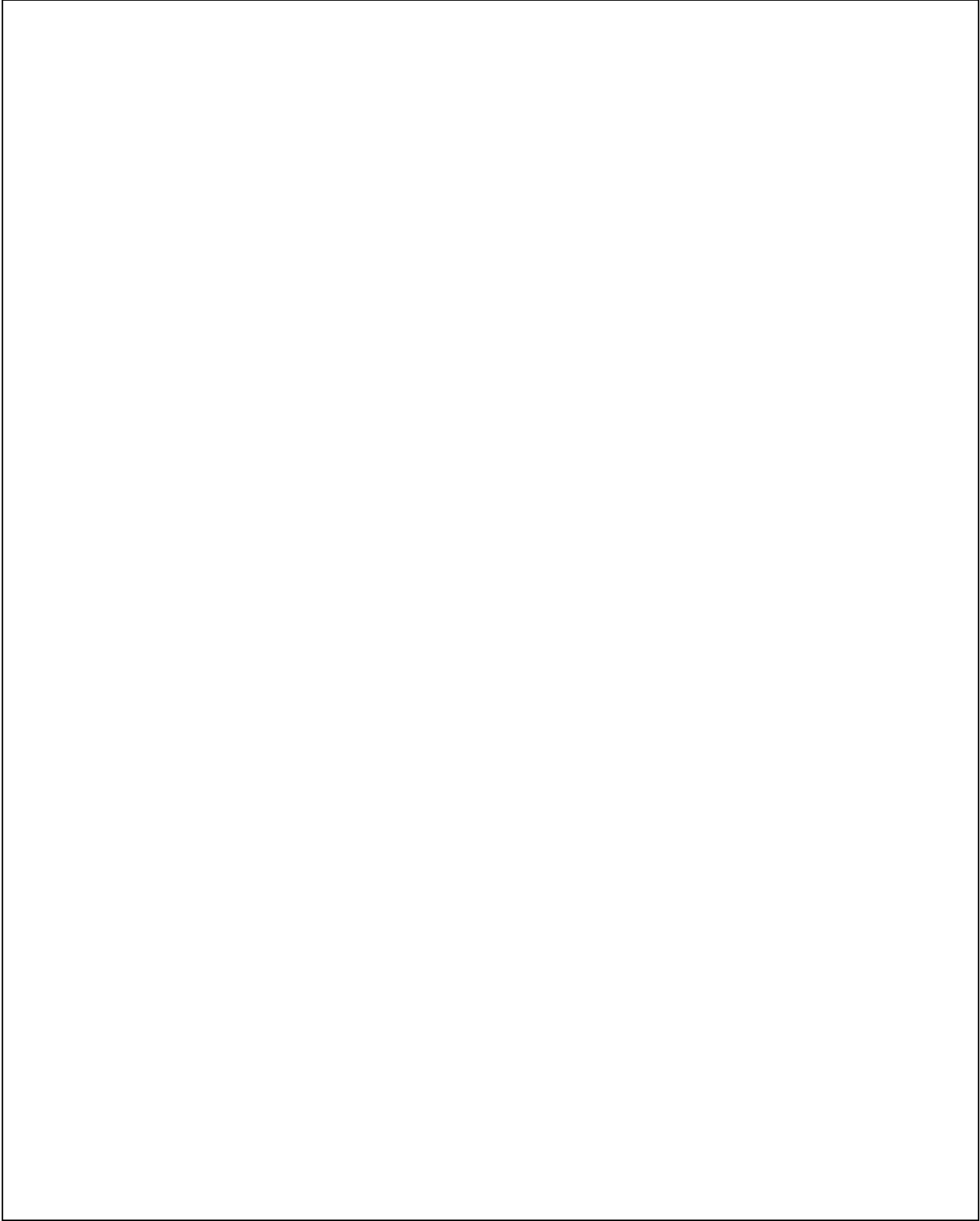
158. The introduction in peacetime of major US or Soviet combat units, particularly ground forces, into the Middle East could have a destabilizing effect on the regional military balance. Large-scale deployments of ground, air, or air defense forces by one superpower probably would trigger counterbalancing deployments by the other, aggravating regional tensions and increasing the likelihood of renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities and possibly even direct engagement of superpower military forces. Token deployments would be less provocative because they would be seen principally as signals of heightened US or Soviet policy interest in the area and not as potential combat reinforcements.

159. An expansion of naval activity by either superpower would not generate the same intensity of reaction as the introduction of other types of forces because both the United States and the Soviet Union for years have operated sizable naval contingents in the Mediterranean. Moreover, US and to a lesser extent Soviet naval forces have increased the level of their activity in Middle Eastern waters since the revolution in Iran and the invasion of Afghanistan, and probably will remain at this higher level until tensions in the region subside.

160. Neither superpower at the present time bases ground combat forces or pre-positions weapons and equipment in the region, but either may do so, particularly if the survival of one of its clients were at stake.⁹ Either or both nations may base fighter or reconnaissance aircraft in the area during this period. They already receive overflight and landing clearances from some Middle Eastern countries for transiting military aircraft.

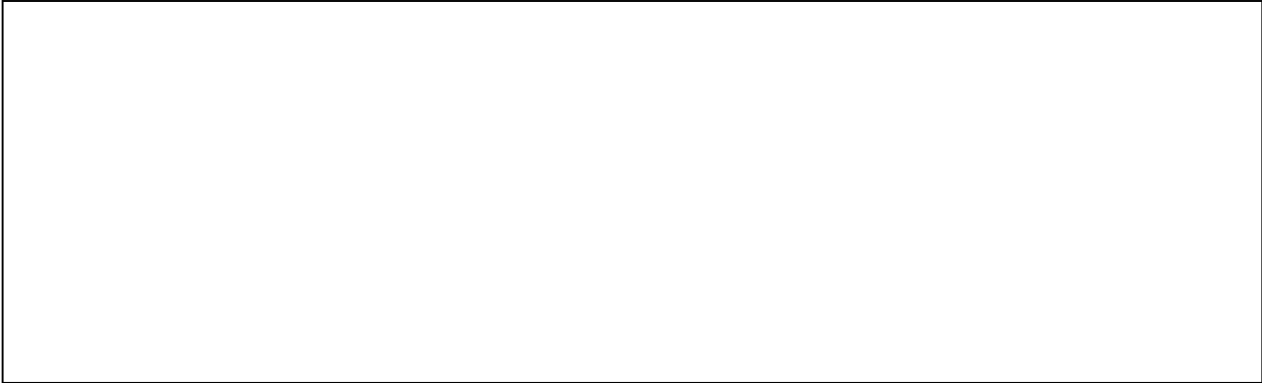
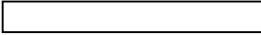
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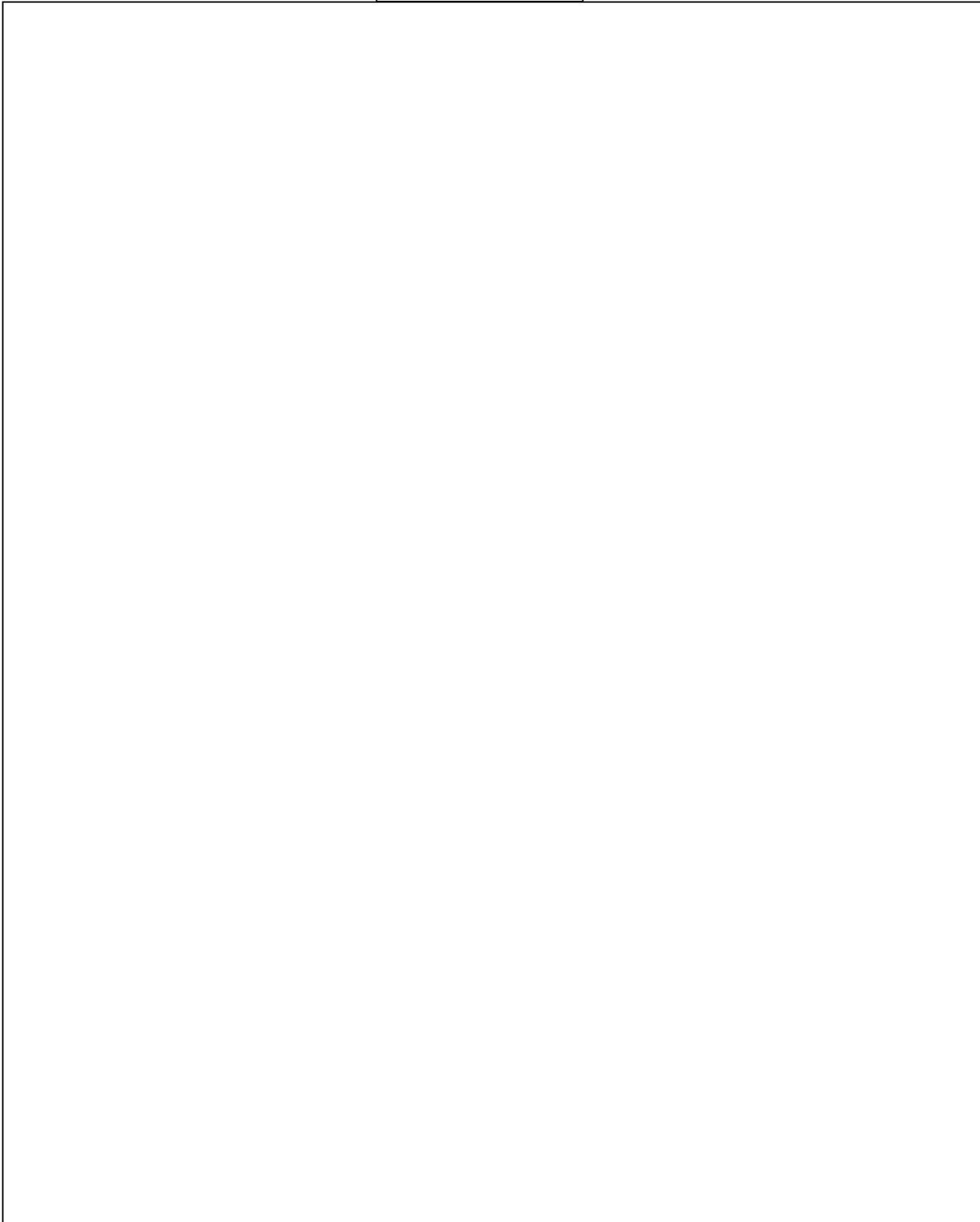


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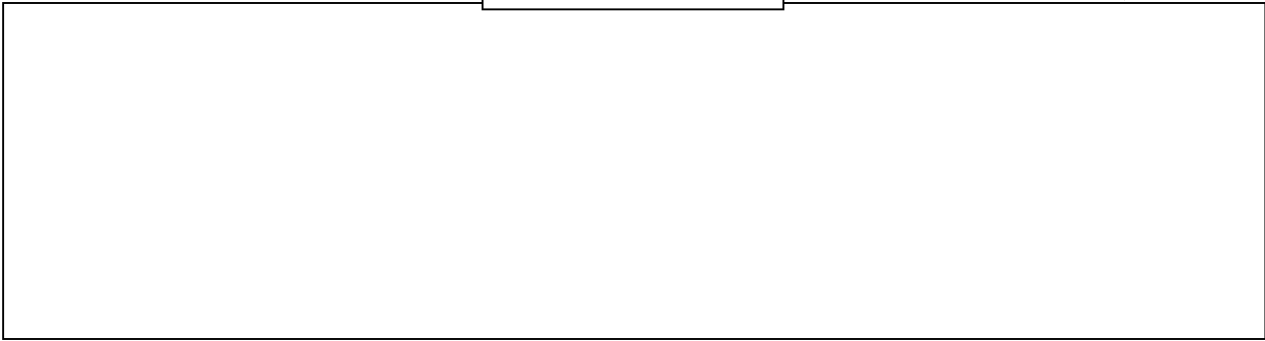


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